



GIPSA News

The newsletter of the employees of the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

April 2010

USDA/DOJ Workshops

J. Dudley Butler



I am told we made history last month. It was the first time that USDA and the Department of Justice have ever worked jointly on matters involving competition in agriculture.

On March 12, I joined **Secretary Tom Vilsack**, **Attorney General Eric Holder**, and a host of Congressional and government officials at our first Workshop on Concentration in Agriculture in Ankeny, Iowa. The workshop drew over 800 participants. The work of P&SP was a main theme of the day, with the importance of our program being mentioned by nearly all of the speakers, including **Attorney General Holder** and **Senator Grassley**.

The expert panels and public participation brought forth viewpoints and data on how the government can best support fair and transparent markets. There will be four more workshops. There will be a poultry

workshop in Normal, Alabama, in May; a dairy workshop in Madison, Wisconsin, in June; a livestock workshop in Fort Collins, Colorado, in August; and, a concluding workshop in Washington, DC, in December.

These workshops offer unprecedented opportunities for all market participants – from farmers to end users – to address issues that are shaping American agriculture and rural America.

GIPSA is playing a major role in the success of these workshops. We will fulfill our missions and do more than our share to help USDA be successful in developing a thriving, sustainable, repopulated rural America.

As one of my old cowboy buddies use to say, “Take a deep seat and hold a tight rein because it’s gonna be heck of a ride.”



[www.
publicservicerecognitionweek.
org](http://www.publicservicerecognitionweek.org)

Names in the News

PERSONNEL

Brian Adam and **Rick Miller**d became members of the Board of Appeals and Review on February 28, 2010.

Alan Disch became the leader of the Grading Services Laboratory on February 28, 2010.

William Kelly is the new chief of the GIPSA Networking/Telecommunications and Customer Support Branch, Information Technology Staff. **William** has been with GIPSA for more than 13 years, and is Microsoft Certified.

Londrae Murrell joined the Grading Services Laboratory as an agricultural commodity technician on March 14, 2010.

Jennifer Porter, assistant to the deputy administrator, FGIS, departed GIPSA on March 26. She returned to the AMS Live-stock & Seed Program

AWARDS

The following P&SP headquarters staff members received spot awards for outstanding effort in reviewing and assessing the public comments received on competition issues affecting agriculture:

Donna Ash
Amy Blechinger
Tina Dillard
Scott Flanary
Catherine Grasso
Jeana Harbison
Peter Jackson
Barbara McDougal
Raymond Minks
Roger Schneider
Henry Wang

Timothy Hansen and **Gale Mason**, Washington, DC, received extra effort awards for outstanding effort in coordinating the review of public comments, which was instrumental in planning the USDA/Department of Justice Public Workshops on Competition Issues Affecting Agriculture.

Bettina Bledsoe and **Eleanor Tuilaepe**, Denver, received spot awards for their support and great work as CFC keyworkers for the Western Regional Office.

35-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Russell Frank, Belle Chasse,
Richard McCaw, Portland
Kenton McDunnah, Cedar Rapids
Thomas Reagan, Beaumont

30-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Michael Barnhart, Belle Chasse
Dinia Hollis, Harlingen

25-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Randall Jones, Washington, DC

20-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Danielle Conde, Washington, DC
Margaret Glavin, Chicago
Leon Ross, Belle Chasse
Thomas Webb, Portland
Juan Luevano, Kansas City
Glen Terrill, Kansas City
Brian Burk, Aurora
Roderick Prather, Lubbock
Susan McBryde, Mineral Wells
Christopher McClure, Roanoke

15-YEAR SERVICE AWARD

Lewis Newman, New Orleans

Check out what's new on the *in*GIPSA web site!

Under Employee Resources > Jobs and Listings you'll find our new, live RSS feed of all current GIPSA jobs listings from the USAJobs.gov web site. The postings are located on the far left column and are updated automatically from the USAJobs site. Clicking on any of the positions will take you directly to the job announcement, where you will find position requirements and application instructions. Thanks to **Erik Mojica** for this improvement idea for *in*GIPSA!

Under Business Support is a new section on Budget and Finance. There you'll find the Management Code Manual, an explanation of the Federal budget process, as well as testimony, explanatory notes, and other documentation for each fiscal year.

