



# GIPSA News

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

October 2006

## USDA Honors GIPSA Employees

*Jim Link*

On October 20, Secretary Mike Johanns will present USDA Honor Awards to individuals, teams, and group leaders for their exceptional achievements. The non-monetary awards recognize outstanding contributions to agriculture, to consumers of agricultural products, and to the ability of USDA to serve rural America. They are the most significant awards that the Department gives. I am delighted and honored to congratulate GIPSA's 2006 USDA Honor Award recipients:

◆ **VERNETT KNIGHT**

◆ **GIPSA HURRICANE**

**RESPONSE TEAM** (Shirley

Albert, Carl Beckwith, Pamela Bourque, Charles Brown, Shelton Buckley, Carla Cambra, Danyne Cameron, Robert Campbell, Milton Clayton, Randy Cooks, Lee Cooper, Robert Daniel, Deborah Edwards, Sabri Gerguis, Adel Ibrahim, Pat LaCour, Regina Landry, Glenda Lasseigne, Raymond Lavine, Yohanna Lorio, Wayne Melvin, Kerry Petit, Angela Roper, Merle Russelburg, John Shropshire; Ana

Trujillo, Bernadine Turley, Josh Watson; Graig Watts, J.C. Wooley)

**Vernett Knight**, New Orleans, is recognized for enhancing economic opportunities for agricultural producers by facilitating international trade and making outstanding contributions to American agriculture by helping to re-establish grain trade with Iraq. **Vernett's** work was integral to regaining the nearly \$1 billion annual grain market that the United States lost after the 1991 war with Iraq.

Between March 2005 and June 2006, Vernett traveled to U.S. ports to **witness** the loading of U.S. wheat cargoes destined for Iraq. He developed loading protocols to maintain the integrity of cargoes during shipment in response to Iraqi concerns. He then met the ships carrying these cargoes on arrival at a Syrian port to witness the sampling procedures conducted by authorities from the Grain Board of Iraq.

**Vernett** made two trips to Syria and Iraq to witness sampling and inspection activities related to United States wheat shipments. During his second trip to Iraq, his convoy was

fired upon by enemy insurgents, and his future travels to Iraq were curtailed. However, he traveled to Syria on five more occasions to witness sampling activities on additional shipments of U.S. wheat. In all of these instances, Grain Board of Iraq authorities cleared arriving wheat cargoes due to **Vernett's** superb work and ability to develop close working relationships with Iraqi officials. Throughout this assignment, **Vernett** demonstrated a willingness to work an irregular and changing work schedule in a sometimes hostile work environment. Indeed, his fifth trip to Syria required that he drive from his home in New Orleans to Memphis for departure overseas, as he traveled only days after Hurricane Katrina devastated the New Orleans area.

Thanks to **Vernett's** efforts, American agriculture sold more than 2.3 million metric tons of wheat to Iraq between March 2005 and June 2006.

*Continued, see Awards  
on page 4.*

# Names in the News

# Improving GIPSA News

## PERSONNEL

**Amanda Tucker** is the new secretary, Office of the Administrator. Prior to joining GIPSA, **Amanda** was office manager of the Center for Life Enrichment Academy, a non-public school in Washington DC.

**Beverly Whalen** is the new agricultural marketing specialist in the Market Analysis and Standards Branch in Kansas City, Missouri. For the past 2 years, **Beverly** has served at the Technical Center as the national program specialist for the monitoring of official grain/rice inspection equipment. Prior to that, she worked in the Kansas City and Stuttgart Field Offices. **Beverly** also worked in the private sector for Riceland Foods. **Beverly** brings with her a vast knowledge of the rice industry and inspection program. She is responsible for the rice, bean, pea, and lentil programs.

## LEAVE DONATIONS

**Deborah Edwards**, office support supervisor, League City, has been dealing with a very serious illness for months. Deborah was recently hospitalized and her diagnosis will require long-term treatment in the hospital. She has exhausted her leave. **Deborah** applied and was accepted into the leave transfer program. All donated leave will be most appreciated.

**Benny Vitale** remains in the Leave Donor Program as he continues to recover from his surgery.

If you would like to donate either annual or restored annual leave to these colleagues, 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: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/forms/adforms.html>.

