



# GIPSA News

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

*August 2003*

## **P&SP Produces Leading References on Livestock and Meat Industry**

*Larry Haller and Roger Schneider, Washington, DC*

In addition to enforcing the Packers and Stockyards Act, P&SP releases two widely used references on the livestock and meat industry. These annual publications, the *Packers and Stockyards Statistical Report* and the *Assessment of the Cattle and Hog Industries*, are many people's primary contact with GIPSA and are unique sources of information on the industry.

GIPSA's Economic and Statistical Support staff has primary responsibility for both reports; other units in P&SP contribute extensively to preparation of the *Assessment of the Cattle and Hog Industries*. Each report conveys information about the industries that GIPSA regulates under the P&S Act.

The *Statistical Report* presents a comprehensive snapshot of the regulated industries primarily through tables and statistics, while the *Assessment* contains extensive discussion in addition to summary tables. Both reports include national and State-level information about the in-

dustry that is not available from any other source, such as information on the number and size of firms of different types, methods used for transfer of livestock, and changes in business practices.

The *Statistical Report* was first published in 1963 as an annual volume of the *Packers and Stockyards Resumé*, a monthly P&SP publication that detailed recent administrative, reparation, and court actions undertaken by Packers and Stockyards division, which was then a part of the Agricultural Marketing Service. The original statistical issue of the *Resumé* was 8 pages long and included 7 tables.

The content of the original issue reveals that some "current topics" actually have long histories. For example, the original issue included information on packer feeding, and indicates that packers fed about 7 percent of slaughter cattle in 1963, not much different than the percentage today.

The *Statistical Report*, still called

the *Resumé*, became a stand-alone report in 1984. The 1984 report covered 2 reporting years and included 41 tables.

The *Statistical Report* has been improved and enhanced over the years to provide more information on emerging topics of interest. For example, tables containing concentration ratios, packer financial performance and the degree of packer specialization have been added, along with additional information on the number of other types of firms (e.g., market agencies and livestock dealers) that are subject to the P&S Act.

The latest *Statistical Report*, currently in review, contains 44 tables, including a new one that shows the four largest steer and heifer packers' use of packer feeding and other captive supplies by month.

*Continued, see References on page 3.*

# Names in the News

## FAREWELL

**Dan Van Ackeren**, director, Field Operations, Washington, DC, retired after 30 years of service.

**Bobby Smith**, marketing specialist, Office of Policy/Litigation Support, Washington, DC, retired after 46 years of service.

## CONDOLENCES

**Edwin Matchey**, owner and chief inspector, Lewiston Grain Inspection Agency, passed away on July 6. Memorial contributions may be made to: Jamestown Hospital, 419 Fifth St. NE, Jamestown, ND 58401 or the American Cancer Society in care of Darlene Kidder, 2130 Sunset Drive, Lewiston.

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## AWARDS

**Gary Erskine**, League City, received a time off award for rapid response in identifying Canadian Thistle in the field office.

**John Giler**, chief, Policies and Procedures Branch, and **Marianne Plaus**, chief, Market Analysis and Standards Branch, Field Management Division, received time-off awards for providing exceptional support and devoting considerable time and effort in preparing the Field Management Division's FY 2005 budget.

**Ana Trujillo**, League City, received a time off award for high quality service to the field office's employees.

**Danny Whitten**, League City, received a time off award for developing a unique procedure for maintaining the records for monitoring gas reading in fumigated flour.

## 30-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Dan Van Ackeren, Washington, DC  
Barbara Fielder, Washington, DC

## 20-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS

Jay Johnson, Des Moines  
Terry Taylor, Des Moines

# Jeannene Henehan in Leave Donor Program

Jeannene Henehan, Field Management Division, Office of the Director, has been accepted into the Leave Donor Program. If you would like to donate leave to Jeannene, please complete Form AD-1043 (available from your timekeeper) and forward it to Tameka Gillis, MRP-BS, Human Resources Operation, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Room 1714-S, Washington, D.C. 20250, or fax it to (202) 690-0866. Any donations are greatly appreciated.

## Travel Bits & Pieces

*Peggy Smith, Washington, DC*

**Airline Code Share Partners.** Many airlines now have code share partners, which means that if you make reservations with US Airways, for example, it's possible that you could actually be booked on one of US Airways code share partners which are Allegheny Airlines, United, and US Airways Express. Please read your itinerary carefully. If it states "Operated By" a certain airline, you must check in with the "Operated By" airline, **not** the airline with which you made the reservations.

