



# GIPSA News

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

March 1999

## Man of the Year

Administrator **Jim Baker** was recently named one of "Progressive Farmer" magazine's Men of the Year in Mid-South Agriculture. **Mr. Baker** was recognized for their positive impact on agriculture in their respective states, and beyond state lines, to the whole nation. Here's how Progressive Farmer describes some of **Mr. Baker's** accomplishments:

For the past 4 years, **James R. Baker** has held an important office in Washington, D.C. Although he holds a high post at USDA, his hands-on management style reflects values learned as a farm boy growing up at Glenwood, Arkansas.

To his job as administrator of GIPSA, **Baker** brought a wealth of experience and knowledge, along with greater respect and appreciation for farmers and ranchers.

For [his] career of service, we proudly name **James R. Baker** 1999 Man of the Year in Arkansas Agriculture.

## Successful Hog Producer Meetings

*John Stencel, Washington, DC*

P&S Programs has presented the results of its 1996 Midwest Hog Investigation to hog producers at eight roll-out meetings throughout the Midwest. More than 700 producers attended the meetings in Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, Illinois, South Dakota and Ohio. The roll-out meetings held in January and February, 1999, were a joint effort that included representatives of GIPSA, the Agri-

culture Marketing Service (AMS), Rural Business-Cooperatives Service (RBCS), and Farm Service Agency (FSA). The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) also took part in the meetings during the question and answer sessions.

*Continued, see Meetings on page 10.*

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## National Women's History Month

~  
March 1999

# Names in the News

## Personnel

Welcome to **Weylin Lucius**, economist, Denver, and to **Terry Taylor**, administrative assistant, Des Moines.

The Field Management Division (FMD) and the Weighing and Equipment Branch welcome **Al Rupert**, Industrial Specialist, to GIPSA's Federal Grain Inspection Program. Al had been with Packers and Stockyards in South St. Paul for 13 years. Glad to have you with us, **Al!**

Many thanks from the Compliance Division's Review Branch to the following field-based people who assisted us during January and February conducting the onsite compliance reviews of the Portland Field Office, California Federal/State Office, Los Angeles Grain Inspection Services, Inc., and California Department of Agriculture. For the Portland review, thanks to: **Don Akers**, quality assurance specialist, Corpus Christi Suboffice, and **Donna Hoover**, office support assistant, League City Field Office. Also assisting on this review from headquarters was **Bill Ashley**, deputy director, Executive Resources Staff. **Bill** also assisted with the reviews of the California Federal/State Office, and the two official agencies in California (Los Angeles and California). For the review of Los Angeles and California, thanks to: **Chuck Britton**, quality assurance specialist, California Federal/State Office; **Dave Fulks**, shift supervisor, Portland Field Office; and **Regina Landry**, agricultural commodity grader, Crowley Suboffice.

## Awards

**Warren Dicus**, FMD, Washington, D.C., received a quality step increase for superior performance of duties in support of the Agency's Year 2000 initiative, thus contributing to the increased effectiveness and efficiency of FMD and GIPSA.

**Paul Manol**, Standards and Procedures Branch, received a spot award for his detection of a computer virus and his quick response to alert Automation and Program Services Branch, of the situation.

**David Mundwiler**, Manager, Toledo, Ohio, Field Office, received a quality step increase in recognition of his exceptional leadership in managing the Toledo Field Office, thus contributing greatly to the increased effectiveness and efficiency of GIPSA's mission and the Toledo Field Office.

**Norma Phelps**, FMD, Washington, D.C., received a quality step increase for superior performance

and professionalism in completing the many varied and difficult assignments which contributed to the increased effectiveness and efficiency of FMD and GIPSA.

**John Rollins**, marketing specialist, Atlanta, received a performance bonus for contributing to producer understanding of risks involved in contract growing of poultry and livestock and providing information designed to minimize that risk.

