



GIPSA NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE EMPLOYEES OF THE GRAIN INSPECTION, PACKERS AND STOCKYARDS

FEBRUARY

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FGIS Matters...!

Randall Jones, Washington, DC

A couple of weeks ago, I had a conversation with a friend in which the following question came up “what makes the U.S. great?” As you might imagine, we each had our ideas and thoughts and certainly did not agree to or settle on any particular point. You might ask what this has to do with FGIS. Well, a couple of days after this discussion with my friend, the question came to my mind “what makes FGIS great?”

After giving this much thought it is obvious that there are a number of things that make our Program great and I would like to share my insight for your consideration. FGIS is somewhat unique within the Federal government in that we charge for the vast majority of our services which I would suggest provides a unique opportunity for us to develop a direct relationship with many of our stakeholders. It is through this relationship that we learn firsthand how those outside of FGIS value services.

Over the past years I have been blessed with the opportunity to travel across this great country and visit almost every office and duty point within our Program. It is this experience that I draw upon when I say that FGIS’s greatness is based upon our greatest asset – FGIS staff. We have proven time and again that we are **dependable, talented, committed** and take great **pride** in our work.

Think about it – when you purchase services (e.g. plumber), what is important to you? What characteristics drive your decision as to whether or not you will ask the plumber to return to your house?

You want someone that is **dependable** and will show up on time for the scheduled appointment.

You want someone that is **talented** and will provide the level and quality of services you need and expect. In short, you want a plumber that can fix your problem.

You want someone who is **committed** and believes in what they are doing and their goal is not to simply separate you from your money.

And lastly, you want someone who has **pride** in their work and cares deeply about their work and will perform their work to the best of their ability.

I would propose to you that I just described the typical FGIS Team Member –



Randal Jones

Continued, see Message on page 2.



GIPSA Idea Hotline

GIPSA Idea Hotline is open for business.
Please send your suggestions or ideas to
GIPSA-Ideas@usda.gov; fax them to 202-690-2173; or
telephone them to 1-800-455-3447 or 202-720-7045.

It is best to send them via fax or email to reduce the possibility of transcription errors;
however, ideas will be accepted regardless of the method of transmission

Message from cover page

dependable, talented, committed and takes great **pride** in serving U.S. farmers, handlers, marketers, and exporters by promoting the marketing of high quality U.S. grain and grain related products.

Secretary Vilsack visits the National Grain Center. On October 23, we had the pleasure of hosting **Secretary Vilsack** when he visited the National Grain Center in KC and toured the facilities (see article by **Mary Alonzo, Director, Technology and Science Division**). The **Secretary** was duly impressed with our facilities and work but seemed most captivated by the **FGIS Team Members** and their commitment to our mission.

Market Update.

Simply put – what a difference a year makes!

The January 10, 2014 Crop Production report from the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) noted that for the 2013 crop that “Corn production is estimated at a record 13.9 billion bushels, down slightly from the November 1 forecast but 29 percent above 2012. The average yield in the United States is estimated at 158.8 bushels per acre. This is down 1.6 bushels from the November forecast but 35.4 bushels above the 2012 average yield of 123.4.”

The NASS report added that, “Soybean production in 2013 totaled 3.29 billion bushels, up 1 percent from the November 1 forecast and up 8 percent from 2012. United States production is the third largest on record. The average yield per acre is estimated at 43.3 bushels per acre, 0.3 bushel above the November forecast and 3.5 bushels above last year’s yield.”

Let’s take a look at and compare the grain exports from this point in Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 to this point last year in FY 2013. Total corn exports have increased by 120 percent; soybean exports increased by 24 percent; and wheat exports increased by 26 percent; while sorghum exports decreased by 14 percent.

Looking at the major U.S. grain importing countries, for the same time period in FY 2013 and 2014, corn exports to Mexico increased by 112 percent, and by 234 percent to China. Soybean exports to China remained about the same at about 16.4 million metric tons, while soybeans to Taiwan dropped by 10 percent. The largest increase in U.S. grain exports by percentage was wheat - Brazil had an increase of 3785 percent (26 metric tons last year compared to 1,110,000 metric tons this year) and China increased its wheat imports by 1335 percent (61,082 metric tons last year compared to 877,128 metric tons this year).

Based on the crop reports and the response by international buyers of U.S. grain, we are very excited about the prospects for a banner year for U.S. grain moving throughout the world. It looks like we are going to be very busy at the export grain inspection labs.

Certainly one of the beneficiaries of the bumper grain crop is the new **Louis Dreyfus** lab in **Port Allen, Louisiana** (just across the river from **Baton Rouge**). I was fortunate to be able to attend the grand opening with the **Administrator Mitchell, New Orleans Field Office Manager Kerry Petit, League City Field Office Manager Dave Grady**, and a number of other **NOLA Team Members**. I am happy to report, that notwithstanding the National Grain Center lab, the **Louis Dreyfus** lab is by far the most impressive of our labs in the U.S. **Louis Dreyfus** is to be commended for providing us such an outstanding facility as they certainly did

Continued, see Message on page 10.

Names in the News

Retirements

James A. Holmes retired from his Area Manager position in the New Orleans Field Office on January 3, 2014, with 37 ½ years of service. He has worked for the USDA, AMS, Grain Division which was later changed to the Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) and then to the Grain Inspection Packers and Stockyards (GIPSA). James graduated in 1975 from Alcorn State University with a degree in Agricultural Education. He began his federal government career in 1976 in Mobile, Alabama, as an Agricultural Commodity Grader for approximately twelve (12) years and in 1989 he moved to Galveston, Texas to accept a Shift Supervisor position for two (2) years. He later accepted a lateral transfer in 1991 to the Lutcher, LA Field office which was absorbed into the New Orleans Field Office at Destrehan, La. and later he was promoted to the position of Area Manager.

