



GIPSA News

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

October 2003

From the Administrator

Donna Reifschneider

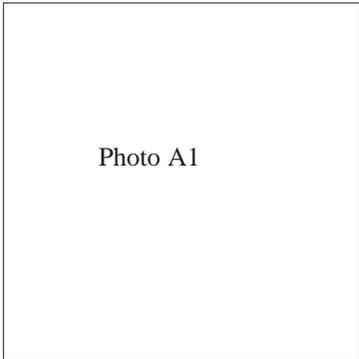


Photo A1

*Administrator
Donna Reifschneider*

GIPSA’s 2003 fiscal year is coming to a close. I want to thank all GIPSA employees for your hard work in a year of very tight dollars. After looking over our mid-year budget, we put out the call to tighten our belts to avoid ending our year well in the red and perhaps violating the Anti-Deficiency Act. Everyone responded, from field employees to the staff in my office. GIPSA worked as a family to secure a budget that stayed in the black. I noticed and appreciate your efforts.

During this difficult budget cycle, we have kept our priorities in place:

working on our mission to serve our industry; keeping employee jobs; and protecting the integrity of our system.

We also have been planning for the future. We are working on long-term solutions to our budget shortfall. Fee dockets are being pushed through clearance processes as quickly as possible. In the information technology area, we are refining our enterprise architecture, an integrated process that looks at how we work from bottom to top to identify ways we can put technology and business processes to work to make us more efficient and improve communication among ourselves, our customers, and others. We also are looking at putting e-government initiatives into place to make our interactions with our customers more user-friendly and productive.

We haven’t received our 2004 appropriation, and we expect to be under a continuing resolution as the new fiscal year starts. Dollars are going to continue to be tight. We still have work to do and an obligation to continue achieving our mission.

Bill Hawks, Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs,

often says that “working together works.” I certainly have found this to be true at GIPSA. Together we can accomplish our goals and implement plans for a solid future.

Thank you again for pulling together and for the high quality work that you continue to do each and every day.

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Names in the News

2004 Mandatory Civil Rights Training

Rosemary Mayne, Washington, DC

AWARDS

Jeffrey T. Lyons and **John W. Contos, Jr.**, Toledo Field Office, received time-off awards for their tireless efforts in loading the SARAH SPENCER on extended hours with short notice, and for maintaining a good attitude with an understanding for the need to provide service to their customers.

Four Complete USDA IT Planning Training Program

Gerald Bromley, Washington, DC

Congratulations to **Jill Ainsworth**, Atlanta; **Karen Guagliardo** and **Irene Omade**, Washington, DC; and **James Vanderwielen**, Des Moines, on their recent graduation from the USDA "Information Technology Capital Planning and Project Management Training Program." The program was held in Washington, DC, and included 5 weeks of training over a 5-month period. The training was designed to provide GIPSA with project managers to lead the integration of information technology (IT) into the agency's business processes.

This training included a module on the USDA Capital Planning and Investment Control (CPIC) process, and project management sessions on Project Initiation, Control Planning, Execution Planning and Project Execution. In the future, USDA and OMB will require fully approved CPIC for all major IT projects before they start. Major IT projects (over \$50 million) will soon be required by OMB to have a full-time, certified project manager directing them.

IT will play an ever increasing role in the Agency's future mission delivery. GIPSA is well along in the development of an Enterprise Architecture (EA), which will be the guide for developing and delivering all of our future IT support in the form of eGovernment (Web based IT).

James and **Karen** have been instrumental in the development of GIPSA's EA. They are now prepared to play project management roles in their respective program areas as the Agency moves toward providing our services through eGovernment. **Jill** and **Irene** will support **James** and **Karen** during the capital planning and investment control phase of each project.

Again, congratulations to this group of pioneers as they lead the Agency through the uncharted world of eGovernment.

Cultural diversity and sexual harassment are the topics for FY 2004 USDA-mandated Civil Rights training. The training booklets will be available on inGIPSA in the Training and Development section. If you do not have computer access, your office will supply you with a printed copy of the booklets.

The training is not interactive; they are booklets to be read from the screen. To make the exercises easier to complete for those working online, copies of the booklet's worksheets are available in your office (ask your Administrative Officer or Collateral Duty Training Officer). The first booklet is "Handling

Diversity in the Workplace" and is 103 pages in length and is posted on inGIPSA. The second booklet is "Stopping Sexual Harassment Before It Starts, Second Edition – Federal Government Version." I will send a notice when it is posted.

Certificates of completion for each course are available in your office or by email from GIPSA's training office. Certify that you completed your training and then follow the instructions on the bottom of the certificate. Each office may establish a completion date to ensure meeting the December 31, 2003, deadline for submitting all the certificates to the training office.