## 25-Year Service Award

Michael Eustrom, Technical Center  
Larry McDonald, Technical Center  
Lawrence Poling, Technical Center  
John Roush, Technical Center

## 15-Year Service Award

Jody Boydston-Johnson, Fort Worth, TX

## February Issuances

*Charlie Turner, Washington, DC*

- PN-99.1, Protein Instruction Improvement , dated 1/11/99
- PN-99.2, Fees for FGIS Official Inspection and Weighing Services Performed By FGIS in the United States and Canada and for Supervision of Official Inspection and Weighing Services Performed by Agencies, dated 2/19/99
- PN-99.3, Determining Other Damaged Kernels In Oats , dated 2/12/99
- PN-99.6, Procedures For Warming Grain for Moisture Meters, dated 2/24/99
- Directive 9180.61, Official Calibrations for the Dickey-John GAC 2100 Moisture Meter , dated 2/19/99

# Getting to Know... Stephaine Harden

*Jody L Boydston-Johnson, Fort Worth, TX*

# Electronic Funds Transfer

photo A1

*Stephaine Harden  
finally has time to relax!*

**Stephaine K. Harden** received her Master of Business Administration in December 1998, from Texas Wesleyan University, Fort Worth, TX. She successfully completed her advanced degree in only 2 years while working full time in the Fort Worth office of Packers and Stockyards Programs. "I always wanted to obtain my M.B.A. degree, but the travel schedule of my job made it hard to do. So when Texas Wesleyan started their weekend program for working adults, I decided to go for it."

**Stephaine** grew up in a family with four sisters. Her oldest sister, **Barbara**, is an assistant coach for basketball and softball at the junior high school in their hometown of

Montgomery, TX. **Sandra** has her B.S. degree in Computer Science and works for MCI in Dallas. **Valda** has her B.B.A. in Accounting and is a flight attendant for American Airlines. **Sharlann** is the youngest and is a lieutenant for the Texas Department of Corrections. **Stephaine** received her B.B.A. in Accounting from Prairie View A&M University, Prairie View, TX. **Sandra** and **Valda** also received their degrees from Prairie View.

**Stephaine** is married to **Lewis** and has a pet Rottweiler named "Ace of Spade".

Now that **Stephaine** has finished school, she said she doesn't feel guilty when she just wants to "veg" on the couch and catch up on old movies and some reading.

**Stephaine** is a true inspiration for all of us who aspire to obtain an advanced degree while working full time at our current job. It can be done!

The Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 requires that most Federal payments be made by electronic funds transfer after January 2, 1999. MRP Human Resources has been working hard to tell you about your options. You now have several choices if you are currently receiving Federal payments by check. You can:

- Receive payment by Direct Deposit through the financial institution of your choice;
- Wait for a basic, low-cost account (called an Electronic Transfer Account) to become available; or
- Continue to receive a check if it would cause a hardship to receive payments electronically.

Additional information on each of these options is posted on the MRP Human Resources home page at: [www.aphis.usda.gov/mb/mrphr/ef.html](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/mb/mrphr/ef.html). Please take a moment to review the site; call your servicing personnel of office if you have any questions.

## Note of Thanks

I wish to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all of you who donated leave to me during my illness. I truly appreciate it.

*Lynette Scalise, Moscow, ID*

## Travel Bits & Pieces

*Peggy Smith, Washington, DC*

- ◆ **Per Diem Rates.** GSA has made several errors and corrections to the new per diem rates since the December 2, 1998, issue of the *Federal Register*. For the most up-to-date listing of per diem rates, check out [www.policyworks.gov](http://www.policyworks.gov).
- ◆ **Lodging Tax.** Also available at [www.policyworks.gov](http://www.policyworks.gov) is a listing of States that give government employees an exemption on State lodging tax.
- ◆ **Mileage Rates.** Don't forget, mileage rates will be DECREASED from 32.5 cents to 31 cents per mile only for privately owned automobiles, effective April 1, 1999.