His immediately plans are to take some computer courses at a local college, spend time with his wife Diane and his son Jacorian playing football, basketball, other sports and of course he plans to do some fishing.

New Orleans Field Office, Supervisory Agricultural Commodity Grader, **Charles Trevillion** retired with 37 ½ years of service to the U. S. Government on January 03, 2014. He graduated from Alcorn State University with a degree in Agricultural Education in 1975.

Charles began his federal employment in the St. Louis Field Office on June 20, 1976 as an Agricultural Commodity Grader. He transferred to the Mobile Field Office in November 1976. After the Mobile Field Office closed in June 1991, he was transferred to the Lutcher Field Office. Since 1991 he has worked in the Lutcher, Destrehan and New Orleans Field Offices. He accepted an Supervisory Agricultural Commodity Grader position in the New Orleans Field Office in January 2001 where he is now concluding his career.

He plans on spending more time with his family while also doing some traveling and fishing

Terry LeBouef retired on December 31, 2013, with 26 years of federal service. Terry is from Garyville, Louisiana. Terry joined FGIS on October 18, 1987 after working with Bayside Elevator for 14 years. Terry was an Agricultural Commodity Technician with FGIS throughout his career. He and his wife Joan have 3 sons and 5 grandsons with another grandchild on the way. Terry's retirement plans include spending time with his family.

Roy Johnson retired on January 2, 2014, with 34 years of federal service. Roy is from Baltimore MD. Roy began his career with the Federal Government in 1979. He began his FGIS career in the Baltimore Field Office as a GS 9. He then transferred to the Brunswick, GA office in 1999. Roy performed many details in various offices such as Portland, New Orleans, and Toledo as Supervisor, grader, sampler. He has had the pleasure of working with some of FGIS finest employees throughout his many years.

Roy and his wife Sandra have 2 children. In his retirement, Roy plans catching up on spending time with his wife and

Issuance Report

Terri Henry, Washington, DC

- FGIS Directive 9180.74, Service Fees and Billing Codes, dated October 1, 2013
- FGIS Program Notice 14-04, "Approval of New Nuclear Magnetic Resonance (NMR) Instruments" dated November 21, 2013

Names in the News

Retirements

James M. Davis, Agricultural Commodity Grader Grain (ACG), Corpus Christi, Texas, began working for USDA, GIPSA, FGIS, October 1977, at the previously known Corpus Christi Field Office, Corpus Christi, Texas. Before joining FGIS, James was employed with the grain exchange from 1973 to 1977, he decided to bring his experience to FGIS and was hired as an ACG. When the Corpus Christi Public Elevator exploded in 1981, James was a part of those which were injured. He worked 36 years with FGIS and has shared so much of his grain knowledge with new and old inspectors. He will be truly missed by all of his colleagues.

James Morcaldi (Jim), Western Regional office Financial Unit Supervisor, started his career with the Federal Government in December 1983 as an Auditor in the Packers & Stockyards Program office in North Brunswick, New Jersey. Prior to his coming to GIPSA, Jim served in the United States Army from July 1967 to April 1970 as a helicopter mechanic in South Korea. After discharge from the Army, Jim went to college on the G.I. Bill acquiring a bachelor's degree in accounting and a master's degree in business administration and was employed as a corporate accounting manager. Mr. Morcaldi's career advancement brought him to the Western Regional Office in April 1999 where he served first as a Senior Auditor and then as the Financial Unit Supervisor since 2002. Mr. Morcaldi closes out his distinguished career with the Federal Government on January 11, 2014, with nearly 33 years of Federal Government service. In addition to his civilian service, Jim served with the Army National Guard with a total of 20 years of service to the states of New Jersey, California and Colorado. His proudest accomplishment in the Guard was receiving the New Jersey Army National Guard Medal of Honor for saving the life of an automobile accident victim. Mr. Morcaldi plans to relocate with his wife of 44 years back to northern California where they can be closer to their children and grandkids.

Kellye Goto, Agricultural Marketing Specialist, started working for P&S in the Western Regional Office in 2009 as an intern student in the Central Reporting Unit (CRU) as an Office Assistant, and then an Agricultural Marketing Assistant. She assisted CRU with filing, analyzing and processing annual reports. She completed her Bachelor's degree in International Business, and was promoted to Financial Reports Assistant. Kellye was then accepted into the USDA BASU Graduate Scholarship, Student Career Experience Program and successfully completed her Master's Degree in Business Administration at the University of Colorado-Denver. Kellye was then promoted to Agricultural Marketing Specialist, and continued to work with CRU on annual reports as well as the Business Practices Unit with other Marketing Specialists learning how to do investigations and gather history on entities applying for registration and bonding. Kellye has remained a dedicated and hard-working employee, and will truly be missed. As she enters the next chapter of her life, she plans to relocate to Hawaii. We wish Kellye well in her future endeavors and thank her for the time and commitment she gave to the agency.

