



# GIPSA News

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

October 2007

## GIPSA Honor Award Recipients

*Jim Link, Washington, DC*

I am proud to announce that GIPSA’s Midwestern Regional Office (MRO), Business Practices and Resident Agent Units Team has been selected to receive the 2007 Secretary’s Honor Award in recognition for its work in correcting illicit weighing practices in 28 livestock markets in 11 states. The team is comprised of **Bryce Wilke, William Arce-Arana, Gayle Barnett, Dewey Blatchford, Arlan DeBlieck, Adam Fast, Jerry Garner, Robert Merritt, Steve Pappaducas, Glenn Plumley, Terry Ryno, and Julie Shamblin.**

P&SP’s mission in the area of accurate scales and weighing consists of two elements that affect the integrity of livestock and poultry transactions: (1) the accuracy of the scales used for weighing livestock, meat, and poultry, and (2) the proper and honest operation of scales to ensure that the weight on which a transaction is based is accurate. The major emphasis in the enforcement of this program is the monitoring of scale tests and detection of improper and fraudulent use of subject scales.

The MRO Team detected improper use of livestock scales at 28

auction markets in 2006. The team members conducted compliance reviews at each of the 450 livestock markets located in the Midwestern region. The reviews were initiated after determining that at least one auction market in the region was operating with scale gates that were not mounted on the platform of the scale as required by the P&S Act and regulations. Inaccurate weighing will always occur to the detriment of livestock sellers when the livestock being weighed is in contact with the scale gates that are not mounted to the scale platform.

The team then conducted follow-up investigations at each of the 28 markets, and all but three had taken corrective action on the scales. Investigative reports were subsequently prepared on these three markets for violations of the P&S Act.

As of June 1, 2007, only one firm in the region is operating with a non-compliant scale. This firm will likely face formal administrative action by the Agency.

The members of the team were dedicated and committed to stopping an illicit weighing practice that had

existed for many years at several of the markets. Although no estimation has been made on the harm that may have occurred over time to livestock producers, it is likely to be several hundred thousand dollars per year. In addition, the team acted in an expeditious manner to correct the violations in a professional manner that further garnered the respect of the industry, livestock associations, and State weights and measures officials.

### In This Issue

Names in the News .....	2
Giler New FMD Director .....	3
Regulatory Info .....	4
Issuances .....	4
Travel Bits & Pieces .....	4
Employment Verification .....	5
Note of Thanks .....	6
Minneapolis Closing .....	6
IT Tidbit .....	7
For Your Health .....	8

# Names in the News

## PERSONNEL

**Julie Harris** has joined the Information Technology Staff Operations Branch. She comes to GIPSA from APHIS.

**Diane Palecek** was named the Assistant Director, Field Management Division (FMD), in charge of the Field Operations and Support Staff (FOSS) in Kansas City, Missouri. FOSS manages and coordinates the programs for mandatory inspection and weighing services at field locations and Federal oversight of agencies performing inspection and weighing services through delegations or designations. FOSS also carries out the Division's budget formulation and execution, and administers various FGIS-related information technology applications.

**Ken Critchfield** has been selected to be the Assistant Director, FMD, of the new Quality Assurance and Control Staff. The new staff is responsible for developing, monitoring, auditing, and reporting a wide range of data and information related to the official grain inspection and weighing system.

**Julie Shamblin** is the new resident agent in San Marcos, Texas. Julie was a resident agent in the Midwestern region.

**Kevin Grant** is GIPSA's new Safety and Occupational Health Manager. He brings 26 years of experience in safety, health and environmental (SHE) practice, including management experience in the waste, electric utility, and transportation in-

dustries. He has been responsible for safety and health management; and has assessed workplace hazards and developed programs and procedures to control risk and promote worker safety. **Kevin** also led environmental programs, and led SHE consulting practices. He has a Masters degree in Health Policy and Management from Harvard University, School of Public Health, and a Bachelor's degree in zoology and chemistry from the University of Wisconsin.