October 2003



*National
Disability
Employment
Awareness
Month*

Issuances

Fred Kelley, Washington, D.C.

New Issuances

- ❑ FGIS Directive 9180.17, "Inspection Of Export Wheat Lots for Canada Thistle Seed," Dated September 3, 2003 (Distribution: A, C, E).
- ❑ FGIS Directive 9180.61, "Official Calibrations For The Dickey-John GAC 2100 Moisture Meter," Dated September 1, 2003 (Distribution: A, C, E, F, G, U, V).
- ❑ FGIS Program Notice 03-03, "Walk-Through Safety Inspections At Grain Elevators," Dated September 5, 2003 (Distribution: A).
- ❑ FGIS Program Notice 03-04, "National Soybean Sample Collection Plan For The Pesticide Residue Program," Dated August 18, 2003 (Distribution: A, C).
- ❑ FGIS Program Notice 03-05, "Moisture Adjustment For Western Production Medium Grain Brown Rice," Dated September 1, 2003 (Distribution: A, C, F).
- ❑ FGIS Program Notice 03-06, "Issuance Retention Policy," Dated September 4, 2003 (Distribution: A, C).

Cancellations

- ❑ FGIS Directive 9180.17, "Inspection of Export Wheat Lots for Canada Thistle Seed," Dated January 24, 2003.
- ❑ FGIS Directive 9180.61, "Official Calibrations For The Dickey-John GAC 2100 Moisture Meter," Dated July 1, 2003.

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

Regulatory Info

Federal Register Publications

- ❑ Designation of Keokuk to Provide Class X or Class Y Weighing Services 09/02/03 Designation for the Minnesota Area, published 09/02/03.
- ❑ Designation for the Idaho (ID), Lewiston (ID), Ohio Valley (IN), and Utah Areas, published 09/02/03.
- ❑ Opportunity for Designation in the Champaign (IL), Detroit (MI), Eastern Iowa (IA), Enid (OK), Keokuk (IA), and Michigan (MI) Areas, and Request for Comments on the Official Agencies Serving These Areas, published 09/02/03.

Cyber Security

*Carol Remmers,
Washington, DC*

I would like to take this opportunity to remind all GIPSA employees of their responsibilities to protect GIPSA/USDA information assets. The recent "Baster" worm and its sneaky variants remind us that the threats are becoming more and more sophisticated.

The IT Staff has worked tirelessly to ensure all technological safeguards available have been put into place. These safeguards include updating and scanning anti-virus software, updating critical security patches, and running vulnerability scans.

However, all the technology in the world can do nothing to protect IT assets from human behavior. Users must know that their computers are part of a connected community that includes fellow GIPSA employees as well as all of USDA. Whatever one person does can affect everyone in the community.

So, to that end, I would like to again remind all GIPSA users:

- 1) **PLEASE** be cautious when opening e-mail. If it looks like spam or junk, delete it.

*Continued, see Security
on page 6.*

Diversity Sessions

Martha Schwartz, Technical Center

During September, Technical Services Division (TSD) employees received three separate sessions of diversity training presented by the staff of the Office of the Director. Presenters were **Michelle Bosley, Connie Murphy, Janine Goodson, Terri Liberty, and Marsha Schwartz**. The topics of the training were Respect in the Workplace, Diversity – Food for Thought, and The Diversity Advantage. Participants learned how to recognize biases and faulty assumptions that can lead to discrimination, effectively communicate and build/improve relationships with coworkers, and identify common ground between people with differences.

In addition to the training, TSD employees also celebrated their diversity with a potluck luncheon coordinated by **Valerie Collins, Patricia Jackson**, and the diversity training presenters. It was a smorgasbord of sights, smells, and tastes with recipes and décor from all parts of the world.

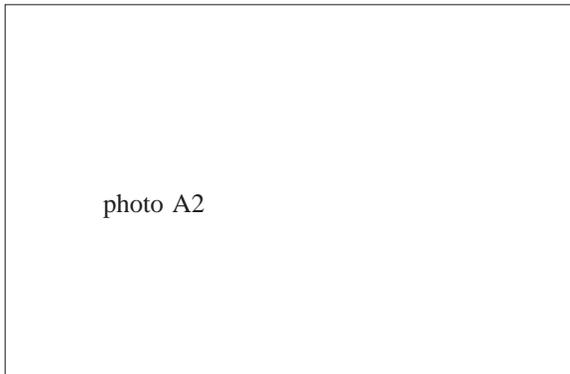


photo A2

Items on display during TSD's diversity luncheon.

Both the training and the luncheon provided avenues for people to acknowledge and embrace their differences, and to become better equipped to achieve the high level of respect and equality in the workplace that has always been a goal within GIPSA.

Employee Assistance Program

For confidential help, call:

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

Field personnel:
1-800-222-0364

GIPSA Idea Hotline Update

*Norma Phelps,
Washington, DC*



No suggestions were received during September.

