



# GIPSA News

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

*November 2004*

## Export Service Provision Raised as Reauthorization Issue

*Dave Shipman*

On September 30, 2005, certain authorities under the U.S. Grain Standards Act will expire. Congress included this sunset or expiration provision in the law primarily to require a periodic review of the user fee provisions of the law. Traditionally, the reauthorization process has also provided the opportunity for us – and all other interested parties – to recommend any changes to the Act to ensure it continues to fulfill its intended objectives in the current market environment. As the 2005 reauthorization nears, several organizations, including the North American Export Grain Association (NAEGA) and the National Grain and Feed Association (NGFA), are raising the question of whether official private agencies along with the current delegated States should be authorized to provide mandatory export inspection services under strict Federal oversight. They believe the model of State and private agencies that we use in the domestic market is very successful and believe a similar approach might work in the export market – again with appropriate Federal oversight.

The organizations believe having both delegated State and private agencies at export holds great promise for maintaining and improving the competitive position of U.S. grain and oilseed exports, and, at the same time, retaining the integrity of the U.S. inspection results and enhancing the long-term viability of government-based official inspection and weighing services.

Our Grain Inspection Advisory Committee discussed this issue at its May 2004 meeting and recommended that we evaluate how the authorization of private agencies in the export market could work, and the potential costs and benefits of such a change in policy. John Giler, deputy director, Field Management Division, is heading up an effort to evaluate the potential benefits, strengths, weaknesses, and methods of allowing non-Federal entities to provide inspection services at export locations. Official inspection and weighing certificates are the basis of international trade in U.S. bulk grains and oilseeds. Our official grain inspection system has gained worldwide recognition for its accuracy and reliability. Maintaining and

strengthening this recognition in the future remains a top priority.

The Advisory Committee also recommended that we look at how other countries have privatized their export inspection operations. This summer, John Pitchford, Office of International Affairs; Eric Jabs, Field Management Division; and I, along with several individuals representing exporters and producers, went on a fact-finding trip to Argentina and Brazil to learn about their grain marketing systems, how grain export quality is measured and certified by the private sector, and how their system compares to FGIS'.

We are evaluating and studying the Advisory Committee's and industry's recommendations in the context of the changing market we serve and the future challenges we face, including a projected 73 percent attrition rate over the next 5 years. The issue of how best to provide export inspection service in the future will be discussed during the upcoming reauthorization. Our objective is to ensure such discussion are based on facts.

# Names in the News

## PERSONNEL

**Michael Eustrom** is the new Board of Appeals and Review Branch Chief. **Mike** previously served as the Assistant BAR Branch Chief within the Technical Services Division (TSD). **Mike** brings a great deal of experience — as a grader, field office manager, marketing specialist – to this critical leadership position.

**Danielle Smith** joined the Field Management Division as an office automation assistant.

**Greg Tomas** was selected to be a senior compliance officer, Regulatory Branch, Compliance Division, Washington, DC.

## CONDOLENCES

**Warren Duffy**, former scale special-

ist, Lutcher, passed away on October 7. He had retired from the Lutcher, LA, field office in 1993.

**James Morris “Sunny” Haire** passed away on October 10. He worked for FGIS for 25 years in the Corpus Christi and Beaumont suboffices, and as assistant field office manager in Lake Charles for several years. He was a veteran who served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean Conflict.

## AWARDS

**Bill Azmy**, agricultural commodity grain grader, TSD, received a time off award for exceptional effort in communicating with the barley industry and conducting workshops. This brought about a standardized method for assessing sprout damage and facilitated the marketing of barley.

**Shana Love**, Field Management Division, Washington, DC, received

a time-off award for her superior networking and customer service skills benefiting the Market Analysis and Standards Branch and the Agency at large.

**Patrick McCluskey**, Field Management Division, Washington, DC, received a time-off award for his outstanding quality of work during fiscal year 2004.