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

Use and Tracking of Non-Refundable Airline Tickets

Rose Alexander, Washington, DC

The Department has granted USDA agencies permission to purchase non-refundable fares. GIPSA recently rolled out its processes for using and tracking such purchases, the latter of which is mandated by the Department to reduce financial risk.

Before purchasing non-refundable fares, the traveler must meet one of the following exceptions: 1) space is not available on the government contract carrier, 2) the flight is available to the general public at a lower cost than the government contract carrier, or 3) the government contract carrier's schedule is inconsistent with GIPSA's explicit written policies related to scheduling travel during normal working hours.

Non-refundable fares:

- must be purchased within 24 hours and ticketed on the same day;
- are non-transferrable;
- do not allow for any changes, for example, to departure dates or times; and,
- if not used as intended, can only be used to purchase another non-refundable ticket on the same airline.

In addition, a \$150 penalty fee will be assessed toward the purchase of a new non-refundable ticket.

Most significantly, the purchase of non-refundable tickets must be approved, in advance of their purchase, by the deputy administrators of each program area or the Administrator for the administrative offices.

Travel arrangers/administrative officers for each office must complete a tracking sheet for each purchase of a non-refundable ticket for cost-monitoring purposes, and a copy of this signed tracking sheet must be provided to the GIPSA Travel Coordinator, Management and Budget Services.

If you have any questions about this matter, please contact your office's travel arranger or the travel contacts in Management and Budget Services.

2010 Leadership Development Program Kicks Off

Rosemary Mayne, Washington, DC

From January 25-29, 2010, the 2010 GIPSA Leadership Development Program participants met at the Office of Personnel Management's Eastern Management Development Center in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, to start their yearlong journey of leadership discovery.

The training, *Preparing Tomorrow's Leaders Today*, focused on developing a leadership foundation. Members came together as a group ready to work together on projects. Senior leaders **Randall Jones**, **Thomas O'Connor**, **Brett Offutt**, and **Marianne Plaus** discussed their personal leadership journeys and shared insights into their own leadership styles and philosophies. Topics covered during the week included personal leadership styles, a model to simplify the leadership process at work, and the creation of high-performing teams.



*Front row: Jeffrey L'Heureux, Jason Lopez, Joshua Liang, Scott Flannery
Center row: Idelisse Rodriguez, Caroline Thorpe, Candice Hildreth, Tاندace Scholdberg, Jayne Ludwikoski, Sarah Chess, and Management and Budget Services' deputy director Rosemary Mayne. Back row: Robert Dorman, Kathy Boyd, Casey Sturgill, Joseph Han, Anthony Goodeman, Jeana Harbison, Amanda Roussell, Regina Ware, Thomas Steele, and Shane Minden.*

The participants closed the week by selecting their special projects. Each learning project has agency impact and will provide the participant the opportunity to lead and learn. The project topics are varied and include such issues as Farm Bill legislation, development of a procedural manual, transitioning to new procedures, cooperative agreements, grain standards, cultural barriers, and succession planning. Each of the 20 participants was provided a subject matter expert as a project sponsor, plus a coach to challenge and guide their leadership and career development.

All employees are encouraged to support the Leadership Development Program participants throughout their year-long program, which ends in December 2010.

Employee Assistance Program

Call for confidential help.

1-800-222-0364

FGIS Matters...!

Randall Jones, Washington, DC

Spring is here! The promise of blooming cherry trees around the Tidal Basin in Washington, DC, brings new energy and beauty to the nation's capital city.

This past month, acting director of Field Management Division Bob Lijewski and I traveled to Portland, Oregon, and met with the North American Export Grain Association (NAEGA), an association dedicated to promoting and sustaining the development of commercial export of grain and oilseed and their primary products. The primary topic of discussion was our fee structure and the application of the tonnage fee assessed to exports. We had a very productive dialogue. As we continue our review of the fee structure, we will hold additional meetings with NAEGA and discuss the matter with the Grain Inspection Advisory Committee. The NEAGA meeting was an excellent opportunity to foster a good working relationship with a primary stakeholder. User fees under the export program annually total approximately \$34 million and account for nearly 80% of all user fees and approximately 55% of all FGIS funding.