Ideas Accepted and Approved for Implementation During September 2003

This list does not necessarily indicate that the idea was implemented as suggested or that it is currently in place (it could be in the development/implementation stage). To avoid the chance of misinterpretation, please call the Hotline if you have any concerns or questions regarding the following list of ideas.

- 👉 Amend AMA regulations to allow for reinspections of graded commodities.
- 👉 Add form to home page to notify customers when changes are made to regulations/handbooks.
- 👉 Update present cell phones or purchase a different service.

Keep those ideas coming in! Send your ideas to the GIPSA Idea Hotline via e-mail: gipsa-ideas@gipsadc.usda.gov; FAX to 202-720-1015; or phone 800-455-3447 or 202-720-1013. **Sending ideas via fax or e-mail reduces the possibility of transcription errors; ideas will be accepted regardless of the method you choose to use.**

For Your Health

Mavis Rogers, Washington, DC

October 5-11, 2003, is Fire Prevention Week. This year's campaign teaches two simple but life saving lessons: install smoke alarms and test them regularly, and develop and practice home fire drills. Because fire can grow and spread quickly, working smoke alarms in your home can mean the difference between life and death. Once the alarm sounds, you may have as few as two minutes to escape. Smoke alarms are the most effective early warning devices available. Having a smoke alarm in your home cuts your chance of dying in a fire nearly in half. You can reduce your risk even more by learning how to effectively use the smoke alarm's early warning to get out safely. Automatic home fire sprinklers reduce your dying in a home fire even more. Here are a few tips on installing and testing your smoke alarms.

Install your smoke alarms correctly

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, including the basement. Make sure there is an alarm in or near every sleeping area.
- Mount the smoke alarms high on walls or ceilings. Remember, smoke rises. Ceiling-mounted alarms should be installed at least 4 inches away from the nearest wall; wall-mounted alarms should be installed four to 12 inches away from the ceiling.
- If you have ceilings that are pitched, install the alarm near the ceiling's high point.
- Don't install smoke alarms near windows, doors, or ducts where drafts might interfere with their operation.
- Hard-wired smoke alarms operate on your household electrical current and can be interconnected so every alarm sounds regardless of the fire's location. This gives occupants extra time to escape if they are in one part of the home and a fire breaks out in another part. Alarms that are hard-wired should have battery backups in case of a power outage, and should be installed by a qualified electrician.
- Don't paint your smoke alarms. Paint, stickers or other decorations could keep them from working properly.

Keep your smoke alarms working properly

- Test your smoke alarms at least once a month, following the manufacturer's instructions.
- Replace the batteries in your smoke alarm once a year, or as soon as the alarm "chirps," warning that the battery is low. HINT: schedule battery replacements for the same day you change your clock from daylight to standard time in the fall.
- Never borrow a battery from a smoke alarm. Smoke alarms can't warn you of fire if their batteries are missing or have been disconnected.
- Don't disable smoke alarms even temporarily. You may forget to replace the battery. If your smoke alarm is sounding "nuisance alarms," it may need dusting or vacuuming. If that doesn't work, try relocating it further away from kitchen, bathrooms, where cooking fumes and steam can cause the alarm to sound.
- Regularly vacuuming or dusting your smoke alarms following manufacturer's instructions can help keep it working properly.
- Smoke alarms don't last forever. Replace your smoke alarms once every 10 years. Make sure that everyone in your home can identify and awaken to the sound of the alarm.
- Plan regular fire drills (twice a year is best) to ensure that everyone knows what to do when the smoke alarm sounds. Hold a drill at night to make sure sleeping family members awaken at the sound of the alarm.
- If you are building a new home or remodeling your existing home, consider installing an automatic home fire sprinkler system. Sprinklers and smoke alarms together cut your risk of dying in a home fire 82 percent relative to having neither— a savings of thousands of lives a year.
- Read National Fire Protection Association smoke alarm fact sheet.

Courtesy National Fire Prevention Week, web site www.firepreventionweek.org. 2003 NFPA.

25th Annual BIG Training Conference

Myron Simmons, Denver

- 2) **ONLY GIPSA-issued computers may be connected to the GIPSA network at any time.** Failure to do so can introduce malicious programs into the USDA/GIPSA community that can destroy data or invite hackers. Disciplinary action can be taken in these circumstances. And, according to Barry Wasser, USDA Office of Cyber Security, that “any device connected to a government network automatically becomes property of the government” and “any such device can be confiscated by the Office of the Inspector General.”
- 3) All GIPSA PCs not regularly used should log into the GIPSA network at least once a week to receive software updates. This is the only way to insure all GIPSA PCs are protected with the most current virus signatures and software patches.