## AWARDS

**Eric Jabs**, Field Management Division, Kansas City, received a spot award for gathering and analyzing data about U.S. long grain rice production and exports to international customers. The analysis was paramount for developing the sampling plan for testing for the presence of the LL601 event.

**Gary McBryde**, director Industry Analysis Division, received a spot award from the Office of Congressional Relations for his outstanding commitment and expertise in preparing Congressional testimony for the GIPSA administrator regarding GIPSA's response to the OIG report.

Each month, we deliver a fresh issue of *GIPSA News* to each GIPSA employee. Our regular columns cover personnel news and awards, issuances, regulatory management, travel policy, the Idea Hotline, and safety and health. Each issue also includes a variety of articles submitted by employees on everything from policy and procedural information to employee development experiences.

Of course, there is always room for more information and for improvement! If you have suggestions for improving *GIPSA News*, ideas for additional content you'd like to see included, or any other comments that will help us improve the newsletter, please send them to Dana Stewart at [dana.b.stewart@usda.gov](mailto:dana.b.stewart@usda.gov).

## In This Issue

Names in the News .....	2
Improving GIPSA News .....	2
Travel Bits & Pieces .....	3
Issuances .....	3
Regulatory Info .....	3
FGIS Weighing Conference ..	6
GIPSA Interns .....	7
BIG Conference .....	8
Summer Internship .....	8
For Your Health .....	9
Soybean Standards .....	9

# Travel Bits & Pieces

*Peggy Smith, Washington, DC*

**Excused Absence Before or After a Period of Travel.** An employee may be granted up to 2 hours of excused absence before or after a period of travel, if the time of departure from or arrival at the official duty site would not allow substantive work to be accomplished.

**Example:** An employee whose tour of duty ends at 4:30 p.m. arrives at the airport at 3 p.m.; the estimated travel time to the office is 30 minutes. Since only 1 hour would remain until the end of the employee's tour, the supervisor may grant excused absence for the remainder of the day.

**Example:** An employee whose tour begins at 8 a.m. must depart from the office at 9 a.m. to arrive at the airport by 9:30 a.m. for an 11:30 a.m. flight departure. The employee may be granted excused absence and report directly to the airport.

On rare occasions, it may be appropriate to excuse absences of longer than 2 hours. Factors to be considered when supervisors make this determination include whether or not the longer absence was caused through no fault of the employee and if requiring the employee to report for duty would pose an undue hardship on him/her.

# Issuances

*Terri Henry, Washington, D.C.*

## New Issuances

- FGIS Program Directive 9180.36, "Warehouseman's SampleLot Inspections" dated September 25, 2006.
- FGIS Program Directive 9180.40, "Pesticide Residue Testing for Grain" dated August 29, 2006.
- "Fumigation Handbook" dated September 4, 2006
- FGIS Program Directive 9020.1, "Exemptions and Waivers of Official Inspection and Class X Weighing Requirements" dated October 2, 2006.
- DON (Vomitoxin) Handbook, FGIS Issuance Change No. 4, dated September 11, 2006

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

---

## Regulatory Info

*Tess Butler, Washington, DC*

### Federal Register Publications

- Opportunity for Designation in the Champaign (IL), Detroit (MI), Eastern Iowa (IA), Enid (OK), Keokuk (IA), Marshall (MI), Memphis (TN) and Omaha (NE), and Request for Comments on the Official Agencies Serving These Areas – Published September 7, 2006
- Designation for the Pocatello (ID), Lewiston (ID), Evansville (IN), and Utah Areas – Published September 7, 2006
- United States Standards for Soybeans – Published September 6, 2006

## Employee Assistance Program

Call for confidential help.

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

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

## Awards, from page 1.

**Vernett** is a self-starter who worked with industry representatives, Iraqi authorities, and others to assess and address issues related to facilitating and re-establishing grain trade with Iraq. He was extremely perceptive in understanding potential problems, including cross-cultural differences, and developed solutions that promoted trade in the region. His work has nurtured relationships with our Iraqi counterparts and promoted future sales of United States grains to Iraq. This year, U.S. wheat exports to Iraq are expected to catapult the country to the rank of America's fourth largest market, and we've started to export rice to Iraq. **Vernett's** ongoing efforts to build productive and positive trade relations between the United States and Iraq provided American agricultural producers continued and enhanced economic and trade opportunities with Iraq.