# Di Giovanni Helps Presidential Classroom Scholars

*Pam Lake, Atlanta*

**Bart Di Giovanni**, Atlanta, took part in the Presidential Classroom Scholars Program in Washington, DC, from June 7-14.

The Presidential Classroom is a non-profit, non-partisan education organization in its 35<sup>th</sup> year.

Selected from a competitive pool of hundreds of applicants, **Bart** joined 17 additional volunteers to prepare more than 350 high school juniors and seniors for responsible citizenship. Sessions led by top government, media, and business officials focused on a framework of Federal government, Washington culture, and democracy. Volunteer instructors also facilitated small group discussions on current topics, including criminal justice, electoral reforms, and the role of the media in the political process.

The week also featured seminars by the Green Party 2002 presidential candidate **Ralph Nader**, Texas Congressman **Gene Green**, and Fox News Washington bureau chief **Kim Hume**. Highlights of the week included appointments with members of Congress, a mock presidential election, and a performance by the political satire group, the Capitol Steps.

"Participating in the Presidential Classroom was a unique and special experience," **Bart** said. "Along with another volunteer instructor, I had 38 students in my assigned 'Caucus.' These students were from high schools located throughout the United States (plus one student from Honduras). The schedule was very challenging and demanding but the rewards were great. Students learned that current issues are more than just "sound bites." It was rewarding to facilitate "caucus meetings" and "crossfire discussions" where issues were discussed in depth, exploring the multi-faceted sides of an issue. Students also learned to respect opinions that differed from their own."

**Bart** also had an opportunity to discuss career goals with many students and provided brochures about Packers & Stockyards Programs to those interested in Federal employment.

"I came away with a great feeling that many of our young people want to make positive contributions," **Bart** concluded. "They have wonderful ideas, goals, and dreams."

## References, from page 1.

The format of the report has also improved, with the original small pamphlet publication evolving into a full-size document that is prepared according to Government Printing Office standards.

The *Assessment of the Cattle and Hog Industries* is of more recent vintage. Following a mandate from Congress, GIPSA began publishing the *Assessment* report in 2001.

The first *Assessment*, for calendar year 2000, described changing business practices in the cattle and hog industries, and identified practices that appear to raise concerns under the P&S Act. The 2001 *Assessment* report added an overview of livestock and meat production in the United States, the importance of these industries in the U.S. economy, and changes in meat and poultry consumption over time. The 2002 *Assessment* report, currently in review, will include new sections on the sheep and lamb and poultry industries, and identify business practices that appear to raise concerns in these industries.

GIPSA prints 5,000 copies of the *Assessment* report and 1,200 copies of the *Statistical Report* each year. In addition, the reports are available on GIPSA's web site, from which they are often downloaded in whole or in part. Both the *Statistical Report* and the *Assessment* report are widely used by policy makers, Congressional staffs, other government agencies, trade associations, the press, industry members, and academics. The *Statistical Report* is often used for research as a data source. The *Assessment* report has been used as a classroom resource in college courses.

# Mexico: Our Customer on the “Other End”

*Chuck Britton, Sacramento*

I spent the past 3 months with the Office of International Affairs on assignment to Mexico. Much to my surprise, I learned very early that Mexico is currently the #1 importer of grains from the United States. Since the implementation of NAFTA in 1992, Mexico has become a most important trading partner.

Currently, grain is exported to Mexico by ocean vessel and rail. Shipments by vessel arrive at four major importing elevators. However, the majority of grain is shipped by rail in unit /shuttle trains (108 to 110 cars), or individual shipments of 20 cars or fewer. Mexico has been steadily increasing its imports of grain by rail at about 10 percent a year for the past 3 years, and according to different sources, expectations are that this rate should continue into

the foreseeable future as the infrastructure for railroad and receiving elevators continues to modernize. The receiving area located at the Nuevo Laredo border crossing has the infrastructure in place for handling over 600 railcars at any given time, and is still undergoing further expansion.

In just the last 3 years at least three new receiving elevators have been built in strategic regions to receive grain by shuttle train. One facility located in De los Lagos, (central Mexico), and owned by a private Mexican company, PROAN, has a storage capacity of 70,000 tons. This

terminal elevator can unload a 110 train in 24 hours and is considered a “transfer” operation in which the grain is loaded from railcars directly into trucks and sent local mills or processors, including some facilities that are over 150 miles away. This facility currently receives corn, sorghum, soybeans, and wheat and used by different receivers including Cargill, ADM, and private Mexican companies.



The PROAN feed mill located 6 miles from the transfer elevator currently uses over 2,000 tons per day. Another receiver, BACHOCCO, which is the largest “pollo” or chicken producer in Mexico, is currently importing over 150,000 tons per month of feed grain (mostly sorghum and corn) to 15 different mills located in different regions of Mexico.