## School Sign Prompts Donation

*Samuel Basile, Peoria, IL*

While driving home from work one day, I noticed a very important sign warning me about a school crossing for deaf children. I was totally unaware that the Peoria Public School District provided such specialized teaching at Woodrow Wilson Primary School so close to my office. I had just received my new Gateway 2000 computer from headquarters when I began to think about how nice it would be if I donated my antiquated computer to this school. Although my computer was old, I felt that it could provide these students a start in gaining knowledge about the computer age and perhaps prepare them for future challenges.

So, I contacted the Automation and Program Services Branch (APSB) to find out what I needed to do to initiate the donation. With help from APSB and APHIS' Property Team, the old computer was on its way to this very special school in just a few days. In return, I received a letter from the Board of Education, City of Peoria, thanking us for the donation.

I was encouraged at how my computer donation could help these special kids, broaden their horizons, and open up a world with endless possibilities. Moreover, I challenge all GIPSA personnel to donate surplus or old equipment to individuals and communities in need across America.

## Working Together to Standardize Rice Heat Damage

*Dave Orr, Washington, DC*

GIPSA's rice inspectors, quality assurance specialists (QASs), and the Boards of Appeals and Review (BAR) have been working together for the last year to standardize the interpretation of heat damaged rice kernels across the Nation. Heat damage in rice is one of those factors that is not often seen, but has a significant economic impact on the value of rice. So little differences between inspection points can cause big problems for buyers and sellers.

When GIPSA was alerted by several field offices that some big differences were occurring between some inspection points, Field Management Division asked the BAR to initiate surveys to all rice inspectors across the country to determine the extent of the problem. Then the QASs in Sacramento, Stuttgart, and Crowley offices went to work with their inspectors and the BAR to align everyone. Several other surveys were conducted, QASs visited almost all inspectors to work with them, the QASs worked on the problem at the QAS Seminar, and BAR members traveled to some offices to provide assistance.

Well, all the hard work paid off. The last survey performed at each office indicates that the inspectors are all in alignment. A laminated picture guide for heat damage in addition to the line slide was developed during this process to better assist front line inspectors in this determination.

GIPSA is proud of the teamwork to assure our customers receive consistent results on this critical factor. Special thanks go out to **Chuck Britton, Eddie Clark, Mike Eustrom, Joe Hearn, Eric Poling, Wayne Melvin, Garry Zeller**, and all of **our rice inspectors**.

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## Rice Inspection Fees Amended

Effective March 1, 1999, GIPSA implemented a 3.6 percent increase in certain fees for Federal rice inspection services performed under the Agricultural Marketing Act (AMA) of 1946.

GIPSA is required by the AMA to recover its costs for providing rice inspection services by establishing reasonable fees to cover their estimated costs. According to GIPSA administrator James R. Baker, the increase is intended to cover, as nearly as practicable, the operational costs associated with 3.6 percent cost-of-living increases to Federal salaries. The increase affects only that portion of the fees associated with the hourly salaries paid to Federal employees; overhead costs are not included in the increase.



# GIPSA Idea Hotline Update

*Norma Phelps, Washington, DC*



Here are the ideas received on the GIPSA Idea Hotline during February. If you have questions about any ideas or the Hotline, please call me at 202-720-1017.

*Suggestor*

*Suggestion*

Vicki Kottke, Moscow, ID	Is GIPSA Looking Into a Form Package Similar to Attached CD-Rom Based Package
Mary Carmouche, New Orleans, LA	Give Day-Off Awards in Lieu of Length-of-Service Pins and Coffee Mugs
All Employees, Grand Forks, ND	Replace 3-Can Test Weight Testing to 1-Can System
William R. Braker and Kaye E. Burnep, Toledo, OH	Submitted Proposed Revision of Form FGIS-918
Robb Hermanson, Duluth, MN	Have All GIPSA Offices Checked Their Phone Systems For Y2K Compliance?
Philip Tate, Toledo, OH	Negotiate Extended Service Contract With Dickey-john for GAC-2100
	Train FGIS Personnel to Work on GAC-2100 Weigh Hopper and Moisture Calibration
Marsha Morehouse, Portland, OR	Allow Field Office to Replace Unused 5-Inch Floppy Drives with Iomega Drives
Ralph Regan, Washington, DC	Consider Some Realignments of the Technical Center
	Update the Political Boundary Map in the Conference Room
	Close Toledo Field Office and Delegate Functions to Baltimore Field Office
Charles E. Williams, New Orleans, LA	Issue New Style of Life Vests That Inflates When Employee Falls Into Water

February's tee-shirt winner: **Marsha Morehouse**, Portland, OR!