**Pinkie Harrod** has joined the Management Support Staff, Washington, DC, where she will provide organizational development support. **Pinkie** previously worked as a human resources specialist at the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), where she provided advisory services related to automated staffing, succession planning, Federal hiring authorities, position management and classification, and the application and interpretation of human resources regulations. Prior to joining ARS, she was an analyst for T. Rowe Price Associates, Inc. **Pinkie** has a bachelor's degree in business with a concentration in finance and management from the College of Notre Dame.

**William "Lindell" Smith**, is transferring from the Crowley, Louisiana, suboffice to Jonesboro, Arkansas, suboffice. **Lindell** had worked on detail in Lake Charles before transferring to Crowley in 1996. While in Crowley, he studied the required grains, passed his proficiency tests and was promoted. **Lindell** and his wife **Tiresa** adapted well both on and off the job, enjoying

"Cajun" food and hospitality. They will be missed by Crowley employees and the local rice industry.

**James Whalen**, Wichita, has been selected to become a member of the Board of Appeals and Review, effective October 14, 2007. **Jim** brings to the position diverse inspection background and work experiences, as well as a command of essential quality control principles.

## AWARDS

**Lee Ainsworth**, Eastern Regional Office (ERO), received a spot award for receiving contributions from 100 percent of the ERO employees for the 2007 CFC campaign.

**Wally Alves**, **Amanda Roussel**, **Joann Perrilloux**, and **Beale Williams**, New Orleans, received time-off awards for outstanding performance.

**Wade Berteau**, New Orleans, received a time-off award for exceptional attention to detail when reviewing loading documents.

**James Cannon**, ERO, received a spot award for extra effort made in the rapid response investigation of a livestock market failure to determine unpaid consignment sellers.

**Karen Collins**, ERO, received a spot award for dedication in completing reviews of investigation files alleging failure to file annual reports and helping the ERO meet a short deadline; extra effort in the

*Continued, see Names  
on page 3.*

## Giler Selected as FMD Director

rapid response to a dealer failure at a livestock auction to determine the unpaid sellers of livestock; and continued efforts to pursue subpoena enforcement and other legal remedies in a case to enforce compliance with the P&S Act.

**Hal Crocker**, ERO, received a spot award for performance and professionalism in performing trade practice investigations.

**Ronald Hanson**, Minneapolis, received a spot award for displaying exceptional support to the Minneapolis Field Office to ensure a smooth transition during the closing of the field office.

**Joel Jolly, Lezo Foley, Fannie Webb, and Gerald Raymond**, New Orleans, received time-off awards for providing exemplary and outstanding service to customers and employees.

**Susan Kleinman**, ERO, received a spot award for dedication in completing reviews of investigation files alleging failure to file annual reports and helping the ERO meet a short deadline.

**Denise LaCour**, New Orleans, received a time-off award for extra effort in assisting co-workers.

**Joanna LeBlanc**, New Orleans, received a spot award for maintaining an impeccable stowage billing program in the New Orleans Field Office.

**Barbara McKee**, ERO, received a spot award in recognition of extra effort in assisting with the printing and delivery of SOP manuals for the April implementation.

**Joe Moore**, ERO, received an extra effort award for his work in documenting a complaint and determining that the complaint was a violation.

**Robinson Obiekwe**, ERO, received a spot award for dedication in completing reviews of investigation files



*John Giler*

**John Giler** has been selected to be the director of the Field Management Division.

**John** brings proven technical skills, market knowledge, and leadership experience to the director position. He had served as acting director since November 2005, providing outstanding leadership to field operations and modernization of the Agency's information management systems.

As director, **John** is responsible for the overall planning, development, administration, and management of all grain inspection and weighing activities carried out by the Federal Grain Inspection Service field offices, and the delegated States

and designated agencies operating under the U.S. Grain Standards Act and the Agricultural Marketing Act.

**John** had served as deputy director of FMD since 2004. Prior to 2004, he was chief of the Policies and Procedures Branch (formerly the Standards and Procedures Branch), and an agricultural commodity grader in the former Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Mobile, Alabama; and Savannah, Georgia, offices.

**John** is a graduate of Southeastern Louisiana University, where he earned a Bachelors of Science degree in agriculture.

---

alleging failure to file annual reports, and helping the ERO meet a short deadline.

**Jan Roehler**, Minneapolis, received a spot award for exceptional support to the Minneapolis Field Office to ensure a smooth transition during its closing.

