



GIPSA News

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

June 2006

Alan Christian is the New P&SP Deputy Administrator

Jim Link

Please join me in welcoming **Alan Christian** to the GIPSA team. Effective May 27, **Alan** became the new Deputy Administrator for the Packers and Stockyards Program. Thank you to all who have waited patiently for this announcement. It has been a long hiring process, and one that I am glad is behind us.

Previously, **Alan** spent 6 years as the director of Investigative and Enforcement Services (IES) in the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS) responsible for enforcing laws and regulations related to animal and plant health, import and export of agricultural commodities and biotechnology. Before becoming director, **Alan** held the positions of deputy director and regional director in IES. He began his career with APHIS Veterinary Services as an animal health technician in the Brucellosis Eradication Program. The Office of Inspector General report on P&SP that we received earlier this year raised concerns about our lack of investigative experience in leadership. **Alan** will bring that critical investigative knowledge, as well as new ideas for investigative processes and procedures.

I have enjoyed serving as both your Administrator and your Deputy these past 5 months, but I am also excited to pass the reins to **Alan**. I will continue to work very closely with PS&P, and also look forward to spending more time on FGIS issues and visiting many of our port locations.

Thank you in advance for your support during this time of transition. As with any new job, **Alan** will need time to learn more about our program, and I thank you in advance for your support as he takes on this new role.

Organizational Assessment Survey Results

Jim Link

Last month, all GIPSA managers were briefed on the results of the Office of Personnel Management's Organizational Assessment Survey, and the results were posted on *inGIPSA* for all to review. Thanks to the 63 percent of GIPSA employees who took the time to complete the survey, and provide both positive comments and constructive criticism. The survey was an important first step in improving the culture and climate of our organization.

GIPSA is a good organization whose employees want to see the agency succeed. We should all be proud to work for this organization; I know that I am. That being said, there is always room for improvement and this survey helped us identify specific areas we can address.

*Continued, see Survey
on page 3.*

Names in the News

PERSONNEL

Daishia Burton, 1890 Scholar, graduated from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and is now a full time employee in the Technical Services Division's Biotech Group.

Danielle Conde is the new secretary to the deputy administrator, FGIS. **Danielle** reported for duty in the FGIS Office of the Deputy Administrator on May 15.

Sekou Coulibaly is the newest employee of the Method Development Unit's Type Evaluation and Calibration Group, Technical Services Division. **Sekou** is a recent graduate of North Carolina A&T State University with a masters of science in Bioenvironmental Engineering.

Frank Jackson was named the new assistant field office manager of the New Orleans Field Office. **Frank** started his career with the govern-

ment in 1976 in St. Louis, Missouri, working for the for old grain division. In 1977, he transferred to the old New Orleans Field Office and was stationed in the Lutcher area. **Frank** moved to the Belle Chasse Field Office when the New Orleans Field Office was split into 3 separate offices. In 1979, he became a shift supervisor and in 1996 was selected as an area manager in the recombined New Orleans Field Office.

Shana Love, formerly of the Market Analysis and Standards Branch, accepted a special assistant position in the USDA/Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration. **Shana** will be working on bioenergy, pandemic flu, and a variety of other issues.

LEAVE DONATIONS

Benny Vitale, IT Specialist in Kansas City, has been approved for the Leave Transfer Program during the period of May 3, 2006 through July 26, 2006, while he recovers from surgery. Please consider donating some leave to **Benny** while he is recuperating. Your donation will help make a difficult time a little easier for him. To donate annual or restored annual leave to **Benny**, please complete form AD-1043, and either fax it or mail it (not both) to: USDA APHIS MRPBS HRD, Attn: LCT; Butler Square 5th Floor; 100 North 6th Street; Minneapolis, MN 55403; FAX: 612-370-2361. Form AD-1043 can be found on the web at: www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/forms/payforms.html.

AWARDS

William Arce, marketing specialist, **Dewey Blatchford**, industrial specialist, **Arlan DeBlieck**, marketing specialist, **Steve Pappaducas**, marketing specialist, Des Moines; and **Jerry Garner**, resident agent, Indianapolis, **William Houchin**, resident agent, Kentucky; **Glenn Plumley**, resident agent, Wisconsin; **Terry Ryno**, resident agent, Missouri; **Julie Shamblin**, resident agent, South Dakota; and **Robert Merritt**, resident agent, Minnesota, received time off awards for their outstanding efforts, dedication, and contributions to the Trade Practices unit in conducting scale inspections of every auction market in the Midwestern region.