The **Hurricane Response Team** was recognized for their heroism and emergency response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. In late August and early September 2005, the Nation stood transfixed as the combined forces of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita destroyed New Orleans and numerous Gulf coast communities and displaced over a half million people. Four GIPSA offices — New Orleans and Crowley, Louisiana, and League City and Beaumont, Texas — were in the paths of these storms. These offices provide inspection and weighing services on over 46 million metric tons of U.S. grain exported out of these port areas, which accounts for 86 percent of the total U.S. grain exports. The Hurricane Response

Team showed exceptional valor and dedication to public service and American agriculture in the face of inconceivable personal challenge.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Team members from New Orleans ensured uninterrupted service to the grain industry and the safety of their colleagues. They catalyzed the immediate and rapid recovery of the export grain industry along the Mississippi River. Notwithstanding catastrophic personal loss, the team members returned to work immediately after Katrina's landfall to serve American agriculture, from Heartland farmers to exporters at the ports, by getting U.S. grain exports moving through the Gulf again. Their superlative efforts resulted in GIPSA inspection personnel being on duty within 48 hours of the storms to reestablish U.S. export port operations in the area. Our personnel were ready to provide service as soon as the industry resumed operations. No service request from our customers was denied.

**John Shropshire** and **Kerry Petit**, New Orleans, organized the recovery team and established an office communication network. Forty-eight hours after the hurricane hit, **John** opened an emergency command center/alternate field office in a Cargill grain elevator in Port Allen, Louisiana, and contacted grain export industry along the Mississippi. The "field office" immediately began responding to requests for inspection and weighing services. **Merle Russelburg**, **Carl Beckwith**, and **Milton Clayton** helped locate employees and prepared reports on their status. **Glenda Lasseigne** led ef-

forts to account for missing employees and helped rebuild the office's communication systems. **Yohanna Lorio** and **Carla Cambra** set up a functional remote office to provide administrative services and official inspection and weighing certification for grain shipments while the field office was without power. **Angela Roper** collected and provided market intelligence to the Agricultural Marketing Service for the daily "Impact of Hurricane Katrina on Agricultural Transportation" reports to the Secretary of Agriculture. She also organized relief efforts for employees who had lost everything in the hurricane. **Graig Watts**, **Shelton Buckley**, and **Randy Cooks** served as dispatchers, coordinating duty assignments and meeting service requests. **Bernadine Turley** and **Shirley Albert** provided the first inspection services on September 1, 2005 [3 days after the hurricane!]. **Josh Watson**, who evacuated to Houston after losing everything in the New Orleans flooding, located missing field office employees who evacuated to Houston and kept them apprised of the field office's status and recovery news from the New Orleans area. **Pat Lacour**, Washington, D.C., was on temporary duty to New Orleans and volunteered to help secure temporary housing for displaced field office employees and was liaison with Federal Emergency Management Agency.

*Continued, see Honor Awards on page 5.*

## Honor Awards, from page 4.

It was 23 days after Katrina's landfall before the New Orleans Field Office was able to move back into their permanent office. In the interim, the Agency ensured an uninterrupted flow of U.S. grain through America's largest grain export port location.

The **Hurricane Response Team** members in League City quickly applied the lessons learned from Katrina as Hurricane Rita approached the Texas coast on September 20, 2005. The League City Field Office and the Crowley Suboffice quickly implemented an emergency communication plan prior to the hurricane strike that established channels for providing daily situation updates to the Department and accounting for employees. The team also relocated all Beaumont Suboffice personnel to safe locations before landfall; evacuated New Orleans evacuees to safer locations and ensured their lodging upon their return to the Houston area; and relocated all valuable government property, including information technology assets, grain testing equipment and tools, and a vehicle, to safe locations. The work of the League City members of the Hurricane Response Team formed the basis of subsequent agencywide emergency preparedness planning.

On September 23, 2006, Hurricane Rita came ashore narrowly missing League City, but directly hitting

League City's Beaumont, Texas, Suboffice. Thanks to the efforts of the team members, the Agency was ready to provide services to American agriculture immediately, and the Beaumont Suboffice, which sustained structural damage that closed it for over a month, suffered no losses of employees or valuable government property.