**Angela Roper** and **Joanne Matherne**, New Orleans, received spot awards for being on the CRT team, creating templates for the New Orleans Field Office, and assisting certification clerks in the New Orleans Field Office and other GIPSA offices.

**Carla Thomas**, ERO, received a spot award in recognition of continued extra effort, dedication, and a professional attitude, which contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of the ERO.

**Ceneda Trufant**, New Orleans,

received a time-off award for consistently performing assigned duties at a high level.

**Melba Twitty**, ERO, received a spot award for performance and professionalism in performing financial investigations in the livestock industry.

**Regina Willis**, ERO, received an extra effort award for continued outstanding administrative support, dedication, and a professional attitude that contributes to the efficiency and effectiveness of the ERO.

**James Woodard**, New Orleans, received a time-off award for displaying exceptional judgment and knowledge resulting in averting delays in services to the applicant.

**Gary Zella**, New Orleans, received a spot award for his positive contributions to the QA/QC Team.

## Regulatory Info

*Tess Butler, Washington, DC*

### Federal Register Publications

- "Poultry Contracts; Initiation, Performance, and Termination," published August 1, 2007
- "Amendment to Certification of Colorado's Central Filing System," published August 8, 2007
- "Guideline Change Involving Volume Discounts in Tariffs," published August 14, 2007
- "Solicitation of Nominations for Members of the Grain Inspection Advisory Committee," published August 20, 2007
- "Designation for the Amarillo (TX), Cairo (IL), Louisiana, North Carolina, and Belmond (IA) Areas, and Opportunity for Designation To Provide Official Services in the North Central Texas Region," published September 4, 2007
  - "Opportunity for Designation in Owensboro (KY), Bloomington (IL), Iowa Falls (IA), Casa Grande (AZ), Fargo (ND), Grand Forks (ND), and Plainview (TX) Areas, and Request for Comments on the Official Agencies Serving These Areas," published September 4, 2007

---

## Issuances

*Terri Henry, Washington, D.C.*

- FGIS Program Notice 07-08, "Milling Yield Procedure – Medium Grain Rough Rice and Medium Grain Brown Rice for Processing," dated August 27, 2007
- FGIS Issuance Change No. 9 to the DON (Vomitoxin) Handbook, Chapter 15, "Diagnostix Ez-Tox™ Test Kit," dated August 27, 2007
- FGIS Program Directive 9180.81, "Quality Management Program Requirements for Official Service Providers," dated September 6, 2007
- FGIS Program Notice 07-09, "National Corn Sample Collection Plan for the Pesticide Residue Program" dated September 24, 2007

## Travel Bits & Pieces

*Monica Alexander,  
Washington, DC*

**2008 CONUS Rate Increase.** Effective October 1, 2007, (fiscal year 2008), the General Services Administration (GSA) Continental United States (CONUS) lodging rate will increase from \$60 to \$70. This increase will cause an overall increase in per diem (lodging and M&IE) for all localities. For a list of the new per diem rates, visit the GSA website at [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov) or contact your office's travel arranger.

**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

# Employment and Salary Verification

*Monica Alexander, Washington, DC*

Have you every needed your employment or salary verified by a lender, landlord, or other organization? If so, the National Finance Center (NFC) has a Work Number just for you! The TALX (<https://www.nfc.usda.gov/worknum/how.htm>) allows Agency employees to forward employment and salary verification requests to a secure, automated phone line.

## What is a "Verifier"?

A verifier is a bank, lender, landlord, or other person or organization that has a need to verify your employment information.