William A. Ashley, Assistant to the Director, Quality Assurance and Compliance Division, retired on January 11, 2014. Prior to beginning his Federal service, Bill worked as a cost accountant with the Pabst Brewing Company, Pabst, Georgia; a corporate payroll manager with the Rhodes Furniture chain, Atlanta, Georgia; and as a corporate staff accountant with Miller Brothers Industries, Conyers, Georgia. Bill began his Federal service in April 1976, as an auditor with USDA's Packers and Stockyards Administration (PSA) in its Atlanta, Georgia regional office. In that capacity, he performed numerous financial and trade practice audits, involving all species of livestock, as well as poultry. In 1981, Bill transferred to PSA's Washington, DC headquarters, where he served as an auditor in the Meat Merchandising Branch, and continued to conduct financial and trade practice audits. He also participated in several high-profile commercial bribery investigations. Following several years in the Meat Merchandising Branch, Bill became the Assistant to PSA's Administrator. He later served as Deputy Director of PSA's Management Services Staff, and was also PSA's Budget Officer. When PSA later created its own compliance office, Bill became its Assistant Director. In 1994, USDA had a reorganization, which combined the Packers and Stockyards Administration with the Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS), to form the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA). As a result, Bill became the Deputy Director of GIPSA's Executive Resources Staff. He later joined the FGIS Compliance Division, where he currently serves. Bill also spent time on a detail with USDA's fledgling National Organic Program, helping create a compliance office there.

Names in the News

Retirements

Dinia Ray Hollis, Supervisory Agricultural Commodity Grader Grain, League City, began his service with the FGIS Beaumont Sub Office in January 1980 and began his walk with USDA. In the early 1980's when FGIS downsized Ray took a position with FSIS as a Food Safety Inspector then several years later transferred back to GIPSA, FGIS and spent many years working for the New Orleans Field Office. He has work 34 years with the federal government and he has now decided to continue his career working on his farm, officiating sporting events, and giving back to the community.

Donald Wayne Ellis, Supervisory Agricultural Commodity Grader Grain, League City, began his career with GIPSA, FGIS on March 13, 1977. Before joining GIPSA, FGIS, Donald was a Grain Inspector with the Houston Market's Exchange and in 1977, he decided to bring his experience to FGIS, Houston Field Office. He was hired as a ACG and through the years he worked his way up to become a FGIS Supervisor. He has worked 37 years with GIPSA, FGIS, and have trained many employees. After retirement Donald plans are to spend more time with his family.

Gregory Tomas retired from his position as the Branch Chief of the Quality Assurance and Compliance Division's Investigation and Enforcement Branch on **January 3, 2014**. He began his career in grain inspection in 1975 as a grain sampler for the Baltimore Chamber of Commerce. In 1978, Greg accepted a position with FGIS in the Baltimore Field Office, as an agricultural commodity grader. During his time in the Baltimore Field Office, Greg served as Quality Assurance Specialist, Shift Supervisor, Commodity Coordinator, and Assistant Field Office Manager. In 2003, the Baltimore Field Office was closed and Greg was reassigned to the Compliance Division's Regulatory Branch in Washington, D.C. as a Compliance Officer. In 2006, Greg was selected as the Branch Chief of the Regulatory Branch, which after reorganization became the Investigation and Enforcement Branch. Greg's retirement plans include, traveling, golfing, woodworking and enjoying his 7 grand kids.

Thomas C. O'Connor retired from his position as **Director, Quality Assurance and Compliance Division** on January 11, 2014. He began his career in grain industry in 1974 when he joined the Bunge Corporation at its New York City headquarters. While serving with Bunge, Tom held various positions moving up from **Operations Specialist** to **Grain Merchandiser** at the Company's Vicksburg, MS soybean processing facility and **Plant Manager** of Bunge's soybean processing facility in Logansport, IN. Tom joined The Andersons, Inc. in 1986 as **Operations Manager** at the company's Delphi, IN facility. In 1998, Tom joined the Central Soya Company as **Operations Manager** for the company's grain operations. He moved to DC in 1990 after accepting a position as **Director of Technical Services** for the National Grain and Feed Association where he was responsible for the Association's policies and activities in the areas of safety and health, food safety, environmental compliance, biotechnology, grain quality and phytosanitary issues. In 2005, Tom accepted a position as **National Trade Director for Grain** with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service where he led U.S. negotiations with foreign governments on phytosanitary matters impacting the export of U.S. grains to overseas markets. He joined GIPSA in 2008 in his current role where he has led the Agency's quality assurance and compliance activities, including investigations of alleged violations of the U.S. Grain Standards and Agricultural Marketing Acts, compliance with official inspection and weighing procedures, designation and re-designation of private and state agencies performing official services in domestic markets, and quality assurance activities. In 2010, he assumed additional collateral duties managing the Agency's labor relations efforts.

Julia Nelis retired from her position as Foreign Travel Coordinator, Departmental Initiatives and International Affairs after 36 years of U.S. Government Service and 24 of those years were with the Federal Grain Inspection Service. Julie held positions in FGIS in the former Equipment Branch, Field Management Division Office of the Director, Office of the Deputy Administrator, and the Departmental Initiatives and International Affairs. In 1978, Julie began her career with USDA in the Agricultural Marketing Service Tobacco Division. Julie also worked for the U.S. Internal Revenue Service and the U.S. Department of Justice from late 1989 to mid-2001, at which time, she returned to FGIS. Julie plans to travel and spend more time with family and friends. Julie also plans to spend the winters in the warmer climate of Florida.