**Dannye Cameron** and **Ray Lavine** developed League City's emergency communication plan, staged an orderly evacuation of employees, and implemented plans to save valuable Government equipment from destruction. **Charles Brown** provided weather updates, including national and local weather bulletins, emergency management network information, and local official evacuation advisories, to field office management and staff every 15 minutes as the storm approached. **Adel Ibrahim**, with the aid of **Ray Lavine** and **Charles Brown**, shut down and secured all information technology and electronic equipment. **Sabri Gerguis**, dispatcher, along with manager **Dannye Cameron**, maintained constant contact with the grain industry, ship agents, rice industry personnel, and the suboffices in Corpus Christi and Beaumont, coordinating shutdown procedures before the storm and upstart procedures after the storm. **J.C. Wooley**, **Robert Daniel**, **Robert Campbell**, and **Lee**

**Cooper** volunteered to continue working during the evacuation order. **Wayne Melvin**, **Regina Landry**, and **Pam Bourque** led the Crowley Suboffice's development of an emergency communication plan, orderly evacuation of employees, and accounting for displaced employees after the storm.

The **Hurricane Response Team** showed fortitude and determination in addressing both the personal and work-related challenges engendered by the terrible storms of 2005. These GIPSA employees performed heroically to safeguard their colleagues, protect Government property, and to provide uninterrupted service to American agriculture, from farmer to exporter, in the face of unimaginable personal challenge and loss.

The Secretary is also giving an **Employee Recognition and Remembrance Award** in recognition of the extraordinary level and quality of assistance rendered by USDA employees during rescue and recovery operations in response to the disastrous effects of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita on the United States Gulf Coast of 2005. Many USDA employees are being recognized, including GIPSA's **Hurricane Response Team**, as well as **Mark Dickson**, **John Giler**, **Tanika Harris**, **Deirdre Holder**, **Mack Manis**, and **Peggy Smith**, Washington, DC.

# FGIS Weighing Conference

*Nelson Buck, Washington, DC*

FGIS Scale Specialists met on September 19-21, 2006, in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Forty-two people attended all or part of the conference, including six guest speakers and representatives from the FGIS field offices; the Master Scale Depot; the States of Washington, Virginia, and Alabama; Yolo County, California; the FGIS Compliance Division; the FGIS Policies and Procedures Branch; the Packers and Stockyards Program; and the Canadian Grain Commission.

**John Giler**, acting division director, Field Management Division, opened the conference. He was followed by presenters discussing a variety of topics, including weighing automation and digital video; audit trails as an alternative to physical seals; Class F weight testing; hopper scale testing; verifying the integrity of grain handling systems; findings of compliance reviews; coupled-in-motion scale calibrations; railroad master scale testing; truck scale testing; and design of weight carts. In addition, the group heard from guest speakers representing John Deere Agris Services, makers of the OneWeigh scale controller; CompuWeigh, makers of the CompuDraft 4000 scale controller and grain management software; and the Norfolk Southern Railway, which employs GIPSA to test its track scales.

The Weighing Conference provided an opportunity for the people attending, some of whom had never met, to get to know each other. Many thanks to **Bill Bates** for setting up the conference.

This was first meeting of this group since 2000. Previous meetings were held about every two years, at sites that rotated among the delegated states. The states of Washington and Alabama are being considered for the next meeting.



*Weighing Conference Attendees. (Left to right) Byron School, Harold Chiasson, Ray Lavine, Larry Penn, Randall Fulmer, Nelson Buck, Jack LaRue, Ted Respet, Robb Hermanson, Stacy Boshell, Lee Blanchard, Paul Hadyka, Virginia Roseberry, Milt Hargrave, John Godfrey, Terry Ryno (hidden), Roland Ellis, Lane LeJeune, and Sandra Metheny. Not pictured: Cary Brown, Al Rupert, Bob Krause, Don Akers, Mark Wooden, Craig Klever, Bob Arnold, Antoine Dotson, Gary Sharp, David Guerrero, Gordon Mandigo, Dave Skallerud, Bob Crook, Karen Guagliardo, and Bill Bates. (Photo taken by Martin Begley.)*

**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**

# Spotlighting 2006 Interns

*Gale Mason, Washington, DC*

As autumn approaches, we anticipate the beauty fall colors that accompany the season. We also reflect on the fun events and special people we enjoyed during the warm summer months – friends and family, vacations, barbeques, and, of course, our summer interns! This past summer, GIPSA was honored to have sponsored four interns in Washington, DC. Let's take a minute to meet our future leaders again!

