



# GIPSA News

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

*May 2010*

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## Bob Lijewski Named FMD Director



*Bob Lijewski*

**Robert Lijewski** is the new director of the FGIS Field Management Division (FMD).

In this position, **Bob** is responsible for the overall planning, development, administration, and management of all grain inspection and weighing and related support programs and activities assigned to the Agency under the U.S. Grain Standards Act and the Agricultural Marketing Act. This includes developing and executing inspection and weighing programs, policies, and procedures; as well as marketing standards for assigned grains, oilseeds, pulses, and rice. He also directs and oversees the operation of all FGIS field offices, Federal/State offices, and delegated and designated agencies.

**Bob** began his career in grain inspection in 1976 working for a private inspection agency in Baltimore, MD. In 1978, he joined FGIS' Baltimore Field Office as an agricultural commodity grader and later became a shift supervisor and then assistant field office manager. In 1995, Bob joined the Standards and Procedures Branch in Washington, DC, as an agricultural marketing specialist. Ten years later, he became assistant director of FGIS' Policies, Procedures, and Market Analysis

Branch. In this role, he successfully directed a staff of agricultural marketing specialists and industrial specialists in administering the inspection, weighing, and commodity inspection programs used nationwide.

**Bob** was born and raised in Baltimore, MD, attended Towson University, and has resided in Bel Air, MD, for the past 24 years. When he's not dealing with grain-related issues, he enjoys playing golf, refereeing soccer games, and spending time with his wife and two children.

**Bob** brings to the director position extensive experience and a wealth of knowledge.

# Names in the News

## PERSONNEL

**Melissa Bowman** has been selected to fill the position of resident auditor in Ardmore, Oklahoma.

**Danielle Conde**, secretary, FGIS Office of the Deputy Administrator, left GIPSA on April 9, to take a position with the Environmental Protection Agency.

**Jennifer Hill**, 1890s scholar, will graduate from North Carolina A&T University on May 8. On May 24, **Jennifer** will begin her GIPSA career with GIPSA's Office of Departmental Initiatives and International Affairs.

**Rodney Kent**, chief, Application Development Branch, has accepted a position with the Department of Justice. **Rod's** last day with GIPSA will be May 6.

## LEAVE DONATIONS

**Romell Rayborn**, agricultural commodity technician, Galena Park, TX, has been approved as a recipient under the Leave Transfer Program. **Romell** will be out of the office for an extended period of time due to a serious medical condition. He has exhausted all of his available leave. If you would like to donate either annual or restored annual leave to this employee, please complete form AD-1043

and either fax or mail it (not both) to: USDA APHIS MRPBS HRD, Attn: LCT Butler Square, 5th Floor, 100 North 6th Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403, fax: 612-336-3544. Form AD-1043 can be found on the web at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/forms/ad.shtml>.

## RETIREMENT

**Tom Wrenn**, manager of the Grand Forks Field Office, retired on May 1, 2010. After graduating from South Dakota State University, **Tom** joined the brand new FGIS in 1976 in Duluth as an agricultural commodity grader (ACG). In 1977, he moved to the Lucher Field Office, where he rose through the ranks to become a supervisor during his 10 years there. Then, in 1987, **Tom** relocated once more, to Grand Forks, ND, as the field office manager, where he stayed for 23 years. **Tom** and his wife **Irene** have two sons, **Michael** and **Timothy**, and now have one granddaughter and one grandson. "**Tom** is one of the hardest workers I've ever known," said **Carmon Lindblad**, ACG, Grand Forks. "We will all miss him and wish him only the best for the future. "

## CONDOLENCES

**Willie Larry**, former FGIS employee, passed away on April 10, 2010. **Willie** worked in the Houston, Texas, Field Office from 1978 through 1984.

## AWARDS

**Larry Freese**, Kansas City, received an extra effort award for providing technical expertise and leadership as a member of the U.S. Delegation to the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling.

**Terri Henry**, Washington, DC, received a time-off award for outstanding contributions in assuring the continuity of critical operations on the employee's alternative work schedule off day.