Keep those ideas coming in! Send your ideas to the GIPSA Idea Hotline via GroupWise to GIPSAIDEA; HP Desk to Ideas; Internet to [ideas@fgis.usda.gov](mailto:ideas@fgis.usda.gov); FAX to 202-720-1015; or telephone 800-455-3447 or 202-720-1013. **We encourage you to send ideas via fax or e-mail to reduce the possibility of transcription errors; however, ideas will be accepted regardless of the method you choose to use.**

## Idea Reduces Record Retention

*John Giler, Washington, DC*

**Judy Johnston**, Wichita Field Office, cut a record keeping requirement in half with her Idea Hotline submission. In 1997, **Judy** suggested we change the file retention period for licensing records from 10 years to 5 years. Upon receipt of this idea, the Standards and Procedures Branch reviewed the risks associated with a

shorter retention period and determined the idea had merit. From there, GIPSA enlisted the help of APHIS to petition the change before the National Archives and Records Administration.

As a result of the efforts of all involved, especially **Judy** for her idea, the National Archives and Records

Administration has approved our request for a 5-year retention period. To initiate this change, the Standards and Procedures Branch will prepare a program notice to implement this change.

Another example of how everyone's ideas help GIPSA work better! Way to go, **Judy**!

# Revised Bean Handbook

*John Giler, Washington, DC*

In March, copies of the newly revised Bean Inspection Handbook will hit the mail. Our purpose in rewriting this handbook was not to establish new policy, but to clarify existing policies and incorporate procedures that have been established over the past five years via the Board of Appeals and Review Question-and-Answer Bulletin Board, FGIS Policy Bulletin Board, FGIS program notices and bulletins, and Headquarters policy memorandums.

Key changes include:

- Incorporating procedures for performing combined-lot, otherwise grade, and factor only inspections;
- Adding a list of approved abbreviations;
- Clarifying (i.e., adding additional details) the procedures for determining infestation, damage, odor, and insect webbing and filth;
- Updating the list of approved interpretive line slides;
- Removing the procedures for monitoring bean inspections for quality control purposes; and
- Changing the class name Black Turtle Soup beans to Black beans, and eliminating clean-cut weevil-bored beans as a factor in Blackeye beans.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please call me or Mack Manis at (202) 720-0252.

# Revised Moisture Calibrations for Corn and Soybeans

Effective February 22, 1999, GIPSA revised moisture meter calibrations for corn, high moisture corn, and soybeans for the GAC 2100, the official grain moisture meter. The changes, which respond to moisture measurement differences that were observed in the field under certain testing conditions, improve moisture measurement accuracy for corn and soybeans at extreme temperatures.

The revised calibrations change moisture results by less than 0.1 percent moisture, on the average, for samples that are tested at normal room temperatures. These calibrations have been incorporated in a revised National Type Evaluation Program Certificate of Conformance, which also is effective February 22, 1999.

The revised calibrations are as follows:

	CORN 990210N	CORN HIGH MOISTURE 990210N	SOYBEANS 990217N
K1	1709	0037	1083
K2	7133	0211	1535
K3	1485	1001	1092
K4	8044	1058	0762
K5	2305	2305	2455
K6	2553	2562	2075
K7	2008	4019	2406
K8	0071	0055	0139
K9	1087	1087	1087

Even with these calibration changes, GIPSA recommends warming grain in a sealed container to near room temperature prior to moisture measurement for best accuracy, since extreme sample temperatures influence results for all grain moisture meters.

