



GIPSA News

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

December 2008

From the Administrator

Terry Van Doren

Seasons greetings and a warm hello to all of the GIPSA family! For those who missed the news, I was named GIPSA Administrator on November 3. I am proud to be part of this dedicated team and its important mission. I have had the pleasure of meeting a number of our staff in Washington, DC, and I hope to soon meet many of our field staff as well. I am also looking forward to taking part in the Grain Inspection Advisory Committee meeting this December in Kansas City.

My thanks to all who have welcomed me so very warmly as I quickly assumed my new responsibilities. Thanks also to Jim Link, who left GIPSA after a 3-year tenure as administrator to lead the Agricultural Marketing Service. Jim has left behind a strong organization of which we can all be proud.

A little of my background... I have been at USDA since 2005. I came to the Department to work on research, education, and economic policy issues, and later became senior advisor

to Bruce Knight, Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs. In 2007, I took a 1-year leave of absence from USDA to work for Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky during the development of the 2008 Farm Bill – the 5-year reauthorization of U.S. farm, conservation, rural development, and nutrition policy.

I grew up on a grain and livestock farm in Macoupin County, IL. My family raised primarily beef cattle and feeder pigs which were sold in various auction markets in both Illinois and Missouri, so I have firsthand knowledge of the important work that we do on the packers and stockyards side. Additionally, our family farm raised corn, soybeans, wheat, grain sorghum, and hay, so I have an appreciation for the grain inspection side of our agency as well.

I am a graduate of the University of Illinois with a bachelor's degree in Animal Sciences. While at the University of Illinois, I had the opportunity to be involved with some

international soybean quality research, allowing me to travel internationally to some of the largest ports that were importing U.S. soybeans and other grains. This experience also gave me an understanding of our grain inspection system and its role in today's thriving international agricultural trade. After completing my undergraduate degree, I received a master's degree in Agricultural Sciences from Colorado State University.

After graduation, I moved to the Nation's capital and served in various roles in the agricultural policy arena. In 1999, I joined the staff of my home-state senator who served on the Senate Agriculture Committee – U.S. Senator Peter G. Fitzgerald of Illinois. I first served as his Agriculture Subcommittee staff director and later as his legislative director.

So, now that you know more about me, I look forward to working with you on your important efforts on behalf of our nation's farmers and ranchers. Have a safe and prosperous holiday season.

Names in the News

AWARDS

Brian Adam, Technical Services Division (TSD), received a spot award for exceptional effort in coordinating and administering practical examinations to perspective licensed inspectors and promoting initiatives to improve program efficiency and cost effectiveness.

Donald Akers, San Antonio, received an award for sustained performance contributing to the effectiveness and efficiency of the Compliance Division's Review Program and FGIS.

William Ashley, Washington, DC, received an award for sustained superior performance contributing to the increased effectiveness and efficiency of the Compliance Division's Review Program and FGIS.

Joseph Barney, Wesley Blake, Joanne Nielsen, and Jason Vanfossan, TSD, received spot awards in recognition of outstanding effort in completing the analysis of Pesticide Data Program samples.

Rodney Bell, Clarence Brown, Donald Damm, Alan Disch, Ramon Luevano, and Joseph Lopez, TSD, received spot awards for outstanding performance in processing and grading appeals in a timely and accurate manner during periods of high volume.

Cathleen Brenner, TSD, received an extra effort award for substantial contributions to the standardization of commercial grain inspection equipment in the United States through effective leadership of the grain instrumentation National Type Evaluation Laboratory.

Bill Burden, TSD, received an extra effort award for exceptional commitment, skill, and creativity in guiding the development of the National Grain Center.

Tess Butler, Washington, DC, received an award for outstanding performance in attending to detail, sharing information, and working with others to ensure continuity of information and regulatory management operations, thereby helping to create and sustain an environment that promotes timely and responsive customer service.

Rangan Chinnaswamy, Aarion Johnson, Rhonda Lyne, and Brooke Rodriguez, TSD, received an extra effort group award for their diligence, creativity and effective teamwork in developing and improving wheat functionality test methods.

Robert Crook, Cedar Rapids, received an award for sustained performance contributing to the effectiveness and efficiency of the Compliance Division's Review Program and FGIS.

Larry Engebretson, TSD, received an extra effort award for outstanding diligence and creativity in reviewing existing processes and developing recommendations to improve GIPSA policies and procedures regarding model evaluation and unit testing of sampling equipment.

Larry Freese, TSD, received an extra effort award for providing excellent statistical training for official grain graders.