Names in the News

Reintroductions



My name is Tyhisa "Ty" Luckey and I first began my government career with USDA/APHIS through the Operation Jumpstart (OJ) Program as an Office Automation Assistant on July 22, 2007. After eight weeks of training in the OJ Program, I was placed in the GIPSA Administrator's office to work with the Packers and Stockyards Program's (P&SP) Deputy and Assistant Deputy Administrator where I remained until I accepted my new position in Management and Budget Services (MBS). While working for the P&SP Deputy Administrator, aside from my other administrative duties I was able to gain valuable experience managing budgetary data for the P&SP Headquarters monthly operating plan. I have accepted a position as a Budget Analyst in MBS. In my new position I will handle the agency's IT Capital Planning and Investments Portfolio as well as work with the IT Staff to establish the budget framework for their Operating Plans. As I reflect back on when I first began my government career until now, I am pleased and thankful at my journey thus far. I look forward to the new challenges and opportunities I will be faced with in my new position.



Huong Nguyen comes to GIPSA with a wealth of knowledge in budget. She graduated from George Mason University with a degree in Finance and started her career as a federal contractor. Huong later joined the federal government with the Postal Regulatory Commission where she worked in the Accounting and Finance department. Huong is excited to be a part of GIPSA's budget team and looks forward to meeting and working with everyone.

Links of Interest

GIPSA Town Hall Meeting Recording Link

In case you missed the GIPSA Town hall meeting held November 14, 2013 you can view the recording by following the link below.

<http://www.screencast.com/t/dutdvenZ8Lf>

Administrator's Awards

The recording of the award ceremony can be found below.

<http://www.screencast.com/t/6CAI0q1HV4y>



USDA GIPSA Director Mitchell Keynote Presenter at Kansas Farmers Union Convention

<http://kticradio.com/news/agricultural/index.php?more=59j8xiex>



A big Congratulations to all of the GIPSA
Administrator's Awards recipients!!!!



Distinguished Individual

Regina Ware

Superior Individual

Brian Zarek

EEO Group

Onetisha Anderson
Jody Boydston-Johnson
Desmond Coker
Dawn Cowan
Marilynn Gallagher
Jeana Harbison
George Lewis
Michael Meadows
Ana Trujillo
Regina Willis

Rangaswamy Chinnaswamy
Shoshana Avrishon
Valerie Collins
Stephanie Feinberg
Andrew Greenfield
Mark Kemp
Susan McBryde
Idelisse Rodriguez
Regina Ware

Distinguished Group

Brian Beecher
Ron Jenkins
Brian Adam
Mark Ruth

Tandace Bell
Paul Wacker
Rick Millerd

Superior Group

Denise Ruggles

Ruth Ortiz

Non-GIPSA Support

Dr. Zoltan Gillay

Safety & Health

Mark Kemp

News from National Grain Center

The National Grain Center (NGC) Tricks and Treats for CFC!

The annual Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) campaign was shortened, but not weakened, by the Federal government wide furlough. Events such as a Chili Cook-Off, weekly Bake Sales, Football Toss and Photo Contest raised a total of \$1870.00 over the four week campaign period.

A highlight of the NGC's CFC Campaign is the annual Halloween Costume Contest. Sara Ludwig took this year's prize out of the ghouls and goblins represented below.



NGC Costume Contest Participants included (L-R): Terri Liberty, Mark Ruth, Joe Lopez, Sara Ludwig, Alan Disch, Jennifer Helber, Gary Foushee, Rick Millard, Marsha Schwartz and Mary Alonzo

The 2013 NGC CFC Campaign Goal is \$14,000. The NGC's exceeded that goal this year. Great job to everyone involved in the campaign, especially co-coordinators Pat Jackson and Valerie Collins.

2013 Kansas City Collegiate Crops Contest

On November 19, 2013, the National Grain Center hosted the 80th Kansas City Collegiate Crops Contest. The contests held in Kansas City and Chicago represent the national finals of collegiate crops competition for the year. This year teams from the University of Minnesota (Crookston), University of Wisconsin (Platteville), Kansas State University, South Dakota State University, Oklahoma State University, Virginia Tech, and Murray State University competed in the Kansas City event. Each university team consists of three undergraduate students and a faculty support coach.



The first such contest referred to as the Intercollegiate Grain Judging Contest was held in Chicago in 1923. Except for lapses in 1929 and 1942-1946, the Chicago Collegiate Crops contest has been held every year. The Kansas City contest, first known as the American Royal Collegiate Crops Contest, was held for the first time in 1929 and held annually through 1941. The contest was recessed from 1942-1946, but has been held each year since.

The Kansas City contest was hosted by the Kansas City Board of Trade for many years. However, when the KCBOT was closed after its sale to the CME Group, the contest needed a new host and GIPSA offered the National Grain Center facility in

News from National Grain Center

Crops Contest *from page 6*

Kansas City. USDA has provided the grain grading samples for the contest in both cities for decades, initially as the Grain Division of AMS, then FGIS, and now GIPSA.

Preparation for crops contests teaches students the evaluation of crops for quality relative to certification, viability and marketing. Students learn in great depth many things which can be valuable regardless of their chosen profession in agronomy. The National Crops Judging Contest consists of three parts: plant and seed identification, commercial grain grading, and seed analysis. Contestants have one and one-half hours to complete each section.