**Serena Romero.** I spent my summer as an intern in the Policy and Litigation Division, PSP. As a member of the Washington Internship for Native Students (WINS), I began my internship on June 5 and sadly ended on July 29. When I return home to California, I fully intended to meet with the necessary people of my tribe and see about our investing in agriculture. My tribe has a reservation with highly desirable land for agriculture, and I feel it will be a way for my tribe to make money in a positive way, rather than just with casinos. I hope that all my work was satisfactory and hope to someday be able to come back and do more work for this wonderful agency.

**Danielle Carter.** I will be returning to the University of Maryland, Eastern Shore, this fall as a sophomore with a major in Business Administration and a minor in Journalism. My aspirations for the future are to obtain a Doctorate in Business/Finance. I worked in the Policies and Procedures Branch under Robert Lijewski. I found my work atmosphere to be very friendly yet goal-oriented. I enjoyed my peers, and found the assignments they give me to be beneficial to both parties. I entered data and created spreadsheets. I hope to continue to work with GIPSA during my upcoming school years and hopefully attain a permanent position when that time comes!

**Kevin Fortis.** This summer I worked at GIPSA through the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) National Internship Program. I have future aspirations of becoming a permanent, full-time U.S. Government employee. Working in GIPSA let me do a lot of work, including (1) updating Microsoft Excel spreadsheets that served as timecards for GIPSA Application Modernization (GAM) project team members and fed the financial spreadsheets for tracking project costs and overall financials for the modernization effort, (2) learning and using Test Director 8.0, Visual Basic Script (VBScript), and QuickTest Professional 8.2 application-testing software to modify and test GAM computer software applications. (3) developing a Word-processing template that serves as a documentation guide for GAM software developers' VBScript testing software and (4) participating in GAM project status meetings while informing the GAM Project Team on my input.



*Serena Romero, sophomore, University of San Diego, San Diego, CA; Danielle Carter, sophomore, University of Maryland, Eastern Shore, MD; Kelly Mayo, junior, Virginia State University, Petersburg, VA; and Kevin Fortis, senior, University of Maryland Baltimore County, Shady Grove Campus.*

*Continued, see My Summer Internship on page 8.*

# BIG Training Conference

*Donna Melton,  
Washington, DC*

I attended the Blacks in Government Training Conference August 21-25, 2006, in New York City. The theme was “Building Unity through Excellence, Growth and Challenge.” The Conference was wonderful. There were not only outstanding training sessions addressing hiring, retention and discrimination; there were also many activities to promote a healthy lifestyle, including a 6:00 a.m. scheduled walk for interested participants. There were informative exhibits, a banquet with guest speaker Charles Rangel who spoke on the powerful force of BIG, and evening activities that provided opportunities to network. I attended the USDA Employee and Forest Service Forums. I attended numerous training sessions, but received the most information from **ADR/Mediation** session which focused on the ADR/mediation process and how it can benefit the organization. This workshop dealt with communication skills in the workplace and swift resolutions of workplace disputes. It also covered how to handle difficult employees, and how to thrive while working with sensitive issues and needs using skills to develop and sustain effective working relationships in today’s workplace and environment. **Turning Your Workplace or Military Training into College Degrees** which focused on maximizing career-advancement opportunities and pursuing college degrees. This session helped me link possible college credit that I have earned in the workplace to move

# My Summer Internship

*Kelly Mayo*



My name is **Kelly Mayo**, a Washingtonian at heart. I am a junior majoring in Public Administration at Virginia State University located in Petersburg, Virginia. The internship program I am currently affiliated with is WRP which stands for Workforce Recruitment and Referral Program. The purpose of the program is to give college students and recent college graduates with disabilities the opportunity to participate in summer internships and help them get permanent positions in both the public and private

sectors throughout the United States. My experience while participating in this internship was enjoyable. I interned for GIPSA with the Compliance Division. The diversity of people with disabilities that I saw working here had a positive impact on me as well as people with different cultural backgrounds.