The majority of my activities focused on the feed grain importers and receivers. However, Mexico’s imports of soybeans, wheat, rice, and edible beans are also expected to increase in the future. FGIS plays a

vital role in these shipments to Mexico. These receivers are very quality conscious, and every facility I visited has impressive end use measurement systems in place. The main concern for feed grain receivers are mycotoxins, and each laboratory performs extensive testing including: aflatoxin, DON, fumonism, T-2, etc. Other end-use tests performed include total digestive nutrients (TDN), protein, ash, fiber, toffa, etc.

One objective of this assignment was to evaluate the QA/QC programs for the different receivers in Mexico. FGIS has an ongoing program in place with different cooperators including the U.S. Grains Council, American Soybean Association, and U.S. Wheat Associates to educate and help the different customers develop inspection methods and procedures to measure the quality of inbound shipments in accordance with FGIS standards. The majority of people that I met with and interviewed trust that the origin inspections in the United States will facilitate their quality expectations. The major concerns relating to quality are mycotoxin and infestation. FGIS services for testing of mycotoxin and fumigation witnessing at origin could possibly expand in the future.

*Continued, see Mexico on page 5.*

**Mexico**, from page 4.

Carl Jackson  
Mycotoxin/Protein Coordinator  
FGIS Destrehan Office

Dear Carl,

Just wanted to send you a quick thank you note. I appreciated the time you took to meet with our Japanese group that visited your office. You did an excellent job of answering their questions on aflatoxin testing and StarLink testing. Also thanks for taking the time to go through and demonstrate the StarLink testing procedures. All of this helps us keep the flow of U.S. corn exports to Japan moving as smoothly as possible.

I look forward to seeing you again the next time we bring a group of Japanese to the New Orleans area.

Best regards,

Cary Sifferath  
Japan Director  
U.S. Grains Council



*Carl Jackson, New Orleans, shows Japanese trade team  
FGIS testing procedures.*

Taking part in this assignment, and having the opportunity to meet and spend time with receivers at the “other end” helped me realize again the importance and value of “official inspection” to our customers. It also reinforced the importance of uniform and a standardized application of procedures and standards, regardless of where the origin inspection is performed. I came away proud of being part of a “neutral third party” organization that sets the standard for maintaining quality and measuring of grain.

Another important part of this assignment was visiting the different crossings along the U.S.-Mexico border. I met with officials of Mexico's Department of Agriculture, SAGARPA, and the agency responsible for food safety, SENASICA. USDA, and especially FGIS and APHIS, are working cooperatively with SAGARPA to further facilitate shipments of grain from the U.S. SENASICA is currently seeking our help in modeling FGIS sampling and inspection methods. Accurate documentation for phytosanitary certificates along with quality certificates, fumigation information, etc., is crucial for the shuttle trains and shipments to flow to final destination without delay.

It is so important that everyone involved in the “official” inspection process remember who our customers, domestic and foreign, are and that they expect and count on us to deliver uniform and consistent quality information. As Mexico continues to emerge and advance as a major buyer of U.S grain, FGIS plays the key role of assuring all customers at the “other end” the quality they expect and deserve.

## Issuances

*Fred Kelley, Washington, D.C.*

### New Issuances

- MRP Directive 1620.1, "Changes To Space And Lease Of Field Offices And Facilities," dated June 18, 2003 (Distribution: AMS, APHIS, GIPSA).
- MRP Directive 4351.1, "Reduction In Force," Issuance Change No. 1 (Page Changes), dated May 29, 2003 (Distribution: AMS, APHIS, GIPSA).
- FGIS Directive 9180.61, "Official Calibrations For The Dickey-John GAC 2100 Moisture Meter," dated July 1, 2003 (Distribution: A, C, E, F, G, U, V)
- FGIS Directive 9180.74, "Service Fees And Billing Codes," dated July 2, 2003. (Distribution: A, C, E, F, H, T, U)

### Cancellations

- FGIS Directive 1630.1, "Space Management Program," dated May 14, 1993
- FGIS Directive 9180.61, "Official Calibrations For The Dickey-John GAC 2100 Moisture Meter," dated July 1, 2002.
- FGIS Directive 9180.74, "Service Fees And Billing Codes," dated April 22, 2002.

Please call me at 202-720-0259, fax to 202-690-2755, or e-mail to [Fred.H.Kelley@usda.gov](mailto:Fred.H.Kelley@usda.gov) if you have any concerns or suggestions.

