



# GIPSA News

A newsletter for the employees of the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

March 2009

## Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack



Secretary Thomas Vilsack

**Tom Vilsack** was sworn in as the 30th Secretary of USDA on January 21, 2009. Secretary **Vilsack** has served in the public sector at nearly every level of government, beginning as mayor of Mt. Pleasant, Iowa, in 1987; as state senator in 1992; and as Governor of Iowa beginning in 1998.

As Governor, he created the Iowa Food Policy Council to advance local food systems, enhance family farm profitability, and combat hunger and malnutrition. He led trade missions to foreign countries to market agricultural products and attended the Seattle meeting of the World Trade Organization to push for expanded agricultural trade negotiations. In addition, he worked to support independent farmers and ranchers by enacting livestock market reform and mandatory price reporting legislation in 1999.

In addition to serving on the National Governors Association (NGA) Executive Committee, he was chair of the Governors Ethanol Coalition, chair of the Democratic Governors Association, and founding member and chair of the Governors Biotechnology Partnership.

As chair of the NGA Committee on

Natural Resources, **Vilsack** promoted private lands conservation and advanced the concept of tying farm payments to conservation commodities. He also created a comprehensive conservation program in Iowa to encourage and assist landowners in installing buffer strips, restoring wetlands, and rewarding good conservation practices.

During his tenure as Governor, **Tom Vilsack** initiated a comprehensive effort to increase economic opportunity and create good-paying jobs, rebuilding of local economies in small towns and rural communities across the state.

In addition to state economic investment, **Vilsack's** leadership and vision were instrumental in transforming Iowa to an energy state. His policies led to the construction of Iowa's first power facility in two decades and made Iowa a leader in alternative energy and renewable fuels.

Throughout his public service, **Tom Vilsack** has pursued an agenda dedicated to the principles of opportunity, responsibility, and security.

### In This Issue

Names in the News .....	2
Walter Rust Retires .....	3
In Appreciation .....	4
Export Report Available .....	4
New Leader Program .....	5
Mentoring Program .....	5
Network Procedures .....	6
Security .....	7
New Rice Equipment .....	8
For Your Health .....	9

# Names in the News

## PERSONNEL

**Monica Alexander**, Management Support Staff, departed GIPSA in February 2009 to join USDA's Office of Civil Rights as a recruiter.

**Tracy Chesley** left GIPSA's Civil Rights Staff in February 2009 to take a position with the Army Corps of Engineers.

## RETIREMENTS

**Daniel Murphy**, Board of Appeals and Review (BAR) retired on March 1, with more than 37 years of Federal service to the grain industry. **Dan** began his GIPSA career in 1971 as an agricultural commodity aid on the BAR, which at that time was a branch in the Agricultural Marketing Service in Beltsville, Maryland. In 1974, **Dan** transferred to the Toledo Field Office, where he spent the next 3½ years as an agricultural commodity grader. In 1978, he moved to Washington, DC, as a junior member of the BAR. In 1979, **Dan** relocated with the BAR to Kansas City and was promoted to a senior member. In 1989, **Dan** transferred to the Minneapolis Field Office as the assistant field office manager and acting quality assurance specialist. He returned to the BAR in 1995. Over the course of his career, **Dan** has conducted many grain grading seminars for audiences within the official inspection system, international visitors, and industry personnel. Congratulations, **Dan**.

On January 2, 2009, two valued employees retired from the League City Field Office. **Howard Suter** retired with 43 years of service and **Walter Gilbert** with 31 years of service—a combined 74 years of service that the field office will deeply miss. Prior to his retirement, **Mr. Suter** had the most years of service with GIPSA. GIPSA wishes these employees a happy, healthy retirement!

## AWARDS

**Danielle Conde**, Washington, DC, received a spot award for providing secretarial support to the Office of the Administrator during the absence of the administrative secretary.

**James Davis**, Corpus Christi Sub-office received a time-off award for alerting FGIS Corpus Christi and ADM Grain elevator personnel of a potentially hazardous fire situation when the elevator fire alarm failed to work.

**Loree Dickens**, WRO, received a spot award for her efforts in creating a mail merge list of 97 claimants, generating the certified mail bond claim letters, inserting the proper letter with proof of claim forms into the correct certified mail envelope and mailing all letters out in the same day, which was a very large and critical task.