As an employee, how do I use this service?	How does the verifier use this service ?
<p>Each employee is responsible for authorizing the release of their employment and salary information. The credit and reference verifiers <b>must</b> receive an authorization code from you to access your information.</p> <p>To obtain an authorization code:            1.From a touch-tone telephone, call <b>1(800)367-2884</b>.            Enter the following information when prompted:            •USDA's company code, <b>10284</b>            •Your <b>social security number</b>            •Your individual <b>PIN number</b> (contact your Personnel Office for your PIN)            •Record the authorization code in a secure place for future reference.            1.Fill out a reference card to be given to the verifier (obtain card from the website above)</p>	<p>To access your employment information,            •The verifier will need the information on the reference card:                ▪The USDA company code, 10284                ▪Your social security number                ▪One of your authorization codes            •The verifier will need to call <b>1(800) 367-5690</b></p>
How many authorization codes can be active and how long are they valid?	When is the service available?
<p>You can have a maximum of three codes active at any one time. Each code can only be used one time. Unused codes remain active for 6 months.</p>	<p>The service is available 7 days a week during the following hours:            •7:00 a.m. until 12:00 midnight (EST)            •6:00 a.m. until 11:00 pm (CST)            •5:00 a.m. until 10:00 pm (MT)            •4:00 a.m. until 9:00 pm (EST)</p>

Tom Wrenn  
USDA GIPSA/FGIS  
PO Box 13427  
Grand Forks, ND

Dear Tom,

Thank you for your recent donation [of 4,870 pounds of dry beans, peas, and lentils] to the Great Plains Food Bank [in September]. It will truly be a blessing for those we serve.

This year, one out of every twelve people in our community and state will turn to emergency feeding programs supplied by the Great Plains Food Bank for help. Thanks to caring and concerned people like you, none will be turned away empty-handed.

With your help, the Great Plains Food Bank will distribute almost six million pounds of donated food and grocery items for hunger relief efforts this year. Currently 240 food shelves, homeless shelters, soup kitchens and other charitable feeding programs in Fargo-Moorhead and almost eighty other North Dakota communities depend on the food bank for some or all of their food supplies.

And what a tremendous difference your contributions make in so many lives - children having enough to eat so they can learn to their full potential at school - seniors on fixed incomes not having to make the difficult choice between paying for rising medicine costs or food - working moms and dads having enough food to put on the table for their families when an emergency shatters an already tightly-stretched budget.

I have always wished there was some way to express how much this food means to someone who is hungry, homeless, or wondering how they will pay for groceries in the days ahead - but I don't think adequate words exist. So again, thank you for being an important partner in our fight against hunger. Your support provides real help and much-needed hope at a critical time for our many neighbors in need.

Thanks so much!

Sincerely,

Steve Sellent  
Program Director

## Minneapolis Office Closing

*John C. Giler,  
Washington, DC*

The Minneapolis Field Office will officially close effective November 11, 2007. During the past 2 years, the State of Minnesota has shut down its grain inspection and weighing program and the State of Wisconsin has significantly downsized their grain program. Additionally, the Minneapolis Field Office staff has diminished in size due to attrition. The grain program has determined it is more efficient and effective for GIPSA to oversee grain inspection and weighing activities from other GIPSA locations

The Toledo Field Office has assumed responsibility for all export grain inspection and weighing activities on the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Seaway. GIPSA has designated five private inspection firms to provide domestic grain services previously provided by either the State of Minnesota or Wisconsin. Oversight of these private companies will be handled by other FGIS field offices. All employees of the Minneapolis Field Office were offered reassignment opportunities within the Agency. This closure is the first step towards the centralization of oversight of the official inspection and weighing program.

# IT Tidbit

*Ron Beukema, Washington, DC*

New buzzwords are flying around the Internet these days: AJAX, RSS, blog, wiki, mashup, tagging, social networking, permalink, trackback, and more. If you have used Netflix, Amazon, eBay, or even iTunes then you have seen some of the changes for yourself. Do these words represent real change or just a fad? Does it matter to us anyway? We have work to do; we do not have time for frivolous fads.

As it happens, a very large part of our work is to collect, store, and disseminate vast quantities of information, and all that buzzing on the Internet is actually about better ways to “collect, store, and disseminate vast quantities of information.” This means we might indeed have something useful to learn from what we see going on “out there” on the Internet. I cannot possibly cover the ground in this short space, so let me give you the essentials and point you to much more information on the web.

In 2001, many commercial ventures on the Internet collapsed in what became known as the “Dot Com Bubble.” These companies, many of which were very well funded, had hoped to get rich quickly on Internet technology, but instead they failed miserably. However, it soon became obvious that some companies not only survived but were doing very well indeed. In 2004, Tim O’Reilly sponsored a conference to contrast the failures with the successes of what he called “Web 2.0.”