**Ruth Ortiz**, Field Management Division, received a spot award for taking the initiative to analyze and reconcile past-due FedEx accounts.

**Eric Poling**, grain marketing specialist, TSD, received a time-off award for exceptional effort in developing visual reference images and grading mats for the barley industry. This brought about a standardized method for assessing sprout damage and facilitated the marketing of barley.

## 20-YEAR SERVICE AWARD

Jody Boydston-Johnson, Denver

## In This Issue

Names in the News .....	2
Travel Bits & Pieces .....	2
SCL, MPR Changes .....	3
Plans, Plans, Plans .....	3
Advisory Committee .....	3
ISS Training .....	4
Issuances .....	4
Regulatory Info .....	4
Veterans Day .....	5
Amarillo Designation .....	5
For Your Health .....	6
Idea Hotline Update .....	6

## Travel Bits & Pieces

*Peggy Smith, Washington, DC*

**FY 05 Per Diem Rates.** Before traveling, please check the FY 05 per diem rates carefully. Many locations have reduced rates from FY 04.

**e-Travel Update.** A USDA e-Travel Implementation Kickoff Meeting was held on October 21, 2004. Each USDA agency formed an implementation team which consists of travel and financial individuals, workflow process and approval individuals, a technical lead, and a security lead. GIPSA’s team consists of members from both Headquarters and several field and regional offices. Training will be provided to agency representatives who in turn will train others within the Agency. e-Travel for GIPSA will be implemented on June 30, 2005.

# Changes Impacting the Swine Contract Library and Mandatory Price Reporting

*Jaime Adams, Washington, DC*

Livestock Mandatory Price Reporting (LMPR) legislation authorizing the Swine Contract Library (SCL) and Mandatory Price Reporting (MPR) expired on October 22, 2004. Both provide critical price, contracting, supply and demand information to livestock producers.

The Swine Contract Library is operated by P&SP's Des Moines regional office. P&SP's Office of Policy and Litigation and Policy Support worked in conjunction with the Des Moines office to issue letters to hog packers requesting continued voluntary participation in the SCL program. As of November 1, 2004, 19 of 36 packers returned letters agreeing to continue reporting voluntarily. Two of the major hog packers, Smithfield and Tyson, returned letters indicating that they will continue submitting contracts voluntarily.

The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) reported to P&SP that nearly all packers are voluntarily reporting prices for barrows and gilts, and for steers and heifers. There is less voluntary reporting for sheep and lambs, sows, and cows. For these categories, AMS will roll up prices for weekly or less frequent reports.

Since the SCL is now a voluntary program, P&SP posted a disclaimer on the SCL website informing users that MPR and P&SP's SCL information collection authority expired. The notice advises users that P&SP cannot assure the accuracy or completeness of the information contained on the website.

The Des Moines and Denver regional office's competition units are currently monitoring the hog and cattle markets for competition issues that result from changes in the price reporting system. Des Moines is examining contracts that rely on reported prices to determine payment to producers.

# Advisory Committee Members Wanted

GIPSA is seeking 5 members and 5 alternates to serve 3-year terms on the Grain Inspection Advisory Committee beginning in March 2005.

The committee is comprised of 15 members and 15 alternates who represent all sectors of the grain industry charged with advising GIPSA on the programs and services it delivers under the U.S. Grain Standards Act.

Nominations are open to all individuals without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, mental or physical handicap, marital status or sexual orientation.

Those interested in serving on the committee or in nominating individuals to serve, should contact GIPSA by telephone (202) 205-8281, by fax (202) 205-4714, or by e-mail to [Terri.L.Henry@usda.gov](mailto:Terri.L.Henry@usda.gov). Nomination forms also are available on GIPSA's web site at <http://www.usda.gov/gipsa/advcommittee/ad755.pdf>.

Completed nomination forms must be submitted by November 22.