**Donald Kendall**, Kansas City, received an extra effort award for providing technical expertise and leadership as a member of the U.S. Delegation to the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling.

*Continued, see Names  
on page 3.*

## Names, from page 2.

**Tyhisa Luckey**, Washington, DC, received a spot award for her exemplary contributions to the Packers and Stockyard's Office of the Deputy Administrator, leading to efficiency in the office's operations.

**Rosemary Mayne**, Washington, DC, received a spot award for outstanding contributions to the "FGIS Grain Inspection Orientation" Training Development Team.

**Byron Reilly**, Washington, DC, along with **Dr. Delmy Salin**, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) Transportation and Marketing Programs, and **Dr. Agapi Somwaru**, Economic Research Service, will receive the AMS Administrator's Superior Service Award for their research and publication of "Logistical Barriers to U.S.- Mexico Grain and Soybean Trade."

**Pamela Rodriguez**, WRO, received a spot award for her awareness in recognizing a terminal request as an attempt by a registrant to circumvent the bonding and registration requirements in order to gain access to funds pledged to a trust fund agreement, while still operating subject to the Act.

**Katie Stout**, MRO, received a time-off award for ensuring the mission of the LIE work unit was accomplished during maternity leave of two Legal Instruments Examiners by successfully completing additional work while maintaining her own workload.

**LaDondra Taylor**, MRO, received a time-off award in recognition of extra efforts performed in the purchase of the AED and preparing for the CPR/AED training in the Midwestern Regional Office while continuing to accomplish normal responsibilities.

**Caroline Thorpe**, Washington, DC, received a spot award for outstanding contributions to the "FGIS Grain Inspection Orientation" Training Development Team.

**Gretchen Van Walbeek**, MRO, received an award in recognition of extra efforts performed in the purchase of the AED and preparing for the CPR/AED training in the Midwestern Regional Office while continuing to accomplish normal responsibilities.

### 40-YEAR SERVICE AWARD

**Raymond Lavine**, League City

## Issuances

*Terri Henry  
Washington, DC*

- FGIS Directive 9160.5, Official Inspection Laboratory Location, Design and Maintenance Requirements, dated March 29, 2010
- FGIS Policy Memo, Reporting Class Y Weighing and Official Commercial Inspection Service in IDW, dated April 22, 2010

## Regulatory Info

*Tess Butler  
Washington, DC*

### Federal Register Publications

- Opportunity for Designation in the Amarillo, TX; Cairo, IL; State of Louisiana; State of North Carolina; Belmond, IA; State of New Jersey; and State of New York Areas; Request for Comments on the Official Agencies Servicing These Areas, published March 31, 2010
- Designation for the Champaign, IL; Emmett, MI; Davenport, IA; Enid, OK; Keokuk, IA; Marshall, MI; and Omaha, NE Areas, published March 31, 2010
- Swine Contract Library, published April 2, 2010

# TSD Biotech Group Helps Canada Test for Inadvertently Release in Flaxseed

*Don Kendall, Kansas City, MO*

Scientists at GIPSA's Technical Services Division are internationally recognized for their expertise in testing for genetically engineered traits, responding to the inadvertent release of genetically engineered products, the development of statistically-based sampling plans, and the introduction of a pioneering Proficiency Program that gives laboratories all over the world the opportunity to improve their testing methods for genetically engineered grains.

Triffid (FP967), a genetically engineered flaxseed, was developed at the University of Saskatchewan and registered with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) in the mid 1990s. The development of Triffid was based on recombinant DNA technology and *Agrobacterium*-mediated transformation. Europe imports approximately 60 percent of Canada's flax and prefers varieties that do not contain biotechnology-derived traits. Thus, the FP967 variety was de-registered and taken off of the market because of European fears that it could contaminate other flaxseed produced in Canada.