**Tina Dillard**, Washington, DC, received a spot award for writing a MS-Access application for the entry and analysis of annual report data filed by markets, livestock dealers, live poultry dealers, and packers.

**Tyhisa Luckey**, Washington, DC, received a spot award for providing secretarial support to the Office of the Administrator during the absence of the administrative secretary.

**Susan Martin**, Washington, DC, received a spot award for providing secretarial support to the Office of the Administrator during the absence of the administrative secretary.

**Pamela Rodriguez**, WRO, received a spot award for her efforts in creating a mail merge list of 97 claimants, generating the certified mail bond claim letters, inserting the proper letter with proof of claim forms into the correct certified mail envelope, and mailing all letters out in the same day, which was a very large and critical task.

**John Rollins**, ERO, received a spot award for his assistance in facilitating the ECM training in December 2008.

**Creig Stephens**, ERO, received a spot award for his assistance in facilitating the ECM training in December 2008.

## 40-YEAR SERVICE AWARD

Paul Robertson, Beaumont

## 35-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Edward Duncan, New Orleans  
Stephen Michel, New Orleans

*Continued, see Names  
on page 3.*

# Walter Rust Retires

John Giler, Washington, DC

**Walter Rust**, manager of the Portland Field Office, retired on February 27, 2009. **Walt** was an amazing field office manager (FOM). During the years, he constantly demonstrated his personal respect and admiration towards his employees in the field office and the grain industry serviced by his field office. **Walt** was always ready to boast about the dedication of his employees and the value those field office employees added to the U.S. grain export market.

During his decade tenure as Portland's FOM, he maintained a diligent focus on his primary responsibilities to manage and coordinate field office programs involving the inspection and weighing of grain at the export facilities in the Portland area. **Walt** also enjoyed and appreciated the close working relationship he developed over the years with the Wheat Marketing Center, the local U.S. Wheat Associates office, the Washington and Oregon Wheat Commissions, the numerous foreign and U.S. visitors through his office, and the local grain companies.

**Walt's** professional journey to the West Coast was very scenic along the way. **Walt** grew up on a family farm in Tennessee and graduated from the University of Tennessee. After earning his degree in Agriculture, he started his career with FGIS in the Stuttgart Field Office in 1975. He later transferred to the New Orleans Field Office in 1976, where he gained the knowledge and expertise that prepared him for a career in export markets. **Walt** transferred again in 1978 to the Sacramento Field Office. There, he had the opportunity to oversee the grain and rice programs serviced by the State of California Department of Agriculture. In 1980, he was selected as the assistant FOM in the Portland Field Office and was later promoted to manager in 1999.

As a member of the GIPSA/FGIS family, we wish **Walt** a continued safe journey through the next phase of his life, and we hope he truly enjoys his personal time in the future. Although **Walt** will be gone; he will not be forgotten.



*Portland FOM Ed Durgin presents Walt Rust, his predecessor, with a certificate of appreciation for 33 years of exemplary public service to GIPSA.*



*The Portland Field Office Manager Hall of Fame -- (left to right) Ed Durgin, current FOM; Walt Rust; and former Portland FOMs Gary Wasson, and Virgil Wray.*

Names, from page 2.

## 30-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Cleve Ellis, Portland  
Dorothy Grigsby, New Orleans  
Timothy Hansen, Washington, DC  
Kathryn McCaw, Portland  
Barbara McDougal, Washington, DC  
Margaret Mills, Denver  
Wanda Pittman, New Orleans

## 25-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Jody Boydston-Johnson, Denver  
Nelson Buck, Washington, DC

## 20-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Ruth Goff, Kansas City  
Douglas Lacefield, Washington, DC  
Sandra Metheny, Stuttgart  
Robinson Obiekwe, Atlanta  
Mark Ruth, Kansas City  
Lynette Scalise, Moscow  
Edward Stallman, Grand Forks