---

## Plans, Plans, and More Plans

If you're looking for information on GIPSA's direction, check out the **Plans and Reports** section of *inGIPSA*. There you'll find GIPSA's:

-  Strategic Plan
-  Annual Performance Plans
-  Workforce Plan
-  Succession Plan
-  Civil Rights Plan
-  Outreach Plan
-  Affirmative Employment Plan

### 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

# Information Systems Security Awareness Training: Management Responsibility

*Carol Remmers, Washington, DC*

Why do GIPSA employees have to attend Information Systems Security (ISS) Awareness Training? Whose responsibility is it to make sure employees take this training? Both are very good questions, which I hope to

answer in this article.

There are several reasons for ISS training—most importantly, it's the law. The Computer Security Act of 1987 states: "Each Federal agency shall provide for the mandatory peri-

odic training in computer security awareness and accepted computer security practice of all employees who are involved with the management, use, or operation of each Federal computer system within or under the supervision of that agency."

Put in simpler terms, if you use a government computer and government resources, then you must be made aware of how to protect the information those resources contain. In the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-130, Management of Federal Information Resources, Appendix III, Security of Federal Automated Information Resources, it emphasizes, not technical controls, but management controls such as:

- 1) Individual responsibility;
- 2) Security awareness training; and
- 3) Accountability for one's actions

GIPSA supervisors help new employees with all USDA mandatory training, of which cyber security is just one. (EEO/CR and ethics training are among the others.) GIPSA supervisors should make sure new employees take the Ag Learn\* course, "IT Security Awareness - Beginner" and familiarize new employees with the GIPSA's IT Security web page located on *inGIPSA*.

*Continued, see Security Training on page 5.*

---

## Issuances

*Fred Kelley, Washington, D.C.*

### New Issuances

- FGIS PN-04-17, "NMR Calibrations," dated September 13, 2004 (Distribution: A, C, J).
- GIPSA PN-04-10, "Cyber Security Computer Awareness Training," dated September 15, 2004 (Distribution: GIPSA).
- FGIS PN-04-18, "National Soybean and Wheat Sample Collection Plans for the Pesticide Residue Program," dated September 20, 2004 (Distribution: A, C).
- GIPSA PN-04-09, "GIPSA Information Technology (IT) System Audits," dated September 23, 2004 (Distribution: GIPSA).
- MRP Administrative Notice, MRP 04-03, "Annual Reminder to High-Mileage Drivers," dated September 23, 2004 (Distribution: AMS, APHIS, GIPSA).

If you have questions or concerns, please contact **Fred Kelley** at phone: (202) 720-0259, fax (202) 690-2755, or e-mail: [Fred.H.Kelley@usda.gov](mailto:Fred.H.Kelley@usda.gov).

---

## Regulatory Info

*Tess Butler, Washington, DC*

### Federal Register Publications

- Advisory Committee Meeting - Published October 28, 2004

# Veterans' Day November 11, 2004

Writer Cynthia Ozick once said, “We often take for granted the very things that most deserve our gratitude. Freedom. Our Constitution. A good job. A wonderful family. On Veterans Day, America celebrates yet another that should be on that list - our military veterans.

By honoring veterans we remember their valor and we reflect on why they fought. Veterans fought to preserve the values of America. They fought to preserve our right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. They fought because our country asked them to take up arms. They went where they were sent, did what they had to do, and prayed they would survive and return home to family and friends. Some did not. We remember them with solemn ceremonies every Memorial Day.

However, Veterans Day is for those veterans who are still here. Men and women who are making a difference now in communities like ours around the nation. Today there are nearly 25 million American veterans...less than half of them are over the age of 65.

Look around us. Where are the younger veterans? Most likely, they are at work right now - making a difference for tomorrow. They are teachers, law enforcement officers, doctors, nurses, and engineers. Name the skill - you'll find veterans working there.