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## Regulatory Info

*Tess Butler, Washington, DC*

### Federal Register Publications

- United States Standards for Wheat - Published June 4, 2003
- Official Performance and Procedural Requirements for Grain Weighing Equipment and Related Grain Handling Systems - Published June 10, 2003
- Fees for Processed Commodity Analytical Services – Published July 18, 2003

## GIPSA Idea Hotline Update

*Norma Phelps,  
Washington, DC*



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

### *Suggestor/Suggestion*

Carol Carter, Denver, CO/  
Provide Web-Based Tutorial  
Training on XP Office Software

Keep those ideas coming in! Send your ideas to the GIPSA Idea Hotline via e-mail: [gipsa-ideas@gipsadc.usda.gov](mailto:gipsa-ideas@gipsadc.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**

## 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

## You and Your Career

*Rosemary Mayne,  
Training Officer*

Whether you are thinking of changing jobs, retiring and charting a new career course, or learning more about yourself to identify training needs for your current career, tools are available to help you. Check these out.

Assessments help you be more self-aware. Assessment tools help you identify your likes and dislikes, and strengths and weaknesses. At <http://www.careergames.com>, you can complete a FREE self-assessment tool to discover your "hidden talents," to identify conditions that best suit you, and to learn your people and relationship needs and skills. Another FREE self-assessment tool is available at <http://www.wetfeet.com>. Also on this site is information on managing your career, finding a job, resume writing, and interviewing.

Revised every 2 years, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics provides a great, timely, and FREE source for career information. The Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2002-3 Edition is available at <http://bls.gov>. The site states you will learn "what workers do on the job, working conditions, the training and education needed, earnings, and expected job prospects in a wide range of occupations."

Click on to these sites and take advantage of the free tools and information. Learn more about yourself and today's careers.

## Nancy Speer Rides Against All Odds

*Deborah Shipman, Washington, DC*

**Nancy Speer**, CPA auditor, Denver regional office, is an advocate for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. On July 12-13, 2003, Nancy participated in the 2003 Great-West Multiple Sclerosis (MS) 150 Bike Tour fund raiser event. It was her 4th year in riding in the MS event. **Nancy** enjoys the challenge of bicycling for a worthy cause. It helps raise money for people with MS.

According to **Nancy**, the tour started from Denver, ran through the Big Thompson Canyon, over Devil's Gulch in Rocky Mountain National Park, and back to Denver. The 2-day tour involved 150 miles of cycling in the Colorado Mountains. She also cycled in prior MS Bike Toberfest bicycle tours in Leadville, Colorado, at 10,430 feet. The bike ride covered 80 miles in 1 day.

**Nancy** mentioned she is a 9-year survivor of MS and has not had an attack since then. She is in good spirits. Her husband, a top fundraiser since 1994, the year she was diagnosed with MS, has inspired her greatly.

**Nancy** has noted that one in 108 people, or more than 6,300 in Colorado, have MS, and the numbers are increasing. The incurable disease strikes women more than men. Men seem to have the more progressive type of MS.

It is a misunderstood disease. Eighty percent of those with MS have an initial attack with no further complications. Many of them are active and functional citizens. **Nancy** overcame devastating obstacles and has proven life goes on.

**Nancy** concluded to say, "Climbing the mountain ended at the finish line for the cyclists, but those living with MS, climbing mountains on a daily basis never ends."

**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**



# LMIC TAC

*Larry Haller, Washington, DC*

The Livestock Marketing Information Center's (LMIC) annual Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met in June in Kansas City. The TAC, a group of extension economists from most major cattle and hog producing States, acts as a board of directors for the LMIC, and advises LMIC staff on function and data issues. GIPSA is an associate member of the LMIC and I am GIPSA's representative on the TAC Committee. NASS, APHIS, and ERS also attended. The TAC meeting included much discussion of the livestock industry, including Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) and BSE, and data issues.

I reported on recent P&SP news, including ASTM, implementation of the swine contract library, and the livestock and meat marketing study. COOL implementation was the hot topic at the TAC meeting, with most participants concerned that it would lead to severe marketing difficulties. **Joe Miller**, American Farm Bureau Foundation, expressed support for COOL, noting that packers and retailers were only liable for fines for "willful" violations of the COOL Act, not for violations where they mislabeled products based on incorrect information provided by their suppliers. Further, because livestock producers supply live animals, and not "covered commodities" (whole muscle cuts, etc.), they are not liable under the COOL Act for providing incorrect information.