## 15-YEAR SERVICE AWARD

Kaye Burnep, Toledo

## 10-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

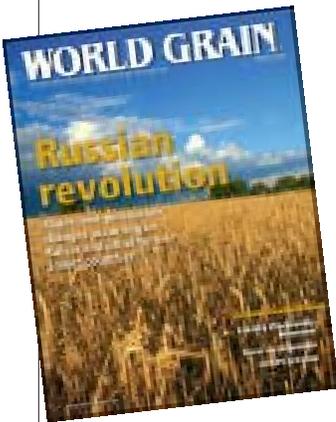
Elmer Koski, Portland  
Carroll Wilson, New Orleans  
Weylin Lucius, Denver  
Kathy Boyd, Denver  
Matthew Bass, Denver

## In Appreciation

Seattle Grain Inspection Staff,

Please see the recognition for the Seattle Grain Terminal published by *World Grain* (below) — You're now world famous as well as being local heroes/heroines!! Remember, this couldn't happen without you. Well done and thanks to each of you for your continuing work ethic and dedication to customer service.

Randy Deike  
Washington State Department of Agriculture  
Grain Inspection Program - Manager



### Port of Seattle Posts Record Grain Exports in 2008

World-Grain.com, January 29, 2009

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, U.S. — The Port of Seattle announced on Jan. 26 that its grain exports set a new record in 2008. The port moved 6.4 million tonnes of corn (maize), soybeans and sorghum through its grain elevator at Terminal 86.

"Last year's grain exports were 20% higher than 2007," said Port of Seattle Managing Director Charlie Sheldon. "That figure clearly demonstrates that our Port remains a viable and competitive gateway for the export of grain grown in the Upper Midwest. It also reflects well on the competitiveness of Louis Dreyfus Commodities, which leases and operates the terminal."

The port said virtually all of the grain that moves through port's grain terminal is grown in the Upper Midwest and arrives via rail. Much of it is used for livestock feed once it reaches its final destination.

The record volumes were due largely to strong demand in China, Japan and other Asian nations, coupled with an ample supply of product in the U.S., said Mike Mandl, director of export operations for Louis Dreyfus.

"We value the partnership with the Port of Seattle and look forward to continuing that partnership well into the future," said Mandl.

The port's 40-acre grain terminal opened in 1970 and has a capacity of 4 million bushels.

## 2008 Grain Export Quality Report Available

The 2008 U.S. Grain Exports: Quality Report is now available on the GIPSA website. Published annually, GIPSA's "2008 U.S. Grain Exports: Quality Report" is the twenty-fifth edition of this annual summary of export grain quality. The report does not analyze the data or give comparative summaries. It is based on data collected during the official inspection of export grain shipments in calendar year 2008.

The report contains chapters on export wheat, corn, soybeans, sorghum, barley, canola, and flaxseed. Each chapter contains:

- \* standards and definitions for each grain,
- \* tables that clearly illustrate all factor result averages at each applicable U.S. grade level, and
- \* factor quality distribution graphs for selected factors.

In addition, an appendix contains figures illustrating select quantity and quality trends over time.

To see the report, go to the GIPSA web site, select News and Events, and then select Publications.

# Thomas and Koch Graduate from New Leader Program

*Rosemary Mayne  
Washington, DC*

On February 2, 2009, **Carla Thomas**, P&SP Eastern Regional Office, and **Jared Koch**, P&SP Western Regional Office, graduated from the USDA Graduate School's New Leader Program (NLP). The ceremony culminated a 6-month learning journey filled with coursework, reading, interviews of senior leaders, and a detail.



*GIPSA's NLP graduates Carla Thomas and Jared Koch.*

**Carla** did a 30-day detail with the Social Security Administration Regional Office in Atlanta, Georgia. She worked on various administrative assignments related to the processing of applicant background checks. **Jared** completed his detail at the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, where he helped determine the feasibility of alternative practices for landowners with expiring Conservation Reserve Program contracts. Both had the opportunity to develop their leadership capabilities and observe other leaders at work.

**Carla** said that what she gained from the NLP will affect the rest of her life. She was able to focus on her growth areas as well as areas of strength on which to capitalize and build. The components of the program gave Jared the opportunity to further develop leadership qualities and to learn from leaders in GIPSA and other agencies.

**Carla** and **Jared** used the program opportunities fully, and I congratulate them on their graduation! Both they and GIPSA benefit.