William Arce, marketing specialist, and **Becky Janssen**, legal specialist, Des Moines; and **Robert Merritt**, resident agent, Minnesota, received extra effort awards for their sustained dedicated effort and substantial contributions during the Syverson investigation and litigation.

Miguel Ceballos, **Larry Hanzelka**, and **James Davis**, League City, received spot awards for excellence in performing inspection and weighing duties in the absence of a Corpus Christi supervisor.

Continued, see Names on page 3.

In This Issue

Names in the News	2
Appreciation	3
Contract Services Update	4
PEARS Changes	4
Regulatory Info	5
Issuances	5
Travel Bits & Pieces	5
Wet Gluten Testing	5
EDB Testing Discontinued	6
ACCA	7
For Your Health	8
Designation Activities	8

Survey, from page 1.

Important dimensions that we will focus on include communication, employee involvement, supervision, leadership and quality, and fairness and treatment of others. These are critical components of a healthy, successful organization.

We will be addressing these major issues agencywide in the upcoming months. As we determine our course of action, I ask that each employee begin to think about what you can personally do to address the identified weaknesses. When the action planning begins, we will form task forces that include both employees and managers to assess where we are now and to recommend changes for improvement. Together we will make real change in our organization.

As our improvement process takes shape and we establish Action Teams, we will continue to ask for input and assistance. I look forward to working together to better and strengthen our agency.

Note of Appreciation

To: The Technical Services Division
From: Harvey Kiser
Subject: Thanks

Thanks so very much for all of preparation for the visit to your agency by the international business executives who attended IGP's Grain Purchasing Short Course. The explanation of your agency's mission and operations and the tour of the Tech Center were appreciated. One of the executives on his evaluation sheet said, 'It was good to know the independence of the FGIS and strict methods.'

I have always enjoyed the professional relationships I have had with you and other professionals of FGIS. You all have been super in your support of our efforts in presenting and informing our international grain buyers about FGIS. The friendships with all of you have been a blessing.

Thanks again.

Sincerely,

Harvey Kiser
International Grains Program
Department of Grain Science and Industry
Kansas State University
Manhattan, Kansas

Names, from page 2.

Agnes Flinn, Tanisha Mapes, and Gretchen Van Walbeek, administrative assistants, Des Moines, received spot awards for their outstanding efforts, dedication, and contribution to the Des Moines office's Trade Practices Unit for the National Scales and Weighing Training Program.

Sarah Hagan, auditor, Des Moines, received an extra effort award for her excellent dedication and professional work product in preparation of a complete data base listing all registrants and packers in the Midwestern region to be used in audit planning purposes.

30-YEAR SERVICE AWARD

William Crutchfield, Washington, DC

25-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

James Morcaldi, Denver
Stephen Warrilow, Nashville

20-YEAR SERVICE AWARD

Robert Schmidt, Atlanta

15-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Timothy Brennan, Greenville
Steve Dow, Atlanta
Cecilia Hill, Denver
Myron Simmons, Denver

Contract Services Update

John Giler, Washington, DC

Last month, I reported that GIPSA published a request for proposal (RFP) for potential contracts to provide official export inspection and weighing services in California and Wisconsin. As of the April 21 cutoff date, the APHIS contracting officer received responses from four companies. (One company was excluded from the competition because it did not qualify as a small business and these proposals were solicited as small business set-aside contracts.)

During the week of May 11, 2006, GIPSA's Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) evaluated the contract proposals from the three remaining companies. The TEC members included: Henry "C." Greenwood (Policies and Procedures Branch), Steve Bennett (Minneapolis Field Office), Mike Johnson (Portland Field Office), and Dave Mundwiler (Toledo Field Office). The TEC determined the companies qualification based on their ability to demonstrate an understanding of responsibilities under United States Grain Standards Act and how work under the Act relates to and is driven by regulations; understanding and knowledge of GIPSA programs and services, and industry service requirements; personnel qualifications to meet GIPSA requirements; organizational structure; facilities and equipment plans; information technology plans; management and quality approach; relevant corporate or personnel experience providing inspection and weighing services; and documented quality of performance showing evidence of accurate and timely services; and customer satisfaction.