This release is available electronically on GIPSA's home page at: <http://www.usda.gov/gipsa/newsinfo/release>

## Ready to help.

For confidential assistance,  
call your Employee Assistance Program

Washington, DC personnel -- call 301-570-3900

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

# Referring Discrimination Complaints Against USDA

Over the years, many people filed discrimination complaints against USDA, but many of the complaints were never reviewed by USDA, or were improperly handled. When, under the Clinton Administration, USDA tried to go back and take care of these complaints, it found that the various statutes of limitations had run out. That means that by law USDA could not pay farmers even if they deserved to be compensated.

President Clinton and Secretary Glickman worked with Congress to pass a new law that will allow USDA to help the farmers and ranchers whose complaints were ignored or not properly processed.

If you receive any questions from farmers, ranchers, or others in American agriculture about discrimination complaints filed against USDA recently or in the past, you may refer them to:

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Room 326-W, Whitten Building  
Washington, DC 20250  
1-800-543-1289  
TDD/TTY 202-720-8372

# Reaching Out

*Nilsa Ramos, Atlanta, GA*

The 51<sup>ST</sup> Annual International Poultry Exposition was held in Atlanta, GA, January 20-22, 1999. This exposition has grown over the years and is considered the world's largest display of technology, equipment, and services

used in the production and processing of poultry and eggs. Over 1,100 exhibitors from all over the world displayed their products, and more than 26,000 attended the show to learn about the new technology which can improve their businesses. Based on last year's statistics, people from 98 countries other than the United States, attended the show.

During the show, **Amy Van Skiver**, **John Barthel**, and **John Rollins** interviewed college students for potential internship or full-time positions with the Agency. **John Rollins** conducted a training tour for a group of employees from the Atlanta office, to look at the most recent equipment being used

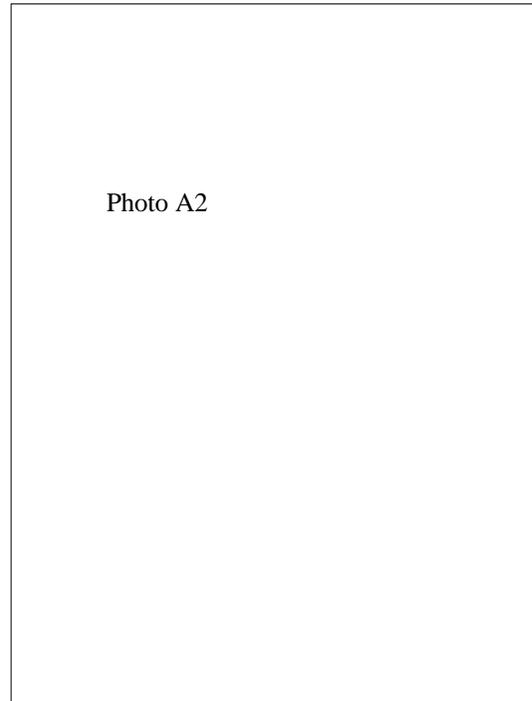


Photo A2

*GIPSA's representatives at the 51st Annual International Poultry Convention included (left to right) GIPSA's Steve Bright, John Giler, and Creig Stephens*

in the industry. The **Atlanta Regional Office staff** and **John Giler**, Washington, DC, helped educate individuals about our program, provide useful information, and worked at the GIPSA booth. The Expo was a success!

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## Are You Going to these March Events?

- 6-9 GEAPS Exchange, Convention Center, Tampa, FL
- 7-9 AOM Soft Wheat Meeting & Crop Forecast, Fort Myers, FL
- 11-12 Rice Quality: Foundation for Value
- 13-14 AOM Central District And Wheat State Joint Meeting, Manhattan, KS
- 21 California Warehouse Association Meeting, Scottsdale, AZ
- 21-23 NGFA 103rd Annual Convention, San Francisco, CA
- 28-29 AOM Southeastern District Meeting, Charlotte, NC
- 29-30 Grain Quality Workshop, Washington, DC

# National Women's History Month

*Shelli Lopez, Federal Women's Program Co-Manager*

March is National Women's History Month. It is a time set aside each year to recognize and honor the women who have been leaders in American History. It is also a time to acknowledge the great abilities and contributions of present day women in our community. It is a month set aside to recognize that women make positive contributions to the quality of life through work in the home, the schools, the church, the community, and the office.