# P&SP Mentoring Program Underway

*Rosemary Mayne, Washington, DC*

Hats off to the P&SP employees who stepped forward to share the lessons of their experience with a newer employee through the new P&SP mentoring program. The mentoring pairs are:

## Mentor

Brian Burk  
Kathy Boyd  
Jared Koch  
Milton Hansen  
Rhonda Williams  
Leslie Jordan  
Robby Obiekwe  
Herple Ellis

## Mentee

William McCune  
Justin Ham  
Loree Dickens  
Sarah Chess  
Ilia Gautier-Nagle  
Beth Walter  
Onetisha Anderson  
Twala Samuels

These 1-year developmental partnerships require the mentor to invest time, know-how, and effort to contribute to the mentee's growth and success, and thereby, to P&SP's success. As the mentors share their knowledge and experience, they also enhance their own development through exposure to fresh new ideas and perspectives, renewed energy, and the personal satisfaction of making a difference.

Mentoring Program participants receive guidance from a program handbook that includes role advice, resources, meeting guidance, and assessments. Each mentor and mentee took a course specific to mentoring and their respective role. They have identified their program objectives and are currently engaged in activities to foster growth and development. Early feedback is positive.

Engaging in a mentoring relationship can bring you personal satisfaction as you experience something new. So, if you are a seasoned employee, consider stepping forward to join the group of mentors above. Get partnered with a new employee, share your experience and knowledge, and contribute to the strength of P&SP.

Call the Training Office (202-720-6242) to get more information.

# Network Procedures

*Morris Johnson, Washington, DC*

GIPSA users sometimes notice slower machine or PC performance. This is often due to deployment of Microsoft “security patches” and current backup processes.

Microsoft noncritical and nonsecurity patches are provided to the Information Technology Staff (ITS) on the second Tuesday of each month. ITS verifies the patches for applicability and accuracy, and deploys them to all GIPSA machines within moments or a few days, depending upon the volume of patches. Most patches cover multiple issues, and therefore may include multiple patches. You may notice slower machine performance as patches are being pushed out. If you are connected to our wide area network (WAN), you will see performance differences as the patches are deployed. If you are not connected, your machine will get the updates immediately upon your initial login after patches are received.

Microsoft critical and security patches are created by Microsoft to address new exploited vulnerabilities of the MS operating system software. These critical mandates are required to ensure the consistent and continual health of our machines and WAN. Microsoft recommends that these patches be implemented immediately; Departmental directive requires that GIPSA implement the patches within 14 days of their release. ITS also verifies these patches for applicability and accuracy, and sends them out immediately to all GIPSA machines. Because these critical patches are created and deployed by Microsoft to deal with new system vulnerabilities, no scheduling is provided and immediate use always recommended.

Machines that are not in networked offices should be connected to the GIPSA WAN through our VPN solution during the second week of each month to allow the updates to occur. This preparation would preclude slow machine performance on the initial login after patch deployment.

ITS performs system-wide agency backups daily, beginning at 5:30 p.m. EST. Due to the large amounts of data on our system, we must begin the backup process at this time to allow for optimum data and connection speeds during the next business day. The beginning of this process may slow a machine’s performance in retrieving data from your shared network drives. Again, this process is transparent to the user and you probably have never noticed it due to the small amount of resources that the backups require.

Deployment of patches and systemwide backups are essential to the health of our network. ITS will continue to work to minimize the impact of these actions on users.

---

## Issuances

*Terri Henry, Washington, D.C.*

- FGIS Program Notice 09-03, “Use of Closed Circuit Television Systems for Railcar Stowage Exams” dated February 2, 2009

**Are EEO/CR issues or concerns affecting your employment with GIPSA? Do you have questions? Need help?**

**Then let your voice be heard.**

Call the EEO Advisory Committee at...

**1-800-639-5167**

**Civil Rights Hotline**

## Employee Assistance Program

Call for confidential help.

Washington, DC personnel, call...  
1-800-222-0364

Field personnel, call...  
1-800-222-0364

# Security - It's All about Layering

*Brian Hughes, Washington, DC*

It's winter and we can all relate to layering clothes to stay warm and allow for adjusting to changing conditions. Accessing the Internet from a machine on the network is a bit like going out in the cold. And it can be hostile if you're not prepared. Defending a network or a machine on the network requires as many layers of defense as possible so that would-be attackers move on to a softer target elsewhere. Let's talk about three of these layers: two-factor authentication, spear phishing, and flash drives.