The TEC concluded that the three companies were qualified to provide official export services and recommended to the APHIS contracting office that each company be placed on GIPSA's Official Service Provider List.

California Agri Inspection Company, Ltd. qualified to provide services at export port locations in California. Champaign-Danville Grain Inspection Departments, Inc. and Eastern Iowa Grain Inspection and Weighing Service, Inc. both qualified to provide services at the export port location in Milwaukee.

A Statement of Work that will be used to solicit interested parties with whom GIPSA can contract to provide export inspection services for the Toledo Field Office circuit and the Corpus Christi area is now under review. Once the review is finished, we will post the contract information on the Federal Business Opportunity website (www.fbo.gov) to notify the public of our intent to contract for grain inspection and weighing services. Fifteen days after posting the synopsis, we will post the RFP seeking interested contractors. Interested parties will have 30 days to respond to the RFP.

PEARS Changes

MRP Business Services is integrating the on-line job application system, PEARS, with the Office of Personnel Management's USAJOBS web site to make it easier and more efficient for job applicants to maintain and manage their on-line applications. **The following changes are effective for announcements issued June 5, 2006, and later.**

▲ Job applicants must register with USAJOBS to apply for vacancies. Their PEARS log-in and profile will no longer be active. Go to www.usajobs.gov to register.

▲ The PEARS email announcement notification system will no longer be active. To continue to receive e-mail notification of new job postings, job applicants must register through the e-mail notification service offered through USAJOBS.

▲ Supporting documentation, e.g., DD-214, transcripts, SF-50B forms, can be faxed and stored within the system. Documents must be faxed to the number listed on the announcement. These documents will be attached to the applicant's profile within the system. Once attached to their profile, these documents will automatically be submitted, along with their resume, for each vacancy to which an applicant applies. Only clear and legible supporting documents can be faxed.

Continued, see PEARS on page 6.

Regulatory Info

Tess Butler, Washington, DC

Federal Register Publications

- Official Wet Gluen Determination for Hard Red Winter and Hard Red Spring Wheat – Published April 28, 2006
- Amendment to Certification of Minnesota’s Central Filing System – Published May 1, 2006
- Advisory Committee Meeting – Published May 1, 2006
- Opportunity to Comment on the Applicants for the Texas Area – Published May 12, 2006
- United States Standards for Feed Peas – Published May 12, 2006

Issuances

Terri Henry, Washington, D.C.

New Issuances

- FGIS Program Notice 06-03, “NIRT Wet Gluten Program” dated April 24, 2006.
- FGIS Program Notice 06-04, “Ethylene Dibromide Residue Testing for Grain” dated May 1, 2006.
- FGIS Program Directive 9180.61, “Official Calibrations for the Dickeyjohn GAC 2100 Moisture Meter” dated May 1, 2006.
- FGIS Program Notice 06-05, “Sample Collection Responsibilities for Verifying the Accuracy of Moisture Meter Calibrations Crop Year 2006” dated May 15, 2006.
- GIPSA Directive 4315-1 “Training Policy for Supervisors, Managers, and Executives” dated May 19, 2006
- Deleted - FGIS Policy Memorandums – Policy #198 Additional Qualified Laboratories

Please call me at (202) 205-8281, fax to (202) 690-2755, or e-mail to Terri.L.Henry@usda.gov if you have concerns or suggestions.

Travel Bits & Pieces

Peggy Smith, Washington, DC

Paying for Choice Seats. Northwest and Midwest Airlines are now charging \$15 for aisle and exit row seats. If you select one of these seats, please remember that GIPSA will not reimburse you for the \$15 fee.

GIPSA Offers Wet Gluten Testing for Wheat

FGIS is now providing official determination of wet gluten content for Hard Red Winter (HRW) wheat and Hard Red Spring (HRS) wheat using a protein-based calibration on official near-infrared transmittance (NIRT) instruments.

Buyers of U.S. wheat often ask for analysis of functional characteristics of the commodity being purchased. This new service will provide the market with important data on wheat gluten functionality.