The Women's Rights Movement, to achieve full civil rights for women in America, started 151 years ago at a tea held by 5 women in a small town in upstate New York. The women discussed some limitations in their lives in America, and planned a convention to address the "Rights of Women." This tea was the initial step toward what was an outlandish idea in those days, Citizenship for Women. A tea and discussion can launch a revolution and start staggering changes that effect our lives in government, religion, employment, education, and family. This movement led to the August 26, 1920, passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, which gave women the right to vote. Today, because of those women and the continued work of many committed citizens, our world has changed for the better for all people. This year marks the 151<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of the Women's Rights Movement, 1848 to 1999.

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~ March 1999 ~

## *Women Putting Our Stamp on America*

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This is also the 13<sup>th</sup> consecutive year that Women's History Month has been celebrated by our Nation. This year, the theme for the month is "Women Putting Our Stamp on America." Many American women have put their stamp or mark on history by making positive contributions to our society that have a lasting impact on our culture. The accomplishments of some of these women have been featured on U.S. postage stamps. However, many women place their mark on American history and make a difference in the lives of people each day with far less public attention. Our country and our children have benefited greatly from the efforts and contributions of all these American women. Women who strive to give that extra energy toward making a positive change or lasting mark on the lives of others, those are the leaders we are honoring and remembering today.

# Peer Review of Cattle Investigation

GIPSA has begun a peer review of its investigation of fed-cattle procurement in the Texas Panhandle.

USDA has been engaged in ongoing dialogue with interested industry groups on issues raised in a petition submitted by the Western Organization of Resource Councils to restrict certain livestock procurement practices regarding forward-contracted and packer-fed cattle.

"As a result of that dialogue, and because it's our responsibility to address concerns about concentration issues, USDA will conduct outside professional peer reviews of some of GIPSA's major investigations of competitive behavior in the industry," said **Mike Dunn**, under secretary for marketing and regulatory programs. "**Secretary Glickman** has made it clear that concentration issues in agriculture must be addressed head-on and that America's small farmers must be given an equal opportunity to compete in the marketplace."

The objective of the peer reviews is to evaluate whether GIPSA has asked the right questions, collected the right data, and conducted sound analyses using appropriate models.

Technical and legal experts in universities and other organizations throughout the United States have already begun reviewing GIPSA's Texas fed-cattle investigation. Reviewers will provide independent assessments of their findings and recommendations rather than developing a consensus report. Reviews are expected to be completed in about 2 months.

# Planning Your Career

*Rosemary Mayne, Washington, DC*

Do you need to take charge of your career?

In today's changing work environment, everyone needs to be responsible for their own work-related goals and individual development. The Audiovisual, Regulatory, and Training Staff provides information to assist FGIS personnel with personal career planning. A variety of learning sources and opportunities for development are available, and you are encouraged to use them. "Training Courses Offered to FGIS Employees Annually" contains much information about opportunities to consider as you chart your course.

FGIS employees who wish to be directly informed when the specific courses on the chart are available, want to be added to a special interest log, or would like general assistance with training, should contact **Mary McCoy** at 202-720-1734, or **Rosemary Mayne** at 202-720-6242.

P&S personnel should contact **Peggy Smith** at 202-720-7045 for information on training opportunities.

See page 11 of this issue of *GIPSA News* for further information on a number of training and development opportunities available to GIPSA employees.