**Two-Factor Authentication.** In the near future, GIPSA and the rest of USDA will be implementing two-factor authentication. As the name implies, it will take two different pieces to log into the system. In multifactor authentication, the factors are something you have (in this case, your LincPass) and something you know (in this case, your LincPass PIN). Some high-security installations use "something you are," such as fingerprints or retinal scans. Once implemented, two-factor authentication will allow you to slide your LincPass card into the card reader on the side of your machine and enter your PIN to log in. When you step away from your machine, you will take your card with you and the keyboard will automatically lock.

**Spear Phishing.** You may be sick of hearing me talk about spear phishing, but I cannot stress how important it is to avoid becoming a victim. Spear phishing is getting very sophisticated. Here's an example of how an attacker might construct a spear phishing attack:

Attackers scour the Web, studying public documents, chatrooms, and blogs to build digital dossiers about the jobs, responsibilities, and personal networks of targets. Then they construct a convincing email with an attachment or Web link on a subject likely to trick the victim into clicking on it. Common spear-phishing topics include news events, corporate earnings results, and Word and PowerPoint documents containing real information. The email address is made to look like it comes from a logical sender. When the victim opens the attachment or clicks on the Web link, malicious code hidden inside combs document files, steals passwords, and sends the data to a "command and control" server, often in a foreign country, which collects the data for study. In addition, the victim's compromised machine is often used as a zombie to attack other machines. **Do not click on embedded email links from unknown sources. If the source is known, please verify via a quick phone call if you have doubts.**

**Flash Drives.** Flash drives, also know as thumb drives, are a great way to backup, store, and transport data. Unfortunately, anything that can be used for good can also be used by an attacker. Don't ever pick up an unknown flash drive and insert it into your machine. This is a great way for a hacker to spread a virus or worm.

In a test at an unnamed company, testers dropped thumb drives around the parking lot, smoking area, employee lounge, and restrooms. The test was intended to assess the staff's security habits. The drives contained code to "call home" and notify the tests if the drive was plugged into a

machine. Ninety-three percent of the found flash drives were connected to the network.

Here are some things to remember about using flash drives:

- All portable devices must be encrypted, as mandated by OMB.
- Use on-board encryption that does not require local administrator rights so it will run on an FDCC-compliant machine.
- Encryption passwords should be recorded and stored in a secure location. Some encrypted flash drives self destruct if you can't remember the password, so this can act as your safety net.
- Do not use USDA thumb drives with non-USDA computers; do not use personal thumb drives on USDA computers.
- Store the drive in the same physical location when not in use.
- Do not leave your flash drive plugged into your machine when your machine is unattended.
- Report the loss of any thumb drive containing sensitive information immediately.
- **And, again, if you find a thumb drive, do not plug it into your machine.**

You are the final and most important layer of security. No matter how many firewalls are in place, no matter how good the virus protection is, or how many guards there are at the doors, good security boils down to where the rubber meets the road or in this case, where the fingers meet the keyboard. Please do your best to maintain safe computing habits. Thanks for helping keep the GIPSA network safe.

# New Rough Rice Appraisal Equipment

*Beverly Whalen, Kansas City*

Milling yield determinations are, and have always been, critical factors in rough rice. Most buyers of rough rice give more consideration to the milling yield than to any other single factor. For that reason, it is imperative that official rice inspection offices maintain their rice milling equipment in excellent operating condition. However, it has become increasingly difficult to purchase milling equipment replacement parts that meet GIPSA quality specifications and delivery periods.

In 2002, GIPSA met with Grain Machinery Manufacturing Corporation (commonly known as GrainMan), an established manufacturer that has been a supplier of rice equipment for over 20 years. Impressed with the operation, the Technical Services Division (TSD) evaluated GrainMan's rice equipment and found it provided results comparable to the existing approved equipment. GrainMan equipment was approved for official use in December 2003.