Gluten, the primary functional protein in wheat, is responsible for the unique ability of milled wheat to produce bread, pasta, and noodle products.

GIPSA will provide wet gluten content determination as official criteria under the authority of the United States Grain Standards Act, as amended.

Help is within reach.

For confidential assistance,
call your Employee
Assistance Program

Washington, DC personnel, call...
301-570-3900
or 1-800-222-0364

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

Ethylene Dibromide Testing Service To Be Discontinued

Marianne Plaus, Washington, DC

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency banned the use of ethylene dibromide (EDB) as a grain fumigant in 1984. After the ban, GIPSA began offering EDB analysis at our Technical Center in Kansas City, Missouri, as a service to the grain industry. Since 1994, GIPSA has not detected EDB in any of the samples that were officially tested. Today, the cost of maintaining the service exceeds revenue generated from infrequent service requests. To improve program efficiencies, GIPSA will discontinue our EDB testing service effective July 1, 2006.

Before making this decision, GIPSA reviewed the Agency's EDB testing data and sought feedback from industry representatives. Our data indicates that a limited number of customers in a few countries (i.e., Taiwan, South Korea, and Mexico) occasionally request the official EDB testing service. Our contacts in the export community indicate that their customers in these countries would be satisfied if testing were provided by independent laboratories. Most of our contacts did, however, request that we provide ample notification of our decision to the U.S. market and international buyers.

GIPSA has sent written notification of its decision to the major grain associations, including the North American Export Grain Association, U.S. Wheat Associates, the U.S. Soybean Export Council, and the U.S. Grains Council. **Ed Durgin**, Office of International Affairs, who is currently on detail in Asia, has also notified his Asian contacts of the EDB service termination.

To facilitate marketing of U.S. grain, GIPSA is also prepared to provide the following letterhead statement:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) banned ethylene dibromide (EDB) for use as a grain fumigant in 1984 in the United States. Since 1994, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) has performed, at the request of the applicant for service, 1,228 tests for the presence/concentration of EDB in export cargoes of grain. To date, GIPSA has not detected EDB in any of the samples that were officially tested.

Questions about GIPSA's termination of its EDB testing service, should be directed to **Steve Tanner**, Director, Technical Services Division, at (816) 891-0401.

PEARS, *from page 4.*

Original documents with light or faded print and/or dark or patterned backgrounds will not be legible in the on-line system. Illegible faxed documents cannot be used for qualification or verification purposes. Resubmission of supporting documentation is only necessary if either 1) the information requires updating or 2) if the original documentation is illegible. Please carefully read the application instructions on vacancy announcements opening on or after June 5, 2006. The announcements will contain detailed instructions on how to submit supporting documentation.

▲ All application materials *and supporting documentation* must be **received** by midnight Eastern Time on the closing date of the announcement. There will no longer be a 48-hour post-announcement closure timeframe through which to submit supporting documentation.

▲ Application status for positions applied to after June 5, 2006, will be available through USAJOBS.

▲ Application status for positions applied to prior to June 5, 2006, will be available through the PEARS at the following web site: <https://jobs.quickhire.com/scripts/aphis.exe>.

▲ Additional information regarding this integration can be found at web site: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/job_opps/job_opps_faqs_usajobs.html.

As of June 2, the information applicants stored in the PEARS system became unavailable.

Agricultural Commodities Certification Association

Marianne Plaus, Washington, DC

The Agricultural Commodities Certification Association's (ACCA) annual meeting was held in Denver, Colorado, on April 17-21, 2006. The ACCA was created in 2000 by employees of our sister Agency, the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), and GIPSA's **John Sharpe**, Compliance Division, to provide a means of sharing information about certification and grading activities.

At this year's meeting, ACCA members from around the country gathered to learn about and discuss a variety of topics related to this year's theme, "Public-Private Partnerships: The Voice of the Customer." Supply chain partnerships, product tracking, the relationship between the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture and the USDA, audit and accreditation programs, and recruitment and outreach using public-private

partnerships were just some of the topics of learning/discussion. Participants also had the opportunity to tour Morning Fresh Farms, a shell egg processing plant. GIPSA attendees included **Byron Reilly**, Office of International Affairs; **Beth Hayden**, Office of the Director/Field Management Division; and **Eric Jabs**, **Becca Riese**.