Candace Hildreth, Washington, DC, received a performance award for sustained superior performance contributing to the increased effectiveness and efficiency of the Compliance Division's Regulatory Branch.

Patricia Jackson, Steve Burton, Jim Rhodes, Ryan Rudder, and John Bass, TSD, received spot awards for ensuring the moisture program objectives were met during personnel shortages.

Don Kendall, Michael Eustrom, James McLaurin, Dempsey Lewis, and Mark Ruth, TSD, and **Ken Critchfield, Diane Palecek, and Kenneth Weaver**, FMD, received an extra effort group award for exceptional program management and organizational improvements in centralizing GIPSA's oversight activities.

Continued, see Names on page 3.

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Robert Krouse, Kansas City, received an award for sustained performance contributing to the effectiveness and efficiency of the Compliance Division's Review Program and FGIS.

Tyhisa Luckey, Washington, DC, received a spot award for outstanding service to the GIPSA Office of the Administrator.

Rosemary Mayne, Washington, DC, received an award for superior performance in supporting GIPSA in developing and delivering technical, leadership, and supervisory training, and for timely coordination of a wide range of Human Capital Management projects to meet Federal, Departmental, and Agency requirements.

Joanne Peterson, Washington, DC, received an award for superior performance in coordinating Freedom of Information and Privacy Act activities in a manner that exceeds Federal requirements, and for timely completion of the USDA-mandated GIPSA Action Plan to ensure the protection of Personally Identifiable Information.

Roderick Prather, Lubbock, received a time-off award for his initiative and persistence in obtaining payment for a South Dakota rancher's bulls that were shipped to Mexico.

Ted Respet, Superior, received an award for sustained outstanding performance contributing to the in-

creased effectiveness and efficiency of the Compliance Division's Regulatory Branch.

Kraig Roesch, Denver, received an award for outstanding performance in all areas of responsibility during FY 2008.

Virginia Roseberry, Washington, DC, received an award for sustained performance contributing to the effectiveness and efficiency of the Compliance Division's Review Program and FGIS.

Gregory Tomas, Washington, DC, received an award for sustained superior performance contributing to the increased effectiveness and efficiency of the Compliance Division's Regulatory Program and FGIS.

Luis Valdes, Washington, DC, received an award for sustained superior performance contributing to the increased effectiveness and efficiency of the Compliance Division's Regulatory Branch.

Thomas Weber, TSD, received an extra effort award for creativity and diligence in developing and validating a significantly improved aflatoxin reference method Based on UHPLC.

Mark Wooden, TSD, received an award for sustained performance contributing to the effectiveness and efficiency of the Compliance Division's Review Program and FGIS.

Issuances

Terri Henry, Washington, D.C.

FGIS Policy Memorandum Reference No. 218, "Average Quality Unit Trains," dated November 5, 2008

P&SP Directive 9700-40, "Civil Penalty Stipulation Agreements," dated November 20, 2008

FGIS Program Notice 09-02, "Ordering Plastic Bags, Coin Envelopes, Spear Envelopes, Plastic Quart Bottles and Plastic Cable Ties," dated November 24, 2008

Regulatory Info

Tess Butler, Washington, DC

Federal Register Publications

- United States Standards for Whole Dry Peas, Split Peas, and Lentils, published November 19, 2008
- United States Standards for Beans, published November 19, 2008

Employee Assistance Program

Call for confidential help.

Washington, DC personnel, call...
1-800-222-0364

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

David Lowe Receives Presidential Volunteer Service Award

Chuck Britton, California

David Lowe, supervisory agricultural commodity grader with the FGIS Board of Appeals and Review in Kansas City, was recently chosen as a recipient of the "President's Call to Service Award" for volunteer service. **David** is a graduate of Texas A&M University, and has worked for FGIS over 30 years.

David has been an active volunteer with the Boy Scouts of America organization in the Kansas City area for more than 20 years. He has been a scout and troop leader, and carried out many other functions with the local chapter of Boy Scouts in the Kansas City area, the state of Missouri, and the Midwest. His Boy Scout work began with his involvement with his own son, **Jonathan**. His wife **Joan** also played an active part early with a "Cub Scout" group. At last count, over 55 young men under **David's** tutelage have achieved the honor of "Eagle Scout," which is the highest award of the organization. Achieving "Eagle Scout" status requires many years of dedication, hard work, and commitment under the guidance and mentoring of a Scout Leader. Our country has many leaders, past and present, who were Eagle Scouts, including presidents, governors, senators, community leaders, and corporate executives.