**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 3601  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-3601  
Phone (202) 720-5091  
FAX (202) 205-9237  
E-mail: [dstewart@fgis.usda.gov](mailto:dstewart@fgis.usda.gov)

**by March 25, 1999!**

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## Atlanta Regional Office -- Before and After

*Pam Lake, Atlanta*

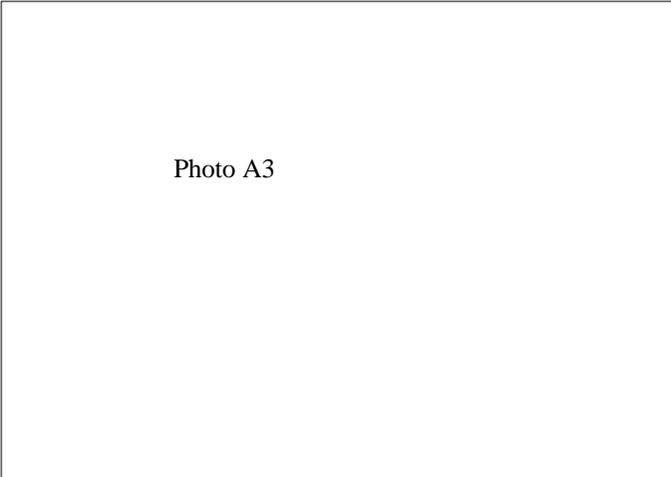


Photo A3

*Atlanta Regional Office -- January 18, 1999*

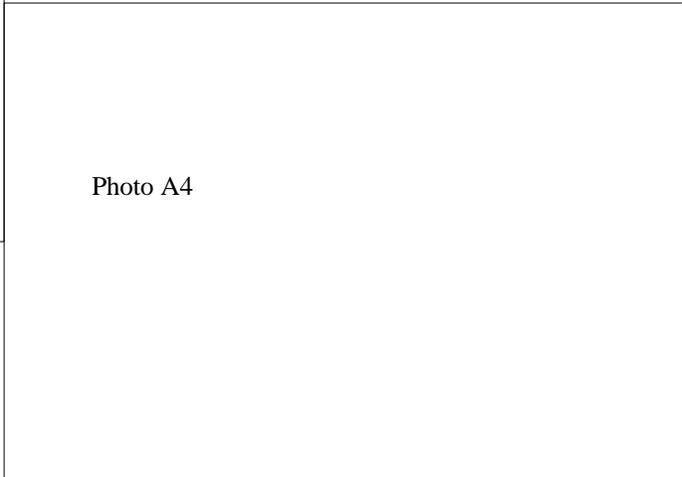


Photo A4

*Atlanta Regional Office -- January 19, 1999*

## Meetings, from page 1.

The presentations to producers provided information on the Hog Procurement Investigation, new Hog Market News reports, alternative marketing programs, Small Hog Operation Payments (SHOP), and available credit programs. APHIS answered questions about the accelerated pseudo-rabies program.

GIPSA also included in its presentation, a list of new and ongoing investigations of concern to the pork industry.

The producers asked questions pertaining to all areas of the program,

of **Congressman Minge** and **Senator Gramm** in Minnesota; **Congressman Boswell** and **Senators Harkin** and **Grassley** in Iowa; and **Congressman Evans** and **Senator Durbin** in Illinois. The Deputy Secretary of Agriculture of Iowa also attended the Indianola, Iowa, meeting, where he discussed proposed State legislation to help hog producers.

**Senator Daschle**, **Senator Johnson**, and **Congressman Thune's** representatives were at the Sioux Falls, South Dakota, meeting.

The press was present at all of our meetings, usually asking additional questions at the end of the session or doing interviews with individual presenters following the sessions.

In addition to these roll-out meetings, **Harold Davis** and **Jay Johnson** have also made presentations at additional meetings for State and Federal legislators, State and local pork producer organizations, the American Farm Bureau Federation, and the Iowa Farmers Union. Packers and Stockyards program staff members have made presentations at 25 hog

Photo A5

*The panel at the roll-out meeting at Feeder Pig Auction Ring, Sioux Falls, South Dakota included (left to right): Tom Bowar, and Roger Anderson, FSA; Harold Davis and Jay Johnson, GIPSA; Brad Gherke, RBCS; and Weldon Hall, AMS.*

however, most questions related to the enforcement of the Packers and Stockyards (P&S) Act, concentration, vertical integration, mandatory price reporting, and the SHOP payments. A large share of the producers expressed a high level of support for mandatory price reporting with very limited opposition.