In 2004, the California Department of Food and Agriculture installed GrainMan milling baskets on all of its on-line millers. With industry support, the laboratory millers used to provide milling appraisal results for rice marketed in the west (California) were then standardized to a GrainMan rice miller located at TSD.

GIPSA spoke with industry representatives on numerous occasions to address concerns about maintaining the current official rice inspection equipment. In fiscal year 2008, GIPSA decided to purchase GrainMan rice millers to replace the "master" at TSD and in the southern official rice inspection locations. Field offices are currently aligning, conditioning, and testing the new millers. Data comparing TSD's new GrainMan miller and the current "master" miller confirms that the transition should proceed smoothly. On average, between the two millers, head rice yield and total rice only differ by + 0.3% and - 0.4%, respectively. To further improve standardization of the southern rice inspection systems, each on-line rice milling system will be standardized to TSD.

In consultation with industry, GIPSA established July 1, 2009, just prior to rice harvest, for the debut of the GrainMan. At that time, southern official rice inspection offices will retire their current on-line rice millers and as a direct result of this change, there will be an increase in the uniformity of equipment in the official system and GIPSA customers will also see an increase in the overall consistency of milling yield results.



# For Your Health

*Mavis Rogers, Washington, DC*



Hailed as the “staff of life” for their historical importance to human survival, grains are an essential part of a healthy diet that come in many shapes and sizes, from large kernels of popcorn to small quinoa seeds. Grains are good sources of complex carbohydrates, are filled with various vitamins and minerals, and are naturally low in fat. But grains that haven’t been refined – called whole grains – are even better for you!

**Whole grains vs. refined grains.** Whole grains haven’t had their bran and germ removed by milling, making them better sources of fiber. Among many health benefits, a high-fiber diet also tends to make a meal feel more filling, so you stay full for longer. Refined grains, such as white rice or white flour, have both the bran and germ removed from the grain. Vitamins and minerals are artificially added back into refined grains after the milling process. Does that make a difference? Yes. You don’t get as many nutrients or as much fiber. Eat whole-grain versions – rather than refined grains – as often as possible!

Whole Grains	Refined Grains
Barley	Corn flakes
Brown or wild rice	Couscous
Buckwheat	Enriched macaroni or spaghetti
Bulgur (cracked wheat)	Grits
Millet	White bread (refined)
Oatmeal	White rice
Whole-wheat bread, pasta or crackers	

**Many whole grain foods come ready to eat.** These include a variety of breads, pasta products, and cereals. Look for the word “whole” on the package and in the ingredient list. Make sure whole grains appear among the first items listed. New white whole-wheat bread makes it even easier to add whole grains to your diet. White whole-wheat bread looks and tastes like white bread but has the same nutritional benefits as regular whole-wheat or whole-grain bread.

Other easy ways to add whole grains to your meals and snacks include:

- Enjoy breakfasts that include high-fiber cereals, such as bran flakes, shredded wheat or oatmeal.
- Make sandwiches using whole-grain breads or rolls.
- Add wild rice or barley to soups, stews, casseroles, and salads.
- Add whole grains, such as cooked brown rice or whole-grain bread crumbs, to lean ground meat or poultry for extra body.
- Use rolled oats or crushed bran cereal in recipes instead of dry bread crumbs.

As they’ve been for centuries, grains remain the basis for many healthy meals and snacks. Eating a variety of whole grains not only ensures that you get more nutrients, but also helps make your meals and snacks more interesting.

*Source: Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research.*

**GIPSA News** is the employee newsletter of the USDA Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration. Send your news, ideas, suggestions, comments, questions, or thoughts for the next issue to:

**Dana Stewart**  
 USDA, GIPSA, Stop 3614  
 1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
 Washington, D.C. 20250-3614  
 Phone (202) 720-5091  
 FAX (202) 690-2333  
 dana.b.stewart@usda.gov

**by March 25, 2009!**

**Retiring?** To be included on our email distribution list after you retire from GIPSA, please send your email address to [dana.b.stewart@usda.gov](mailto:dana.b.stewart@usda.gov).

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR  
USDA, GRAIN INSPECTION, PACKERS  
AND STOCKYARDS ADMINISTRATION  
STOP 3601  
1400 INDEPENDENCE AVENUE, SW  
WASHINGTON, DC 20250-3601

---