David currently is still active as a Boy Scout leader even though his son has grown and graduated college. He attends meetings every week and participates in Scout camps during the summer and school breaks. **David** has a passion for inspiring young people.

It is people like **David** who serve as volunteers and make our communities and Nation better for all. Congratulations to **David** and his family for his many years of helping others.

IT Tidbit

David Will, Washington, DC

Outlook 2007 has improved its usability and ease to accomplish many types of communication functions. One of Outlook's major organizational functions is the calendar. The use of electronic calendars can help every employee organize their day, save wasted efforts trying to find out if someone is in or out, and if they are available or not.

To request access to another GIPSA employee's calendar, simply send them a request to view their calendar. To start the request for employees within GIPSA, click on File, Open, Another User's Folder, Select Calendar, and then type in the person's last name and highlight it.

If you already have access to the person's calendar, Outlook will automatically display it. If you don't have access to the desired calendar, you will be asked if you want to send a request to see the person's calendar. The person will receive a message requesting to view his or her calendar. The person can simply click to allow or deny the access.

Grain Inspection Advisory Committee to Meet

The Grain Inspection Advisory Committee will meet December 16 and 17, 2008, in Kansas City, MO.

This advisory committee's members represent all facets of U.S. grain marketing. The committee is charged with providing advice to the GIPSA administrator on implementing the U.S. Grain Standards Act.

The December meeting agenda will include a review of GIPSA's grain inspection program operations, international programs, technical training programs, sorghum odor line validation, research and technology, the use of contracts for export service provision, and implementation of Quality Management Programs in the official inspection and weighing system.

For more information, contact Terri Henry, telephone (202) 205-8281, email terri.l.henry@usda.gov, or fax (202) 690-2173.

**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

Designation Activities

FGIS recently announced the following actions on designations to officially inspect and weigh grain in specified areas in Alabama, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Texas, Washington and Wyoming. Entities are designated to inspect and weigh grains based upon a comprehensive selection process.

FGIS is asking for applicants to provide official services in the Topeka, Kansas; Cedar Rapids, Iowa; Minot, North Dakota; and Cincinnati, Ohio areas, and requests comments on the official agencies serving these areas. Applications and comments are due by January 2, 2009.

FGIS also is requesting comments in support of or objection to the applicants seeking official designation to provide services in the unassigned areas of east Texas. The applicants are Central Illinois Grain Inspection doing business as Lone Star Grain Inspection and Gulf Country Inspection Service, Inc. Comments must be postmarked or electronically dated on or before December 31, 2008.

FGIS has designated Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries (Alabama); Kankakee Grain Inspection, Inc. (Kankakee); Springfield Grain Inspection, Inc. (Springfield); State Grain Inspection, Inc. (State Grain); and Washington Department of Agriculture (Washington) to inspect or inspect and weigh grain effective January 1, 2009, through December 31, 2011. For official grain inspection services, contact Alabama at 251-438-2549, Kankakee at 815-365-2268, Springfield at 217-522-5233, State Grain at 952-808-8566 and Washington at 360-753-1484.

For further information contact Virginia Roseberry at 202-720-9803, fax 202-690-2755 or e-mail Virginia.V.Roseberry@usda.gov.

Travel Bits & Pieces

Monica Alexander, Washington, DC

SmartPay2 Implementation. On November 30, 2008, USDA employees transitioned from Bank of America travel cards to U.S. Bank travel cards. The Bank of America travel credit cards will be “turned off” on November 30, 2008, therefore employees should destroy their cards. The new card information has been uploaded in employees’ GovTrip profiles for use when making travel reservations.

ISSUE	RECOMMENDED ACTION
Missing Travel Card	Contact your administrative point of contact immediately and report missing card. A new card will be requested and issued to you.
Missing PIN	Call customer service at the number on the back of your card at 888-994-6722 and request the PIN.
Change of Address	Contact your administrative point of contact and provide the new information.
Incorrect USDA Agency on front of card	Report issue with your administrative point of contact and confirm that your card is active with GIPSA.

Travel card holders who have not received their card or pin number, or have other issues, should do the following:

GovTrip Split Disbursement. On November 25, the split disbursement feature in GovTrip will be turned off, due to the transition to the new SmartPay2 travel card program. Travelers will receive full reimbursement of their travel vouchers and must remit payment to U. S. Bank and Bank of America, if charges were billed to the cards.

REMINDER. Mandatory Travel Card Training deadline is January 15, 2009 (web-based) and January 23, 2009 (hard copy).