During this trip, we also had the opportunity to spend some time at the Portland Field Office and discuss many important issues with staff. My last visit was back in January, and during this trip, the striking river view and the warm welcome from the staff made this another remarkable visit. On Wednesday evening after dinner, field office manager Ed Durgin, Bob, and I visited the Terminal 5 elevator operated by Columbia Grain and spent about 2 hours with the staff. This was especially rewarding as I presented a 35-year service award to Richard McCaw. Thank you, Rich, for your contributions and dedication over these many years.

In early April, FGIS managers will meet in Toledo, Ohio, to discuss our current finances, lab working conditions policy, and FGIS' organizational structure among other topics. The hard work, dedication, and commitment that managers demonstrate daily have kept our system running efficiently for many years. Given the wealth of knowledge of this group, I can anticipate a very fruitful meeting. I'm looking forward to meeting with this extraordinary team and work together to improve our operations while maintaining our high-quality services.

Inspections for this fiscal year continue to greatly exceed 2009 with exports 17 percent above last year. Soybeans are leading the way at 31.8 million metric tons, 35 percent above last year's record. Corn exports stand at 18.8 million metric tons (mmt), 1.5 percent above last year, wheat exports are at 10.5 mmt, up 2.9 percent, and grain sorghum currently at 1.9 mmt, 18 percent above last year.

New Orleans has inspected 30.6 mmt, 5 percent ahead of last year, Washington State at 12.6 mmt, League City 8.2 mmt, which is a whopping 140 percent over last year, Portland at 3.7 mmt, 31 percent more than last year, and Toledo at 3 mmt, drastically outpacing last year by 130 percent.

Domestic inspections at 83.4 mmt are also well above last year. This represents a 15% increase and on pace to far exceed the 168 mmt inspected in 2009. The 5-year average for domestic inspections is just under 170 mmt. We hope that demand for inspection and weighing continues at this level which could see domestic inspections for the year approach 190 mmt.

We continue to work closely with the Farm Service Agency to sample and test corn soy blend for distribution by U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to nations around the world. This very visible program is highly regarded by senior USDA and USAID officials. Our work is critical to ensure that high-quality product is produced and distributed for the hungry and needy in many impoverished countries. Our staff in the Cedar Rapids field office deserves a lot of credit for the oversight of the sampling of the product and the environmental monitoring of the production facilities. Our team members at TSD have worked many long hours to get the testing done in a timely manner.

Keep up the good work! Talk to you next month.

WRO's National Women's History Month Celebration

Tim Johnson, Denver

The Western Regional Office (WRO) celebrated National Women's History Month on March 11, 2010, by holding a Chili Cook-Off. Six contestants participated by cooking up their most famous chili recipes. All office employees tasted a sample of each recipe and voted for their favorites. The winner, by a landslide, was **Frank Bowen**, senior marketing specialist. Second place went to **Marlys Sahlin**, senior auditor.

In recognition of the occasion, posted around the break room were informational flyers about various women in history who made significant contributions to Federal government service and to society. Such women included **Isabelle Kelley**, who worked for USDA in 1940 as an economist. She designed and became the first national director of the Food Stamp Program. **Grace Hopper** became a Naval Reservist in 1943, was the inventor of the COBOL computer language and recognized as a leader in the computer field, and served as a captain in the Department of the Navy's Naval Data Automation Command.

Everyone enjoyed all the food, and the event was fun and educational.

Chili Cook-Off Contestants: pictured left to right are Frank Bowen (1st place), Vanette Stewart, Marlys Sahlin (2nd place), Cecilia Hill, Craig Roesch, and Jim Elswick (retired, not pictured)



Townsend Farms Pays \$48,000 Penalty

On March 5, 2010, GIPSA and Townsend Farms of Arkansas, Inc. (Townsend), of Batesville, Arkansas, settled an administrative complaint GIPSA filed against Townsend in June 2009. The complaint and subsequent consent decision follow a GIPSA investigation in which GIPSA found evidence that Townsend Farms agreed to certain payment terms with poultry growers, but failed to follow through on that agreement with 32 of the 33 growers.

Following GIPSA's investigation, Townsend made payments to the 32 affected poultry growers totaling approximately \$114,000. As part of the consent decision, Townsend Farms paid an additional sum of \$48,000 as a civil penalty and has been ordered to cease and desist from failing to pay, when due, for live poultry obtained under any type of poultry growing arrangement before the close of the fifteenth day following the week in which the poultry is slaughtered.