In September 2009, a number of European laboratories publicly claimed to have identified the presence of FP967 in Canadian flaxseed test samples. The Canadian Grain Commission (CGC) confirmed the European laboratories' claims and, shortly thereafter, asked for help from GIPSA's Biotechnology Workgroup. Canada asked us to provide insight and draw from our experiences with products that have become inadvertently introduced into the marketplace.

GIPSA's Biotechnology Workgroup, comprised of **Dr. Ron Jenkins**, **Dr. Tandace Scholdberg**, **Daishia Nelson**, and statistician **Larry Freese**, participated in weekly conference calls with the Flax Council of Canada, Canadian industry and government officials including those from the CGC, National Research Council of Canada, and Canadian Food Inspection Agency, to develop a strategy and advance an appropriate response to this trade dispute.

The Flax Counsel of Canada developed a protocol to detect FP967 and formally asked GIPSA's Biotechnology Workgroup, along with other laboratories, to be actively involved in a third-party verification of a quantitative PCR-based method to detect the presence of the FP967 trait. This verification included validating various primer/probe combinations for PCR detection, and assessing the usefulness of a commercial DNA extraction kit. To help in the standardization, the GIPSA's Biotechnology Workgroup prepared comparator samples that currently are being used by all laboratories that provide official testing services for detection of FP967.

During negotiations with Europe, it was agreed that the Canadian government would implement a flaxseed proficiency testing program for laboratories that provide official testing services. The CGC Flax Seed Proficiency Program was modeled after the GIPSA Proficiency Program, and in November 2009, the CGC began disseminating proficiency samples that were prepared and characterized by GIPSA's Biotechnology Workgroup. Our Biotechnology Workgroup also provided expertise on sampling strategies, reporting criteria, and an approach to estimate the infiltration rate of FP967 in the field.

For their efforts, Elwin Hermanson, Chief Commissioner of the Canadian Grain Commission, wrote a letter of appreciation to GIPSA, thanking **Dr. Ron Jenkins**, **Dr. Tandace Scholdberg**, **Daishia Nelson**, and **Larry Freese** for their invaluable assistance.

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

# FGIS Matters...!

*Randall Jones, Washington DC*

The summer is fast approaching and FGIS is working at a matching rapid pace.

I was pleased to announce the selection of **Bob Lijewski** as director of the Field Management Division. His superior services and vast experience will greatly contribute to our mission. **Bob** succeeds an exceptional group of leaders who have previously held this position including **John Giler** (2007-2009), **David Orr** (1998-2005), **David Shipman** (1992-1994), and **John Marshall** (1978-1992).

On April 6-8, FGIS managers met in Toledo, Ohio, to review program changes and discuss upcoming challenges. A very special “thank you” to **Dave Mundwiler** and his staff for hosting our managers meeting in Toledo and providing support throughout the entire meeting. It was great seeing everyone in Toledo, and I appreciate all your hard work. Your dedication and commitment are an inspiration to all of us!

I would like to share with you the initiatives we are working on to address some of the ongoing issues discussed during the managers’ meeting and the Quality Roundtable Report:

- I’ve asked managers to review our current organizational structure and functions and to provide suggestions as how we can best structure FGIS to continue to meet the needs of our stakeholders and continue to provide high quality services. We will collect their input and proceed accordingly.
- With attrition rates on the rise, we all agree that providing training for new and current employees is imperative. To that end, **Ron Metz** will lead a task force which will assess FGIS training needs and develop a comprehensive training program that will encompass all FGIS staff and positions.
- We will conduct a comprehensive review of our regulations to bring them up to date with current grain business practices. Dave Mundwiler will lead this effort. I anticipate that this initiative will require a tremendous amount of time and energy but will most certainly provide tremendous benefits for FGIS and our stakeholders.
- To improve communication internally, we will create an FGIS Change Control Working Group (CCWG) similar to the efforts initiated by our P&SP colleagues. This group will process changes requested by our own employees and facilitate implementation of those changes that enhance operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Stay tuned for more information on all of these initiatives. Though these are very ambitious, I know we’re up to the task to make sure our system remains second to none.