Commercial Grain Grading. This is the ability to recognize crop products for their market worth and involves knowing defects that reduce quality. Grading provides a basis for marketing and provides quality control over grain products, this determining their ultimate use. Contestants will analyze eight samples (75 points per sample) selected from barley, corn, wheat, oats, rye, sorghum, and soybeans. Packets containing 30 grams for wheat, oats, rye, sorghum, and barley; 100 grams for soybeans; and 200 grams for corn shall be furnished each contestant in lieu of the amounts required for official grade determination. Information on test weight per bushel, moisture content and odor for each sample, and values which must be determined on samples larger than those supplied in the contest, such as for sieved quantities, special grades, sample grade factors, and dockage are provided to each contestant. Commercial grades shall be designated in the manner followed in commerce according to the Grain Inspection handbook (Book II Grading Procedures). Abbreviations are not acceptable. The factor or factors which determine the numerical grade, excepting Grade No. 1 or special grades, must be stated. Grain grading samples for the Kansas City Contest were prepared by the Board of Appeals and Review. Roy Lyon (FMD) prepared the samples for the Chicago contest. The BAR also administers the grading portion of the contest and scores the student's results at the Kansas City competition.

Plant and Seed Identification. Training enables one to identify, inspect, and evaluate crops. Weed control and crop production practices often require proper identification for management recommendations. Two hundred plant or seed specimens (3 points per sample) must be identified by the contestants. Contestants will record only the common name of each specimen for the contest. Each University contributes specimens for the contest. Prior to the start of the contest judges examine each of the specimens and all must concur on the 200 specimens that will be used in the contest.

Seed Analysis. Crops grown from pure seed maintain genetic purity and good quality. It is a means of determining the value of seed for planting and for market, thus providing a guide for all using seed. Ten samples are analyzed by the contestants (60 points per sample). The contestant must classify and name, according to common name only, all seeds mixed with the base sample. The classification shall be (a) other crops and/or varieties, (b) prohibited noxious weeds, (c) restricted noxious weeds, and (d) common weeds. Seed analysis samples are prepared by the South Dakota State Seed Testing Laboratory. First place in the 2013 event went to the team from Kansas State University. The teams from Wisconsin and Minnesota finished second and third respectively.



FY2014 GIPSA Mentoring Program Gets Off to a Running Start

By Mary Coffey Alonzo (NGC), Gale Mason (DC), and Caroline Thorpe (DC)



GIPSA has rolled out its FY 2014 Mentoring Program in support of USDA's Departmental mentoring initiative. This GIPSA-wide program is composed of over 40 mentor/mentee pairings or about 80 staff for a participation rate of over 10 percent of GIPSA's employees. In addition, eleven employees are participating in mentoring through the Virtual University leadership programs, which require a mentoring component.

Participation in the program is strong for both program areas in GIPSA. FGIS has 32 pairings or 64 employees participating in the FY 2014 mentoring program while the Packers and Stockyards Administration has 7 pairings for a total of 13 employees. In some cases, mentors are mentoring more than one employee as a mentor. Within FGIS, which had an FGIS-specific mentoring program in FY 2013, FY 2014 participation in the program has increased by 28 percent from the 25 mentor/mentee pairings last year.

Any mentoring program requires a strong commitment by the most senior and experienced staff members. The robust program area support for the FY 2014 Mentoring Program by GIPSA management recognizes that 70 to 80 percent of agency supervisors and managers are retirement eligible. GIPSA is keenly aware of the need to prepare less experienced staff for new potential responsibilities as more senior staff retires. This year employees will be encouraged to choose from several specific mentoring objectives identified by the Department. Key among those objectives are transfer of knowledge and enhancement of employee skills.

Stay Tuned: Next year GIPSA employees will be able to use the new USDA online mentoring portal, which will be a more efficient way of applying for the program, and allow ready sharing of employee applications.

Employees who applied after the September 9, 2013, deadline for the FY2014 formal one year GIPSA mentoring training requirement now will be waitlisted for the FY2015 program.

If you missed this year's application deadline consider some of the following options:

Informal Mentoring: Simply find someone with the skills you want to develop and meet with them to discuss your goals in your area of interest.

Participate in the Online Leadership Development programs from the Virtual University - it is not too late to apply to the Virtual University leadership programs. These are the Aspiring Leader Program for GS-9-12's and the Executive Leadership Certificate Program for GS-13-15's. Both programs have a mentoring component requirement.

GIPSA is committed to the success of the FY 2014 Mentoring Program. A FY 2014 Mentoring Program Webinar is scheduled for Wednesday, November 20, 2013. All program participants should be registered in the webinar. If you have any questions about any aspect of the FY 2014 Mentoring Program, please contact Caroline Thorpe at caroline.c.thorpe@usda.gov.

PSP Change Control Working Group Newsletter

PSP CCWG is welcoming in the change and new change requests as 2014 begins.

CCWG would like to recognize its new Chair **Wayne Basford** of the Eastern Regional Office (ERO) and Co-Chair Marilynn Gallagher, Resident Agent in Longview, Texas. In addition, we welcomed three new members: **Caleb Bott** of the Western Regional Office (WRO), **Robinson Obiekwe** of the Eastern Regional Office, and **Mallory Wagoner**, Resident Agent in Eastern Nebraska. Please see their bio's below. A big thank you to Sarah Childress, Kari McPherson, and Onetisha Anderson who gave us their time in CCWG and rotated off the team.

Caleb Bott is a Marketing Specialist in the WRO. He enjoys his career and is excited to be a member of the CCWG. Caleb grew up on a cattle ranch and alfalfa farm in Utah and has a passion for agriculture. In his spare time, he enjoys being in the outdoors, traveling, being with family, and helping others. Twice his interests have sent him abroad, living for a time in both South America and Europe. Caleb has an MBA degree with an emphasis in Food and International Agribusiness from the Royal Agricultural University in Cirencester, England and a Master of Science degree in Applied Economics from Utah State University in Logan, Utah.