Equipment Capability Testing Goes Online

Mary Vick, Kansas City



The next component of FGIS*online* – the **Equipment Capability Testing** (ECT) program – has rolled out. The application automates GIPSA’s nationwide program for testing and verifying the accuracy of equipment used to officially test the quality of grain and related products. The program houses electronic data on the performance and location of each piece of covered equipment in the national inspection and weighing system; automates the equipment testing process; and immediately notifies official service providers of equipment performance. ECT greatly speeds and streamlines the process of checktesting official inspection and weighing equipment and provides users with fast, accurate, and consistent feedback.

WHAT WILL THIS APPLICATION DO FOR YOU? The ECT application will speed the equipment checktesting process for all official service providers. Users will be able to:

- Enter checktest results and get real-time feedback on the Pass/Fail status of the test,
- Receive e-mail notification when samples are created and shipped to inspection locations,
- View and edit equipment inventory listings and add new equipment from the Approved Equipment List,
- Track the status of equipment in service and create reports on demand, and
- Quickly and easily access all equipment checktesting records electronically.

TYPES OF EQUIPMENT INCLUDED IN ECT:

- Certificate Color Referenced Qualifying Caption
- Barley Pearlors
- Dockage Machines
- Falling Number Apparatus
- Hand Sieves
- Hopper Scales
- Laboratory Scales
- Mechanical Diverter Samplers
- Moisture Meters
- Mycotoxin Test Kits
- Near-Infrared Transmittance (NIRT) Equipment
- Rice Millers and Shellers
- Railroad Track Scales
- Vehicle and Commodity Scales

HOW DO I GET STARTED? Equipment specialists who have already completed training and practiced on the training site need only request access by following the links on the GIPSA webpage for FGIS*online* and click on Equipment Capability Testing: https://fgis.gipsa.usda.gov/default_home_FGIS.aspx. New users should contact Mary Vick at 816-823-2733 or Mary.L.Vick@usda.gov to setup training and access to the practice site.

For Your Health

Mavis Rogers, Washington, DC

Holiday Health and Safety Tips. The holidays are a time to celebrate, give thanks, and reflect. They are also a time to pay special attention to your health. Give the gift of health and safety to yourself and others by following these holiday tips.

- ★ Wash your hands often. Keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps you can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. Wash your hands with soap and clean running water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and clean water are not available, use an alcohol-based product.
- ★ Stay warm. Cool temperatures can cause serious health problems, especially in infants and older adults. Stay dry and dress warmly in several layers of loose-fitting, tightly woven clothes.
- ★ Manage stress. The holidays don't need to take a toll on your health. Keep a check on over-commitment and over-spending. Balance work, home and play. Get support from family and friends. Practice time management. Keep a relaxed and positive outlook.
- ★ Travel safely. Whether you are traveling across town or around the world, help ensure your trip is safe. Don't drink and drive. Wear a seat belt every time you drive or ride in a motor vehicle. Always buckle your child in the car using a child safety seat, booster seat, or seat belt according to his/her height, weight, and age.
- ★ Be smoke-free. Avoid smoking and breathing other people's smoke.
- ★ Get checkups and vaccinations. Exams and screenings can help find problems before they start. They can also help find problems early when the chances for treatment and cure are better. Vaccinations help prevent diseases and save lives. Schedule a visit with your health care provider for a yearly exam. Ask what vaccinations and tests you should get based on your age, lifestyle, travel plans, medical history, and family health history.
- ★ Watch the kids. Children are at high risk for injuries that can lead to death or disability. Keep a watchful eye on your kids when they are eating and playing. Keep potentially dangerous toys, food, drinks, household items, choking hazards (like coins and hard candy) and other objects out of kids reach. Learn how to provide early treatment for children who are choking. Make sure toys are used properly.
- ★ Prevent injuries. Injuries from falls and fireworks often occur around the holidays. Use step stools instead of furniture when hanging decorations. Leave the fireworks to the professionals.
- ★ Most residential fires occur during the winter months. Keep candles away from children, pets, walkways, trees, and curtains. Never leave fireplaces, stoves, or candles unattended. Don't use generators, grills, or other gasoline – or charcoal-burning devices inside your home or garage. Install a smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector in your home. Test them once a month, and replace batteries twice a year.

Courtesy: Centers for Disease Control



***Happy Holidays
to all!
Wishing you a
New Year filled
with health,
happiness, and
peace.***

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 December 25, 2008!

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.

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