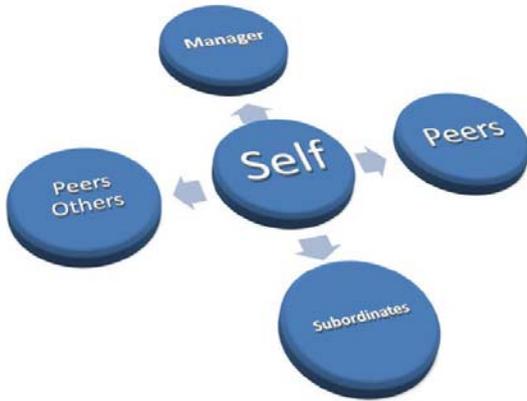
*Continued, see **FGIS** on page 7.*



***FGIS Managers and GIPSA Administrator gather in Toledo.** From left to right, back row: Dave Grady, Bob Lijewski, John Pitchford, Ed Stallman, Ken Critchfield, Clyde Steves, Dave Mundwiler, Phil Tate, Dave Lowe, Don Kendall, John Flemm, Kerry Petit. Front Row: Ron Metz, Diane Palecek, Idelisse Rodriguez, Tom O’Connor, Ed Durgin, Marianne Plaus, J.Dudley Butler, Randall Jones.*

# 2010 360 Survey

Caroline Thorpe, Washington, DC



Every two years, per GIPSA Directive 4351.1, all executives, managers, and supervisors are required to participate in a 360-degree assessment survey. This year, it's time for Packers and Stockyards Program (P&SP) and Office of the Administrator (OA) managers to take part. The process will require the input of P&SP and OA employees who may be selected to fill out surveys or be a rater in the 360 survey process. What is this process and why does the agency do this?

The 360 is a structured process for giving and receiving feedback from a leader's supervisor, peers, and subordinates. It provides the participant an opportunity to compare self-perceptions with feedback from others. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) develops and conducts the survey, and identifies the tasks

assessed in the 360 through research and practice. The assessment is used as a developmental tool to promote self-awareness and plan behavioral change. In GIPSA, the 360 tool has no connection with the participant's performance appraisal.

In May 2010, P&SP and OA leaders will begin the 360 process with an OPM-administered Internet-based survey. If you are a peer or subordinate who is identified to complete an assessment, here are some tips:

- ◆ Please respond candidly and objectively. Base your responses on observable behavior in actual work experiences, NOT on assumptions or personal feelings.
- ◆ The survey maintains rater anonymity and responses from participant groups (peers and subordinates) will be averaged together. Active support is absolutely necessary for the 360 to succeed. If there are too few respondents, the data cannot be reported back to the manager or supervisor. To ensure anonymity, responses by subordinates are grouped so that your responses cannot be identified by the individual.

The 360 is an extremely valuable developmental tool. The feedback provided to the leaders gives them a view from all around, and not only from their own or their supervisors' perspectives. Using the information learned from the analysis helps the leader develop a roadmap for improvement to move forward. In addition, GIPSA will receive an aggregate analysis that will help us plan for the succession needs of the Agency.

If you are asked to complete a 360 as a GIPSA employee, know that the participant selected you to provide input because she/he values your feedback and objective assessment, which benefits both the individual and the agency.

With your support and participation, P&SP and OA can strengthen and develop their leadership.



## eOPF

*Irene Omade, Washington, DC*

GIPSA employees were notified about the implementation of the electronic Official Personnel Folder (eOPF) and how to register to obtain access. Thanks to all who registered! If you have not had the opportunity to register, please follow the steps outlined in the “eOPF Registration Using eAuthentication Guide” along with other related documents which can be found on the inGIPSA website at <http://ingipsa/Employee-Resources/Benefits.aspx>.

The eOPF is an electronic version of your OPF and contains the records required to document your Federal career. The Human Resources Division (HRD), in conjunction with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), is providing access to all employees as part of a government-wide initiative. If you have registered for eOPF, you know that you have electronic access to your folder and have been notified, via email, when a new document is added to the folder. Since SF-50 forms are being automatically deposited into folders, hard copy SF-50 forms are no longer being printed or mailed, effective January 1, 2010, for employees who have registered and entered a valid email address. Employees who do not have government or personal access to a computer or email will continue to receive hard copy SF-50 forms through the mail.