"When growers don't get paid the money they are due, they are unable to make their mortgage payments and ultimately could lose their farms," said GIPSA Administrator, **J. Dudley Butler**. "Life in rural America can be challenging. It is imperative that everyone plays by the rules."

Password Management

Tanika Harris, Washington, DC

McAfee Endpoint Encryption (1st Login). The McAfee password is used by the Department to encrypt the C drive on your computers. The McAfee Endpoint Encryption (MEE) password must contain 12 characters and expires every 90 days. When resetting your MEE account password, please ensure that you synchronize the new password. Here are the steps for synchronizing your MEE account:

- Right click the MEE icon (the image is a computer with a padlock in front of it) on the taskbar. If you scroll your mouse over the icon, it will read McAfee Endpoint Encryption Tray Manager.
- Select Show Status. This will open the MEE Client Status Window.
- Select the Synchronize button at the bottom of the MEE Client Status Window.
- Once you select the Synchronize button, the window above will start checking for updates. Once synchronization is complete, the third line from the bottom will read Synchronization is Complete. Please perform this task twice.

Synchronizing updates the MEE Database with your new account information. This allows you to login to any GIPSA computer. At this point, you can close the window. If you don't synchronize your account after resetting the password, you will not be able to log in to the computer. Please contact the GIPSA Helpdesk if you are unable to access your computer.

Network Password (2nd Login). Your network password must contain at least 12 characters, including at least one capital letter, one numeric character, and one special character. The network password expires every 60 days. To change your network password select CTRL, ALT, Delete simultaneously and select the Change Password button.

Virtual Private Network (VPN) customers must be logged into the network prior to selecting CTRL, ALT, and Delete. Once you change your password, select CTRL, ALT, Delete and choose Lock Computer. After locking the computer, select CTRL, ALT, Delete again and select Unlock computer using your new password. Log off the computer and logon back on. This task will cache your network account and windows log on password. This will also alleviate the common error most of you receive after changing your password when logging into Microsoft Outlook, DCEXS requesting a user id and password before logging into MS Outlook. You can also access Microsoft Outlook by entering GIPSA/username and your network password in the dialog box.

National Finance Center. Here are the requirements if you are a customer who has access to the National Finance Center (NFC) and need to change your NFC password:

- Password must be exactly 8 characters and contain at least one number, one letter, and at least one of these symbols (\$, @, or #). Please enter the symbol in the third or fourth position of your password.
- The password cannot be one of the last 24 passwords used in the past.

Please try to login to your account at least twice a month in order to keep it active. NFC will remove your account within 90 days of no activity.



For Your Health

Mavis Rogers, Washington, DC



Your in-basket is overflowing, and your phone is ringing off the hook. A big report is due in 10 minutes and your computer crashes. You have after-work plans, and your boss asks you to stay late. Do any of these situations sound familiar? If so, you have your share of job-related stress.

Stress is a natural part of life. While you may not be able to steer clear of all the demands of your job, you can learn to better manage the stress they cause.

Too much stress can cause health problems. It can raise your blood pressure, weaken your immune system, and worsen other physical, emotional, and behavioral problems. To avoid stress-related health problems, you need to notice when stress is affecting you. Do you have any of these signs of stress?

- Impatience or outbursts of anger
- Nervousness or anxiety
- Tightness in the shoulders and neck
- A rapidly beating pulse
- Headaches
- Teeth grinding
- Trouble sleeping

If you have job-related stress, try these strategies to help you cope.

- **Take a break.** If you feel yourself getting tense, step away from the situation for a little while. Even a walk to the water cooler can help you clear your head.
- **Set priorities.** You may find it helpful to create a “to-do” list. Then, try to get your least favorite tasks out of the way first. That way you won’t have to worry about them for the rest of the day.
- **Feed your funny bone.** Tell a joke or share a funny story with a co-worker. Laughing relaxes your muscles and lowers your blood pressure.
- **Find the help you need.** When something is bothering you, find someone to talk to. Also, take advantage of any stress-management programs your workplace or health plan may offer.

Job stress is a fact of life for most of us. Fortunately, there is a lot we can do to lessen its effect.

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) 205-9237
dana.b.stewart@usda.gov

by April 25, 2010!

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