Mallory Wagoner is a Resident Agent in Eastern Nebraska. Mallory grew up on a ranch in the sandhills of Nebraska and currently resides in Columbus, Nebraska with her husband and one child. Mallory has a Bachelor's degree in Animal Science from South Dakota State University and has been with the Packers and Stockyards Program for a little over 3 ½ years. She is excited for her new role serving on CCWG.

Robinson Obiekwe is a Senior Auditor in the ERO. He started his career with the Packers and Stockyards Program in March of 2009. He is married to his wife of twenty three years and blessed with two kids.

A Shout-Out Goes to...

"Gilbert Sanchez for always being so helpful with the VTC, and Tanika for always going beyond her duties.... And being extremely helpful when I called her".—Ana Alvarado

The GIPSA Headquarters CFC Team (Amber McDonald–Lake, Amanda Tucker, Ana Alvarado, Amy Blechinger, Candice Harvey, Eli Salahuddin, Irene Omade, Jeana Harbison, and Robert Kayne) for their dedication during the campaign season. —Jennifer S. Hill

Stephanie Feinberg, Andy Greenfield, Regina Ware, and Ty Luckey for their support during CFC event set up and take down.

The DC P&SP group for donating over \$100 in change to the GIPSA CFC Coin War.

Export Cargo Sampling Project (ECSP)

Jennifer Weiland, Washington, DC

Over the years, you may have heard of the Export Cargo Sampling Project (ECSP) or maybe you have provided data or collected samples for the ECSP. While it may sound familiar, have you ever wondered what the project is about or why GIPSA is involved?



The Export Cargo Survey Project was initiated by U.S. Wheat Associates (USWA) in 1985 as the wheat marketing group sought to expand on the harvest quality reports that they had been compiling for a number of years. Originally, the harvest information was gathered to share with overseas contacts for marketing purposes. In the 1980s, USWA began working with GIPSA to gather more detailed information regarding possible differences between the quality reported at harvest and the quality reported at the time of export due to rumors that grain merchants might be adding dockage or moisture to wheat at the time of export. Fortunately, these harvest vs. export quality comparisons showed that the rumors were false. However, USWA and GIPSA continued to work together to gather and evaluate export wheat samples and the data became available to the public as a regular part of USWA's harvest quality reports.

When GIPSA and USWA first began the survey, they gathered basic information such as inspection results, milling yield, farinograph and baking data. Gradually the types of data collected expanded in response to requests from overseas buyers and processors. At that point, the Wheat Marketing Center, North Dakota State University and what is now Great Plains Analytical Laboratories were brought on by USWA to conduct complex quality and end-use tests, including starch damage and alveograph testing. The survey is managed by GIPSA's Office of Departmental Initiatives and International Affairs, which works closely with the field offices and USWA. The survey is designed to capture about ten percent of U.S. wheat bound for export, and runs in three phases throughout each year, with each phase lasting for about 3 months. Field office and elevator staff work together to collect, identify and package the samples before they are shipped to the laboratories for analysis. USWA compiles the quality data and publishes it in their annual [Crop Quality Report](#) to advise importers on the classes of wheat available for sale and the advantages that U.S. wheat has over our competition.

GIPSA's Technical Services Division (TSD) began testing the wheat samples for pesticides, mycotoxins and heavy metals in the early 1990s. While the pesticide data is available upon request, U.S. Wheat shares the mycotoxin and heavy metals data on a case-by-case basis.

In 2010, USWA coordinated with GIPSA, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) to design a weed seed survey to run in conjunction with the ECSP. During the survey periods, each export field office sends 10 samples of wheat to TSD for sample breakdown. TSD sends the separations to the AMS laboratory in Gastonia, North Carolina, for weed seed identification. Data from the weed seed survey is shared between the agencies and USWA, and is intended to assist in determining the impact of new weed seed regulations proposed by importing countries.

In 2013, a TCK survey component was added to the ECSP to monitor the occurrence of *Tilletia controversa*, known as TCK, in certain classes of wheat. TCK is a fungus that can cause smut disease in wheat. The disease stunts the growth of wheat plants and the flour produced from the wheat kernels can produce a strong odor. The Portland and Washington State field offices collect samples of Soft White, Hard Red and Hard Spring wheat and send them to the Wheat Marketing Center in Portland, Oregon for analysis.

The ECSP has grown and evolved over nearly three decades, and the information it provides has become part of a powerful marketing tool for U.S. wheat farmers as well as a valuable source of data on pesticide use, weed seeds and plant diseases. Field office and TSD staff have played a valuable role in this effort, enabling GIPSA and other USDA agencies to continue their mutually beneficial partnership with USWA for the benefit of U.S. wheat producers.

FGIS Matters *from page 2*

not cut any corners.

Over the past few years a primary focus of the **FGIS Management Team** has been to improve the working conditions and safety of our export lab facilities throughout the country. To aid in the endeavor, we assembled a **Task Force** to develop lab specifications that could be used as a model for the construction of new labs or the renovation of existing labs. **Tony Goodeman, FMD Policy, Procedures and Market Analysis Branch**, led the team consisting of: **Bob Baker** and **Cleve Ellis – Portland**; **Mark Kemp, Nelson Buck** and **Stephanie Brown - WDC**; **Barry Gomoll – Toledo**; **Tim Humiston – GSL**; **Jeff L’Heureux** and **Roy Lyon – DIOO**; **Orval Schleiermacher** and **Jayne Ludwikoski – League City**; **Sandra Metheny** and **Albert Snelson – Stuttgart**; **Larry Mosloff – Grand Forks**; **Gerald Raymond, Sarah Welch-Hill** and **Kerry Petit – New Orleans**; and **Jorge Vazquez – California**.