If you have questions about any of the information above, please contact me or your servicing Processing team member at: [www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/contact\\_us/downloads/processing\\_prog\\_assignments.pdf](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/contact_us/downloads/processing_prog_assignments.pdf) or, send an email message to the eOPF mailbox at [eopfmrp@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:eopfmrp@aphis.usda.gov). Your continued support of the eOPF initiative is appreciated.

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## New on *in* GIPSA

We've updated safety and health information on the inGIPSA web site. The information relating to individuals' health and wellness remains on the Employee Resources > Safety and Health page (<http://ingipsa/Employee-Resources/Safety--Health.aspx>). We've added a new Business Support > Safety and Security page (<http://ingipsa/Business-Support/Workplace-Safety.aspx>) to house information that employees and offices need to work safely. This new page includes policies, directives, and other office resources and links.

**FGIS**, from page 5.

At the end of April, FGIS managers met with the American Association of Grain Inspection and Weighing Agencies, the national association representing grain inspection and weighing agencies. We provided updates on key FGIS programs and initiatives including *FGISonline*, container regulations, National Grain Center, and the Quality Management Program. As always, we appreciate the opportunity to speak to this group and will continue to foster our working relationship.

In May, I'm looking forward to meeting with Union members to talk about their concerns and plan for the future of our workforce. This is an excellent opportunity to continue to build upon the excellent relationship that we have with our Union leaders and members.

In conclusion, I would like to extend my gratitude to all the hard working mothers in GIPSA. Thanks for your commitment to the services we provide and for all the mothers out there, Happy Mother's Day!

### Employee Assistance Program

Call for confidential help.

1-800-222-0364

# For Your Health

*Mavis Rogers, Washington, DC*



**Rest for the Weary – Dreaming of Sleep.** If you think you stop working when you slide under the covers at the end of the day, guess again. Your body keeps working when you sleep, recharging your immune system. If you don't get the sleep you need, your body will demand that you make it up. If you are constantly sleep-deprived, you may be weakening your immune system. You may also find it more difficult to function normally. People who don't get enough sleep (usually seven or eight hours a night) are more likely to have problems concentrating, may have impaired judgment, and are more likely to get into car accidents.

Millions of people don't get the sleep they need because they have insomnia (difficulty falling asleep and staying asleep). Insomnia is slightly more likely to affect women, and it increases with age. Insomnia can be temporary or long-term and is a common symptom of some medical conditions. Some causes of short-term insomnia are stress, jet lag, medication, and diet. If you suffer from long-term insomnia, talk with your doctor. Insomnia also can be a symptom of a medical problem, such as depression. Whether you are trying to tackle short-term insomnia or just make the most of your bedtime, here are some tips.

- › **Keep a Sleep Schedule.** Go to bed and get up at the same time every day, even on weekends. If you can't sleep at bedtime, get up and do something else. Staring at the clock will only increase your anxiety about not sleeping—which further hinders your ability to fall asleep.
- › **Tune Into Your Circadian Rhythms.** You naturally feel more awake in the daylight and sleepier when it's dark because your internal body clock sets itself based on light. If you work nights, you are interrupting your natural sleeping and waking patterns. To counteract this, make sure the room you sleep in during the day is dark.
- › **Exercise,** but not too close to bedtime. Regular exercise will help you sleep better.
- › **Be Careful of When You Eat and Drink.** Avoid caffeine (found in cola, coffee, chocolate, and certain medications) within six hours of bedtime. Alcohol consumed within several hours of bedtime will also impair your ability to sleep restfully. A light dinner at least two hours before bedtime is better for your sleep than a heavy meal.

Courtesy: FOH

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**  
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[dana.b.stewart@usda.gov](mailto:dana.b.stewart@usda.gov)

by May 25, 2010!

**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).

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