Historically, the celebration of Veterans Day is anchored in marking the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918 - the time the guns fell silent to end “the Great War.” Despite the Doughboys’ dream, it was not the “war to end all wars.” Every generation has fought its wars from Pearl Harbor to Baghdad.

Unheralded men and women - doing what needs to be done - just as those who came before them did. They don't do it for pay. They don't do it for glory. They do it because they have been chosen - have been privileged - to pay the price of freedom.

As we honor veterans, remember that our freedom did not come easy. On the battlefields of the globe, America's finest men and women have shed blood and tears. They did it, not for recognition or reward, but simply because they love America — and they love those who share the burden with them.

We shall always remember them. We are forever thankful to those who served ... and to those serving today.

Source: *The American Legion*

## Security Training, *from page 4.*

USDA's Office of Cyber Security has issued additional policy about user awareness training. For example, “CS-015, Cyber Security Guidance on Computer Security Awareness Training Programs, CS-015” states that agency management must “ensure that all users are appropriately trained to fulfill security responsibilities based on their need-to-know, before allowing them access to any USDA information system.” CS-015 can be found in its entirety at:

[http://www.ocio.net.usda.gov/ocio/cyber\\_sec/policy.html](http://www.ocio.net.usda.gov/ocio/cyber_sec/policy.html).

In addition, I recommend that supervisors check out the “Training and Development” section of *inGIPSA*.

\* *AgLearn is a Learning Management System (LMS). It is USDA's access point to various e-learning content (e.g., free GoLearn courses, SkillSoft, NETg, etc.) and to specialized agency training courses.*

---

## Amarillo Designation

*In September, Administrator Donna Reifschneider presented a full 3-year designation renewal to Amarillo Grain Exchange, Inc., officials Cash and Sharon Burris.*



# GIPSA Idea Hotline Update

*Norma Phelps,  
Washington, DC*

Here are the ideas received on the GIPSA Idea Hotline during October 2004. If you have questions about any ideas or the Hotline, please call me at 202-720-1017.

## *Suggestor/Suggestion*

Philip Warren, Denver, CO/  
**Clarification of September Submission**—Create and Maintain a Compilation of Each Region's Registrants/Entities Data Who Are On Notice For Violations

Kristen E. Pirtle, Des Moines, IA /  
Establish a Report That Shows Number of Hours and Recovery Amounts Spent For Investigations For Compliance Work

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 choose to use.**

# For Your Health

*Mavis Rogers, Washington, DC*

**Avoid Sniffles This Cold and Flu Season.** Stock up on chicken soup, tissues, and cold medications. It is that time of year again! Cold symptoms can last for weeks and are a leading cause of job absenteeism. The flu can knock you off your feet for days and leave you feeling exhausted when it sweeps through.

The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), a department of the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH), says that to minimize your chances of catching a cold or the flu, you should follow these simple techniques:

- ✚ Eat nutritiously.
- ✚ Drink plenty of water.
- ✚ Get adequate rest.
- ✚ Exercise regularly.
- ✚ Minimize stress, which lowers your resistance.
- ✚ Reduce or stop smoking.
- ✚ Ask your health care provider about getting a flu vaccine.

You can avoid spreading colds and flu to your family and co-workers by following these "cold/flu courtesies:"

- ✚ Wash your hands every two hours to avoid spreading the virus to work surfaces. Anti-bacterial lotion alone is not recommended, but is effective when used in combination with hand washing.
- ✚ Use tissues instead of handkerchiefs to cover sneezes and coughs. Throw them away and wash your hands immediately.
- ✚ Avoid shaking hands when you have a cold or the flu.
- ✚ Avoid crowds when possible.
- ✚ Clean work surfaces, doorknobs, etc., with a disinfectant.

*Courtesy: Environmental Health & 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 3601  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-3601  
Phone (202) 720-5091  
FAX (202) 205-9237  
[dana.b.stewart@usda.gov](mailto:dana.b.stewart@usda.gov)

**by November 25, 2004!**

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

---