A complete listing of GIPSA security policies, as well as links to USDA and Federal policies can be found in the Information Systems Security section of inGIPSA.

As the threats become more and more serious so must our reaction and each of us must do all we can to protect GIPSA information assets.

During August 25-29, 2003, I attended the Blacks in Government (BIG) 25th Annual Training Conference in Denver, CO. It was my first time attending a BIG conference, and it was a rewarding experience. It gave me insight into how big an impact Blacks (African Americans) are making in the U.S. Federal government, and how Blacks in government are making a difference in communities through its after school programs.

On opening day, we were welcomed by energizing speakers. BIG president **Gregory Reeves**, set the tone of the conference with an opening speech entitled “Achieving Excellence through Professional Development.” Colorado Governor **Bill Owens** and Denver Mayor **Hickenlooper** also gave welcoming speeches. The most impressive speaker that day was **Dr. Erylene Piper Mandy**. She gave an uplifting and motivating presentation on how Federal employees can take a more active role in educating kids in our communities. She challenged us to get involved with different youth and after school programs. She talked about how we could make a difference in someone’s life.

After the first day, I realized how fortunate I am to be a Federal employee. I am proud to know that my job as a legal instruments examiner with GIPSA is a position that serves the public. We, the people employed by the Federal government, should feel a sense of pride in knowing that we are making an impact, no matter how big or small, on someone’s everyday life.

During the days following the conference, we were invited to attend a variety of workshops. Although you may have attended similar workshops and presentations in the past, you came away with something new from these presenters who were well informed and extremely prepared. My favorite workshop was “Marketing Your Skills,” by **Frank Davis**. **Mr. Davis** worked his way up from the lowest level in the Federal government and retired at the highest level. He is regarded as an expert in career counseling and job placement. **Mr. Davis’** tenure with the Federal government reassured me that we can move up the ranks with hard work and determination.

This was truly a great gathering with a group of friendly people. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to attend this year’s annual BIG Conference.

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

GIPSA Strengthens Ties with Turkey

Byron Reilly and Deborah Shipman, Washington, DC

On January 3, 2003, Turkey implemented new import regulations without prior notification to the World Trade Organization, imposing a 1.0 percent limit for the cumulative presence of nine different types of Fusaria mold on corn, barley, oats, rye, wheat, and triticale. The new regulations effectively closed Turkey's market to U.S. grain exports. Turkey imports about 80 percent of its grain from the United States. U.S. corn exports alone were valued at over \$70 million dollars a year.

GIPSA has been instrumental in keeping U.S. grain exports flowing to Turkey. On February 3, 2003, **Byron Reilly**, Office of International Affairs, and two APHIS representatives traveled to Ankara, Turkey, to hold technical discussions with officials and scientists from Turkey's Ministry of Agriculture, Plant Protection and Control to convince them to suspend implementation of new quarantine regulations. **Byron** addressed the regulations related to U.S. grain exports.

After the meetings, Turkey agreed to suspend implementation of the new regulations, pending further scientific review of the material presented by the U.S. delegation.

On July 7, 2003, Turkey implemented new regulations which removed the Fusaria tolerance and testing requirements on grain imports. There were still minor quarantine issues that remained for APHIS to address during future discussions. On September 14, 2003, the Foreign

Agricultural Service (FAS) sponsored a visit to the United States for a team of five Turkish scientists and regulators. The team held technical discussions with APHIS to address the remaining phytosanitary issues and their role in biotechnology. The scientists and regulators also met with the Food and Drug Administration's authorities to discuss their role in biotechnology and mycotoxin testing methodologies.

The North American Export Grain Association (NAEGA) sponsored a dinner reception in honor of the Turkish delegation. Several members of NAEGA and the U.S. Grains Council attended. The delegation was delighted with the hospitality shown by the U.S. grain industry.

Byron traveled with the technical team at FAS expense as they traveled to GIPSA's Technical Center in Kansas City to discuss mycotoxin and biotech test kits, reference meth-

ods, grain grading, and other topics. The team then traveled to New Orleans where **Jim Brown**, quality assurance specialist, New Orleans, gave an excellent presentation on GIPSA's export inspection procedures. **Carl Jackson**, New Orleans, demonstrated aflatoxin test kits. The team also visited the Bunge elevator to observe GIPSA's inspectors grading a ship, and saw Bunge's new barge unloading facility. They finished the day by visiting Cargill's K-2 floating rig in Convent, LA.

By the end of the trip, the Turkish officials had a better understanding of the national inspection system and GIPSA's quality control programs, which they found quite sophisticated and impressive. Overall, the Turkish delegation gained confidence in the accuracy of our export inspection certificates. And, delegation members formed new personal relationships and strengthened ties with GIPSA, FAS, and APHIS.

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:

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by October 25, 2003!

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR
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Photo A1



Photo A2