Tim concluded that successful Internet companies were returning to their roots; they were making it as easy as possible for the public to use the web as it was intended to be used from the beginning, i.e., as a collaborative platform in which users control their own data and interact freely. Successful companies contributed to that process in a variety of ways. They enriched the user interface, made data freely available, encouraged networking, and made themselves into reliable and unobtrusive service providers.

“In the analysis and promotion of web-technology, the phrase Web 2.0 refers to a perceived second generation of web-based communities and hosted services — such as social-networking sites, wikis and folksonomies — which aim to facilitate collaboration and sharing between users. The term became popular following the first O’Reilly Media Web 2.0 conference in 2004, and has since become widely used.”

Although the term suggests a new version of the World Wide Web, it does not refer to an update to Web technical specifications, but to changes in the ways software developers and end users use the web as a platform. According to Tim O’Reilly, “Web 2.0 is the business revolution in the computer industry caused by the move to the internet as platform, and an attempt to understand the rules for success on that new platform” (from wikipedia).

While it sounds like common-sense, much of what they did violated conventional practice in more traditional fields of data management and publishing. Today, we find that many of these Web 2.0 companies continue to grow at a phenomenal rate and are having a significant impact off the web as well.

For more detail, please google “Web 2.0” and read at least the Wikipedia entry. Also highly recommended are the original essay by Tim O’Reilly and a followup by Paul Graham.

As we work to modernize data management in GIPSA, we hope to capitalize on the things that have worked so well on the Internet. Among other things, these keys to success include a high level of user participation; tools that are efficient, available, and easy to use; and ready access to communications throughout the Agency.

## 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

# For Your Health

*Mavis Rogers, Washington, DC*

We have all seen fire extinguishers in schools, public buildings, and even at people's homes. Fire extinguishers are excellent tools for putting out fires and saving lives, but many people don't know how to use them properly and effectively. It is important to know that there are different extinguishers for different types of fires, and how to handle an extinguisher. Read below and you will always be prepared in the event of a fire.

Fires are classified by what type of material is burning.

- ◆ **Class A** fires refer to most fires that catch in ordinary objects, such as clothing, toys, carpets, and papers.
- ◆ **Class B** fires refer to fires that are based in flammable liquids such as grease, oil, or gasoline. It is important to remember that grease and oil can be found in most kitchens, and also in some bathroom products such as lotions and hair balms. Garages are hot spots for Class B fires, as there can easily be grease, gas, or oil on the ground, in tanks, or on rags.
- ◆ **Class C** fires occur when electrical equipment such as wires and electrical appliances catch fire.
- ◆ **Class D** fires are less common in houses as the other classes of fire. They refer to fires that catch in metals such as magnesium, titanium, potassium, and sodium. Water or liquid chemicals generally do not extinguish these fires. They often require an extinguishing dry powder to put them out.

**Using the Right Extinguisher.** Once you have determined the class of fire, it is important that you use the proper extinguisher. All classifications are shown on the faceplate on the front side of the extinguisher. Some extinguishers are marked with multiple fire classes such as AB, BC, and ABC. These extinguishers are capable of putting out more than one class of fire. For this reason, most people keep ABC fire extinguishers so that no thinking has to be done in the event of a fire.

**How to Use an Extinguisher.** Fire extinguishers are simple to use. Simply remember the acronym "PASS" and you will know the steps to effectively putting out a fire.

- P** Pull the pin. You will find a pin in the bottom part of the nozzle. Yank it out.
- A** Aim the extinguisher nozzle. The most effective place to aim for is at the bottom of the flames, where the combustibles are.
- S** Squeeze the trigger. Keep the extinguisher upright as you spray.
- S** Sweep the extinguisher from side to side. Be sure to spray the entire area of the fire.

If you forget these steps, simply read the directions on the back of the extinguisher, or just use your common sense. And remember: If the fire gets out of control, get away immediately and call the fire department to come put the fire out.

*Courtesy: Bailey Stoler Safety Articles*

**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, 2007!**

**Retiring?** To be included on our email distribution list after you retire from GIPSA, please send your email address to dana.b.stewart@usda.gov.

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

---