The Association's main objectives center on improvement and excellence in customer service through

the official system's **Tom Dahl**, Manager of Sioux City Inspection and Weighing Service Company and President of the American Association of Grain Inspection and Weighing Agencies, who spoke about the changing nature of grain inspection. Membership is open to all AMS and GIPSA employees as well as to other Federal and State Government employees in similar lines of work. Members who attended this year's meeting included representatives of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, the Department of Commerce's National Marine Fisheries, and the Georgia and Florida Departments of Agriculture.

Since the association was founded in 2000,

ACCA has had great conferences in San Antonio, Memphis, Chicago, Raleigh, and New Orleans. Next year's meeting will be in Omaha, Nebraska, and, in 2008, we'll gather in Boston, Massachusetts.

As a side note, I encourage my GIPSA and official system colleagues to get involved in ACCA. I have always found the annual meetings to be great opportunities to learn — not just from the presentations but from talking with other members. The network of contacts I have built has helped me in my day-to-day job. On that note, I am honored and excited about being the coming year's Vice-President for Administration and the 2008 President. I hope to see you in Omaha and Boston.

For more information about the Agricultural Commodities Certification Association (ACCA), visit www.agcca.org.

professional development and improvement of the individual. The annual ACCA conference provides members an opportunity to come together in a relaxed environment and exchange new ideas, discuss hurdles to project development and program delivery, and share success stories and solutions. As an added enhancement, the Association also invites exceptional speakers to present insights on many of the high-profile subjects that are challenging government and industry today. This year's luncheon speaker was **Don Ament**, Commissioner of the Colorado Department of Agriculture, who offered his frank impression of changes occurring in Colorado agriculture. We also had the pleasure of hearing from

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

For Your Health

Mavis Rogers, Washington, DC

We all want to improve our health and diet these days. But not all of us have the stamina to keep to the strict diets that many doctors and dieticians tell us are necessary. But a few well-placed changes can make a big difference to your health and not all of them are that difficult to achieve. In fact following just a few good healthy eating tips can get us well on the way.

One of the healthy eating tips that many doctors recommend is to cut down on your intake of saturated fat. These are in many fried and mass produced foods and a little time spent reading labels, will let us make this change without too much difficulty.

One of the more popular healthy eating tips at the moment is to drink more water. Many dieticians seem to recommend this as a good way to improve your health and well being. This is a very simple step and is also a very easily accessible way to give you head starts to improving your health.

Eating more fiber has long been a standard piece of advice for anyone seeking to improve their health and many dieticians and doctors seem to go along with this, as being one of the more useful healthy eating tips. The higher intake of fiber is sometimes associated with better digestion also thought to help with weight loss.

Reducing the amount of salt and sugar in your diet is one of the healthy eating tips that we can all follow without any great inconvenience. And yet, many health professionals think that this is one of the most beneficial changes that you can make to your diet.

Along with all the things, fat, salt and sugar that you can remove from your diet; there are some additions that most professionals recommend. Many doctors and dieticians think that to increase the level of fresh fruit, vegetables and whole grains in the diet is one of the best healthy eating tips around.

Many people who do not worry too much about their health, or read all the latest diet books can benefit greatly from a few good healthy eating tips. The changes, if they stick to them, although not difficult to follow, can make a great deal of difference to some peoples' health. With benefits being derived from only a relatively small inconvenience, it can be a lot easier to follow than many of the healthy eating plans that are so popular. As with all the changes that can affect your health, it is best to consult your doctor when making any changes to your diet.

Courtesy: www.healthyeatingarticles.com.

Official Designation Activities

GIPSA announced the following actions on designations to officially inspect in Texas.

GIPSA is requesting comments on applicants to provide official services in the Texas geographic area. Enid Grain Inspection Co., Inc. (Enid) applied for designation to provide official services in Clay, Montague, Cooke, and Grayson Counties, Texas. Intercontinental Grain Inspections Inc. (Intercontinental) applied for designation in Clay, Montague, Cooke, Grayson, Fannin, Lamar, Red River, Young, Stephen, and Eastland Counties, Texas.

Comments are due by June 12, 2006.

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 June 25, 2006!

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