Meeting people from several branches made me feel comfortable and welcomed. I learned about the traveling done in the Review Branch and I liked how compliance officers visit cities in the United States and perform their jobs while on the road. I became more familiarized with how the U.S. Department of Agriculture works. I gained a little more insight on federal rulemaking and regulation policies and was particularly interested on these topics since one of my childhood dreams is to become a lawyer. The people I worked with made me feel like I was part of a team and this made my experience more gratifying. I’m looking forward to participate more actively in various activities if I have the opportunity to come back next year. Thanks to the Civil Rights Office, to the Compliance Division and especially to **John Sharpe** for giving me this opportunity.

---

more quickly to meet goals. **Career Development Strategies for Thriving and Surviving in Your Organization** was a three-session workshop on a step-by-step process for identifying, analyzing, and building competencies for implementing successful Individual Development Plans (IDP) that can be transferred to jobs. The focus was on applying my tools and techniques to integrate the agency’s mission requirements into an effective career development plan that will address my personal and

organizational performance goals. The session also addressed the different needs of entry-, mid-, and advanced-level employees, with the goal of helping employees transition into today’s workplace requirements.

The BIG Conference also focused on Health issues such as diabetes, heart disease, and hypertension that affect the Black community as well as financial issues. I appreciated the opportunity to attend this worthwhile Conference.

## For Your Health

*Mavis Rogers, Washington, DC*

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a poisonous, invisible, odorless, and colorless gas created by the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels, such as gasoline, wood, coal, propane, oil, and methane. CO is an asphyxiant when inhaled into the lungs. In the blood stream, carbon monoxide combines with hemoglobin to form carboxyhemoglobin, which interferes with the oxygen carrying capacity of blood, thereby reducing oxygen delivery to the body's organs and tissues. At low concentrations, symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are flu-like, progressing from mild to severe headache and nausea. At high concentrations, symptoms include impaired vision and coordination, and dizziness. More severe effects include difficulty breathing, unconsciousness, and death.

Sources of carbon monoxide include unvented kerosene and gas space heaters, leaking chimneys and furnaces, back-drafting from furnaces, gas water heaters, wood stoves, and fireplaces, gas stoves, automobile exhaust from attached garages, and environmental tobacco smoke.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends that you take these steps to reduce exposure:

- ✦ Keep gas appliances properly adjusted.
- ✦ Consider purchasing a vented space heater to replace an unvented one.
- ✦ Use proper fuel in kerosene space heaters.
- ✦ Install and use an exhaust fan, which vents to the outdoors for a kitchen with a gas stove.
- ✦ Open flues when fireplace are in use.
- ✦ Choose properly sized wood stoves that are certified to meet EPA emission standards - make certain that doors on all wood stoves fit tightly.
- ✦ Have a trained professional inspect, clean, and tune-up your central heating system (furnace, flues, and chimneys) annually – repair any leaks promptly.
- ✦ Do not idle the car inside the garage.
- ✦ Protect your family from CO

The National Fire Protection Association suggests installing carbon monoxide (CO) alarms inside your home to provide early warning of accumulating CO. However, the best defenses against CO poisoning are the safe use of vehicles and the proper installation, use, venting and maintenance of household cooking and heating equipment.

*Sources: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and The National Fire Protection Association.*

## GIPSA Revises Soybean Standards

GIPSA is revising the U.S. Standards for Soybeans to change the minimum test weight per bushel (TW) from a grade determining factor to an informational factor.

As an informational factor, TW will be reported on official certificates unless requested otherwise. Upon request, soybean test weight will not be determined or reported on the official certificate.

USDA also is changing the reporting requirements for TW in soybeans from whole and half pounds with a fraction of a half pound disregarded to reporting to the nearest tenth of a pound. The reporting requirements for test weight in canola also are being clarified.

These changes will further help to ensure market-relevant standards and grades and clarify reporting requirements.

The revised standards will become effective on September 1, 2007.

*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 October 25, 2006!**

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

---