Sarah and **Gerald** were active participants in the group since its inception, and they provided great insight into what a clean, efficient lab space should look like. **Gerald** also worked closely with **Kerry** to convince **Louis Dreyfus** to provide many of our items. Once everything was purchased, **Gerald** was responsible for doing much of the hands-on work to set up the lab according to the newly established specifications. I am sure that we will see the work of this group pay huge dividends for years to come. We can all be proud of their work – thanks team.

Until next time, keep up the good work and stay safe!



Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

(800) 222-0364

(888) 262-7848 (TTY)

<http://www.FOH4You.com>

Confidential toll-free number 24 hours a day/7 days a week

Making Change in Washington, DC

Kari McPherson, Pierre, SD and Marilyn Gallagher, Longview, TX

IT Change Control Board

Information Technology Staff , Washington, DC

A structured change control process is an essential component of GIPSA's Information Technology (IT) quality management system. A structured change control process ensures minimum disturbances and economical uses of resources for implementation of changes to GIPSA's IT Configuration Management and IT Purchases. This is a requirement of the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA). GIPSA has embraced this process, not only to be compliant with the Federal Government, but to establish efficiencies that were not present in the past.

In 2013 The GIPSA IT Change Control Board (CCB) was established, and included groups representing each program area as well as budget. This entity is a project-level, decision-making body that must approve or disapprove all IT change control requests before they can be implemented. The role of the GIPSA IT CCB is to review and act on changes that have the potential to cause material or substantive changes to the system, including design specifications, budget (including lifecycle cost projections), project schedule, and interface characteristics with other systems.

For 2013 the GIPSA IT CCB has fielded 86 Change Control requests to satisfy the various internal changes as well as departmental requirements. With the change over to the New Tier 1 Helpdesk, GIPSA will be able to take advantage of the newly acquired Remedy system which has a proven Configuration Management process.

Any inquiries regarding the GIPSA Change Control, or interests to be a part of the board can be directed to the GIPSA IT Branch Chief Abhai Singh at 202-720-8947 or by email at Abhai.P.Singh@usda.gov.

Data File Storage

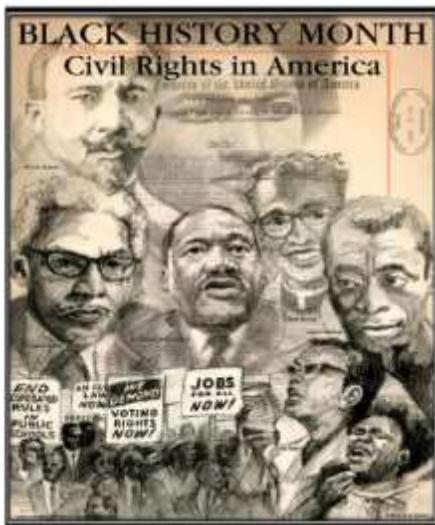
Information Technology Staff , Washington, DC

Importance of storing files on the network

GIPSA IT has gone to great lengths to ensure that Agency data is backed up and secure. One of the primary functions of the GIPSA network is to store your files. Not only is proper Data Storage of Government Data a Federal Law, but the implementation of best practices can save a lot of headache for GIPSA users. GIPSA policy is to save all electronic data on the network, whether it be Drive: H for individual private data or on Drives: I and J for shared information. By utilizing these drives, GIPSA can ensure that its data is backed up, secure, and retrievable. This message is a friendly reminder asking all employees to store all GIPSA files on the network drives provided by the agency.

With the New Year comes a little housekeeping. Please go through your drives and remove files that are no longer needed. Additionally, please be mindful that the storing of personal files (photos, music, or videos) is prohibited. Doing this type of housekeeping periodically will help keep you organized as well as assist the agency in cutting down digital bloat. In situations where you can't delete old files, and find yourself in need of additional storage, please contact GIPSA IT for a solution.

Special Emphasis Corner



Message from Sgt. 1st Class Darryl Avery, Equal Opportunity Advisor, 11th ACR NTC and Fort Irwin Submitted by Kevin Smith of the Civil Rights staff

“This year marks the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a landmark piece of civil rights legislation that outlawed major forms of discrimination against racial, ethnic, national and religious minorities, and women. It ended unequal application of voter registration requirements and racial segregation in schools, at the workplace and by facilities that served the general public (known as “public accommodations”).

The bill was called for by President John F. Kennedy in his civil rights speech of June 11, 1963, in which he asked for legislation “giving all Americans the right to be served in facilities which are open to the public – hotels, restaurants, theaters, retail stores, and similar establishments”, as well as “greater protection for the right to vote.”

The assassination of John F. Kennedy on Nov. 22, 1963 changed the political situation. Kennedy’s successor as president, Lyndon Johnson, made use of his experience in legislative politics in support of the bill. In his first address to a joint session of Congress on Nov. 27, 1963, Johnson told the legislators, “No memorial oration or eulogy could more eloquently honor President Kennedy’s memory than the earliest possible passage of the civil rights bill for which he fought so long.”

On June 19, 1964 the substitute (compromise) bill passed the Senate by a vote of 73–27, and quickly passed through the House-Senate conference committee, which adopted the Senate version of the bill. The conference bill was passed by both houses of Congress, and was signed into law by President Johnson on July 2, 1964.