**Ron Gustafson**, ERS, and **Jim Robb**, LMIC, presented information on a joint ERS/LMIC project for data storage and public access. Representatives from each of the member

States reported on conditions in their area and their current budget situation. Many thought the drought that affected their areas had broken and conditions are improving. All reported that their budgets continue to be cut on top of substantial cuts in previous years. University of Kentucky researchers reported that they have studied prices for Holstein steers sold for feeding, and found prices dropped significantly after Smithfield purchased the Packerland and Moyer packing companies. The meeting

included the presentation of several papers on traceability and its implications for livestock agriculture. Specific topics included an overview of livestock identification systems; the willingness of consumers to pay for traceability and other quality- and safety-related characteristics of meat; the potential benefits of traceability systems beyond consumer willingness to pay; and a discussion of food systems that have traceability and other "quality-enhancing" methods currently in use.

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## 2004 National Public Service Awards

The American Society for Public Administration and the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) established the National Public Service Awards (NPSA) to honor individuals who make outstanding contributions and whose accomplishments can be viewed as models of public service within and outside the work environment.

A distinguished committee will review nominations and present awards to as many as five individuals who have spent a significant portion of their careers as public service practitioners. NPSA winners will be those who have, on a sustained basis, done some or all of the following: made a profound difference in improving service to the public; been willing to take risks to achieve change; fostered a more democratic society; served as a champion of social equity; changed the way a governmental organization operates so that it better achieves its goals; achieved substantial savings in government operations; or developed a cadre of other government leaders.

NAPA's "Keeper of the Flame" Award, established in 2000, is a regular special award for "an individual who has continued to provide public service after their official retirement." Many individuals retire from their career positions and continue to serve the public in other volunteer or paid positions. Nominations for this award follow the timeline and other requirements of the National Public Service Awards. Up to two such awards can be presented.

All nominations must use a specified format (for full nomination submission requirements see NPSA's web site at [http://www.napawash.org/about\\_academy/about\\_npsa.html](http://www.napawash.org/about_academy/about_npsa.html)). Complete nomination packages must be received by October 17, 2003.

## For Your Health

*Mavis Rogers, Washington, DC*

**Protect Yourself from the Sun.** Keep in mind these tips to protect yourself from the sun's damaging rays, which are strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.:

- Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of at least 15.
- Reapply sunscreen every 2 hours when outdoors, even on cloudy days.
- Wear protective, tightly woven clothing, such as a long-sleeved shirt and pants.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses when outdoors.
- Stay in the shade whenever possible.
- Avoid reflective surfaces, which can reflect up to 85 percent of the sun's damaging rays.
- Protect children. Minimize sun exposure and apply sunscreen to children aged 6 months and older.
- No shadow...seek the shade! If your shadow is shorter than you are, you are likely to sunburn.
- Avoid tanning beds

*Courtesy American Academy of Dermatology, 2003*

**Cool, Cool Summer.** Although the warmer months are traditionally a time to relax, today's cram-it-all-in lifestyles can make them anything but. Here are some thought starters to help you refocus so that the hottest months can also be your coolest.

- **Rise and Shine on Time.** It is tempting to sleep in on summer days off, but doing so can actually disrupt your body clock and make you feel sluggish all day long. Work or play, try to rise at the same time each day, and schedule walks or other exercise during early morning hours before the temperature rises.
- **Let go of the Laptop.** More and more people check in to the office while on vacation. If you must keep on top of events at work while you are away, schedule set check-in periods so you can focus on fun the rest of the time.
- **Keep the Kids Happy.** On long car trips, crabby kids cannot only be a stressor but also a distraction to the driver that threatens everyone's safety. Plan ahead. Bring along travel games, music, snacks, and pillows for the back seat gang.
- **Never underestimate the power of water to help you feel energized.** Keep a filled bottle in the fridge at all times and take a bottle with you wherever you go. Dehydration can lead to fatigue.

*Courtesy Tophealth: The Health Promotion and Wellness Newsletter*

## Herculex Test Kit Verified

FGIS verified that the Strategic Diagnostics, Inc. Trait v™ Bt1F Corn Grain Test Kit #7000018 Qualitative Lateral Flow Strip Kit detects the presence of one kernel of Herculex™ corn in 600 kernels in 10 minutes (test strip development time).

This test was evaluated under GIPSA's Rapid Test Performance Evaluation Program.

FGIS' evaluation of this test will help the U.S. grain market make more informed decisions about the grain being bought and sold.

For information on GIPSA's Rapid Test Performance Evaluation Program and Proficiency Program, visit GIPSA's Biotechnology web page at <http://www.usda.gov/gipsa/biotech/biotech.htm>.

**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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**by August 25, 2003!**

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