Congressional representation included staff members from the of-

**Senator Kerry**, **Senator Hagel** and **Congressman Bereuter's** staff members were at the Lincoln, Nebraska, meeting.

**Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur** attended the Archbold, Ohio, meeting and made remarks to the group. Her participation was positive and strongly supportive. Congressman Gillmor, of the 5th District in Ohio, also had a representative at the meeting.

meetings since December 1, 1998. More than 2,500 people have been in attendance at these various meetings. Concentration and structural changes in the meat industry and low hog prices in the last 3 months have generated much concern.

The meetings were a good forum for discussion of the issues that face hog producers at this time. Overall, the outreach effort was positive and constructive.

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# Training Courses Offered Annually to GIPSA Employees

**COURSE INFORMATION:** GIPSA sponsors a number of courses annually, based on available funds. A list of individuals interested in participating in these courses is maintained. GIPSA employees who wish to be informed directly when these courses become available should contact the Audiovisual, Regulatory, and Training Staff (ART) by mail, fax, or e-mail (provide your home address). When a specified program is available, an announcement will be sent directly to those who expressed interest. Additional information on many courses is available on the web sites of the USDA Graduate School ([grad.usda.gov/lda/wel/weldisplay.html](http://grad.usda.gov/lda/wel/weldisplay.html)) and the Office of Personnel Management ([www.opm.gov/mdc/index.htm](http://www.opm.gov/mdc/index.htm)).

## SES Candidate Program

The SES Candidate Program provides training for effective performance in the Senior Executive Service, including an understanding of the Leadership Competencies that make up the Executive Core Qualifications. This program is for individuals at the GS-14 and 15 levels. *Announced January–March annually.*

## Women's Executive Leadership Program

The WEL Program is open to women and men who are full-time, permanent Federal employees at the GS-11 and 12 levels. The program is for non-supervisors and new supervisors with less than 1 year of Federal supervisory experience. Although the program is designed for candidates with the above qualifications, exceptions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. *Announced January–March annually.*

## New Leader Program

The New Leader Program is open to full-time permanent Federal employees at the GS 7 through 11 levels who have just entered leadership positions or have a high potential for leadership. These positions may include first-line supervisors, team leaders, project leaders, administrative support, and members of self-directed work teams. *Announced October–December annually.*

## Aspiring Leader Program

The Aspiring Leader Program prepares Federal employees at the GS-5, 6, and 7 levels for positions as team leaders, supervisors, and managers. *Announced October–December annually.*

## USDA Graduate School Executive Potential Program

This 12-month program, open to all Federal employees at the GS-13-14 level, helps participants acquire or enhance the competencies needed to become successful Federal leaders. *Nominations due in December.*

## OPM's Management Development Seminars

### Seminar for New Managers

Provides new managers with the knowledge and skills needed to make a successful transition into their new positions and to meet the current challenges facing public sector management. The Constitutional framework in which all Federal managers' work is introduced. *Nominations due in July/August.*

### Management Development Seminar

Focuses on the competencies needed by experienced public managers who are responsible for successfully leading public organizations. These managers will typically administer program responsibility through several subordinate managers or supervisors. *Nominations due in July/August.*

**CAREER PLANNING GUIDANCE:** Career-planning guidance is available from a variety of Internet sources. The Department of the Interior maintains an excellent Career Planning Guide at <http://www.doi.gov/octc/>. It is open to all and requires no passwords. In addition, FGIS subscribes to the USDA Career program maintained by OPM. This program requires a password, which you may get by calling (202) 720-1734.

**FURTHER ASSISTANCE.** For further assistance on training and development, FGIS employees may call **Mary McCoy** at (202) 720 1734 or **Rosemary Mayne** at (202) 720-6242; P&S employees should contact **Peggy Smith** at (202) 720-7045.

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

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