The history of civil rights in the United States is largely the story of free people of color and then African Americans to define and enumerate what rights pertain to citizens in civil society. It has been the history of enlisting political parties to recognize the need for our governments, state and federal, to codify and protect those rights. Through the years, people of African descent have formed organizations and movements to promote equal rights. The Colored Convention Movement, the Afro-American League, the Niagara Movement, the National Council of Negro Women, and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference carried the banner of equality when allies were few. In the modern era, integrated organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the National Urban League, and the Congress of Racial Equality fought for and protected equal rights.

Within this struggle for civil rights, many of the important leaders have been men and women whose rights were subordinated to the general cause. Pauli Murray, Bayard Rustin, James Baldwin, and many others litigated, organized, and wrote on behalf of civil rights, believing fully in the path towards equal rights for all. Their struggles accentuate the universality of the movement for equality in America, and form a central part of the 2014 National African American History theme.

On behalf of the National training Center and Fort Irwin we salute the countless African American men, women, and Families who have continued to sacrifice themselves for the betterment and advancement of this great nation.”

[USDA Department-Wide Black History Month Observance](#)

You are cordially invited to celebrate with us at the
2014 Black History Month Observance

Thursday, February 13, 2014
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. (EST)

Jefferson Auditorium – Washington, DC

Theme: Civil Rights in America: Remember! Celebrate! Act!

Keynote Speaker: Roland S. Martin, Journalist and Syndicated Columnist

Training Updates

Caroline Thorpe, Washington, DC

Mandatory Training Due

Course	Due Date	Trainees
No Fear Act Comprehensive	Within 30 days of hiring (USDA)	New Employees
FY2014 Information Security Awareness	February 28, 2014	All Employees
Calendar Year 2014 Ethics	Due Date June 30, 2014	All Employees
Federal Appropriations Law Training	February 20, 2014	All Employees with Budget Related Jobs
Reasonable Accommodations	To be announced	All Supervisors and managers (50 percent are complete)

Training and Development Tools in a Nutshell from USDA and GIPSA

If you're not in an organized development program, what options and tools do you have to move forward in your career? Below is a standard list of ongoing resources employees may use to identify career moves and make sure they take the next step.

1) Identifying next steps based on job series: Considering a move in your current government series or to another series. First look at your own Position Description and also find the series on OPM's website for the next grade higher. Carefully review the documents to clearly identify associated competencies and review this with someone in your office on what those skills are. For those in FGIS that do grain grading you may want go to the InGIPSA website at <https://ingipsa.gipsa.usda.gov/training.aspx> and under "steer your career" click on Career Information for ACGs, ACTs, and ACAs.

2) Goal Setting: Individual Development Plans (IDPs) - Set developmental and training goals using your IDP and follow through. It is easy to identify activities but often the issue is executing or following-up on those plans. See if you can commit to a trusted friend to verify if you are following up on your developmental or training goals whether they are on your IDP (job related and organizational) or personal goals (financial, health, career or personal (house, family hobby). Further, the Department will be rolling out a coaching program over the next year. Initially this will probably be open to those in leadership training programs. Coaching, is a teaching, training or development process via which an individual is supported while achieving a specific personal or professional result or goal. As a result, the coach often asks a lot of questions to clarify next moves that help the coachee identify their next best moves. This is for usually a short duration less than six months. The object here is to meet to move forward with your goals, ideally to become a more engaged employee.

3) Mentoring: Some of you may participate formally and others may opt out of the formal process and do this informally (finding someone with the skills you want and simply talking with them). Either way, this is a great opportunity for you to get information on both the technical skills or soft skills or career development of an employee. Mentoring is defined as an individual who facilitates personal and professional growth by sharing knowledge and insights learned through the years. The assumption is that, unlike coaching, the mentor has some form of information or advice needed by the mentee.

Continued, see Training on page 15

Training from cover page 14

4) Developmental Opportunities: With support and assistance of the supervisor, the employee's present job can be restructured or arrangements made to have the employee temporarily transferred to another area to learn firsthand the necessary technical and managerial competencies required for effective performance in that job.

Examples of developmental activities include the following list:

- **Shadowing:** Providing a trainee or learner with the opportunity to observe a well qualified, journeyman level employee perform a particular skill. Immediately after the shadowing period, the learner needs to have the opportunity to perform the same skill and be given feedback on that performance.
- **Detail/Rotational Assignments:** Short-term assignment particularly appropriate for important skills that make up a small portion of an individual's job, but can lead to full-time work in that field.
- **Task Force Assignments:** This is particularly effective if the learner has an opportunity to work with well qualified people who will provide feedback to the learner on his/her performance and participation in the group.

5) Development of Job Aides: Requires that the learner develop a product that will assist in the performance of the job, while, at the same time, serving as a vehicle for learning job-related information.

- Cross-Program Assignments
- Special Work Projects
- Coaching Lower Level Employees

6) Finally, Communication, Communication, Communication: Studies show that one skill clearly associated with job success and leadership is communication. Consider taking courses on AgLearn to strengthen both written and oral communication. If you want to enter leadership polish your briefing skills by joining Toastmasters, which is only about

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 Civil Rights Staff at
202-690-3640



Have an idea?



Then fill out your change request
available at *inGIPSA* and email it to:
FGIS-CCWG@usda.gov

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:

Jennifer S. Hill

USDA, GIPSA, Stop 3620
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-3649
Phone (202) 690-3929
FAX (202) 690-3951
Jennifer.s.hill@usda.gov



By February 28, 2014

Retiring? To be included on our email distribution list after you retire from GIPSA, please send your email address to Jennifer.s.hill@usda.gov.

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