



GIPSA NEWS

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

AUGUST 2015

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 turned 25

Kevin Smith, Washington, D.C.

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Your chance of being injured and/or becoming disabled is more common than you think. This fact may have a direct impact on someone you know at home, or in the workplace. It is noted that the **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 turned 25 on July 26.**



On that day in 1990, President George H.W. Bush signed the ADA into law, making it illegal for employers to discriminate against qualified job applicants and employees based on their physical or mental disabilities. The law also requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations to applicants and employees who need them because of their disabilities, unless doing so would cause undue hardship.

GIPSA is committed to the recruitment, hiring, and retaining qualified persons with disabilities. Along with the Department as a whole, GIPSA strives to be a model employer of persons with disabilities and strives to promote a workplace that provides reasonable accommodations to remove workplace barriers that would prevent:

1. disabled individuals from participating in the application process for Federal employment,
2. disabled employees from performing essential job functions, and disabled employees from enjoying the same benefits and privileges of employment as non-disabled employees.

To honor the ADA's 25th anniversary, I want to share this helpful information about disability rights and responsibilities and how EEOC is helping people with disabilities in the workplace. Use the information as a guide to learn more about the ADA and EEOC's important work, as well as celebrating the progress that has been made to improve the lives of those with disabilities.

The Law

Below are the laws, implemented by the EEOC, that influenced or amended the Americans with Disabilities Act. Also included are the EEOC's regulations (both the original and the current) implementing Title I of the ADA. For historical reasons, these are presented as originally passed by Congress or issued by the EEOC.

Rehabilitation Act of 1973

In September, Congress passes the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Section 501 prohibits the Federal Government as an employer from discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities. EEOC is responsible for enforcement of Section 501. The Act proves to be the model for Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of disability by private employers.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

In July, President George Bush signs into law the Ameri-

Continued. See **ADA** on page 3

FGIS Matters....!

Randall Jones, Washington, D.C.

Reauthorization Update. On June 9, the **House of Representatives** passed H.R. 2088, the United States Grain Standards Act Reauthorization Act of 2015.

On May 21, **Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry**, held a business meeting and passed the U.S. Grains Standards Act Reauthorization Act of 2015, which authorizes the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Federal Grain Inspection Service to establish marketing standards and conduct inspection and weighing for a variety of grains and oilseeds. The matter is pending action by the full Senate.

As it currently stands, there are differences in the House and Senate versions. Typically, when this happens after the bills have been passed by the House and the Senate, the bills are sent to "conference" which consists of members of the House and Senate to develop a single bill that is then submitted to the House and Senate for another vote. It is not clear if this is the process in which the reauthorization will occur or not.

We remain very hopeful that the House and the Senate will take action to send a reauthorization bill to the President for his signature well before the expiration date of September 30.

Robert Lijewski Retires. Nearly 40 years ago, FGIS underwent monumental changes with the passage of amendments to the U.S. Grain Standards Act and the Program undertook a massive hiring of staff. Bob was one of many that was hired and began to lay the building blocks for this great Program. It was Bob and others like him that have made FGIS into the Gold Standard for grain inspection that is recognized worldwide – a grain inspection system that is second to none.

Bob began his career as many others have and continue to do – as a sampler and technician learning the craft one step at a time. Bob has said many times that the best way to determine if someone truly wants to become a grain inspector is to give them a 12 foot probe on the first day, send them out to the rail yard, and see if they return after lunch to continue probing. This in fact is the way Bob began his career and yes ... Bob returned after lunch, eager to learn more.

Bob's illustrious career with FGIS spanned nearly 4 decades and he saw many changes over the years in the various positions that he held. For the past 5 years Bob served as the Director of FMD and he showed great leadership and distinguished himself as one of the best Director's the Program has ever seen. I will forever be indebted to Bob for his support and confidence that he provided. FGIS has built a reputation of dependability and credibility with our U.S. stakeholders as well as stakeholders around the world. Bob helped create the FGIS brand. It is because of him and many other FGIS team members that we enjoy this reputation as these characteristics best describe Bob – dependable, credible, trustworthy, and dedicated.

Managers Meeting. The annual **FGIS Managers Meeting** was held during the week of July 20th at the National Grain Center. At this annual meeting, the FGIS management team took a look in the mirror and reviewed our accomplishments for the past year. We also spent a great amount of time looking to the future assessing the needs of our stakeholders and determining how best to position the Program to be successful and meet our mission to facilitate the marketing of grain and grain related products. Ideas discussed during the meeting will lay the foundation for the FGIS business initiatives for FY16. Check back in this space in September for more details on the FY16 initiatives.

Pathways Program. FGIS has had great success with past Pathways and internship programs and I am excited to announce that we have initiated another **Pathways Program for Agricultural Commodity Graders**. The program has two Field Offices participating with the recent hires assigned either to the **Domestic Inspection Operations Office** in Kansas City or the **Toledo Field Office**. Upon completion of the intense 6 month training program, the participants will be placed in field offices around the country.

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



ADA from cover page.

cans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) -- the world's first comprehensive civil rights law for people with disabilities. The Act prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in employment (Title I), in public services (Title II), in public accommodations (Title III) and in telecommunications (Title IV). EEOC is responsible for enforcing Title I's prohibition against discrimination against people with disabilities in employment. Title I does not become effective until two years after the President signs the bill (July 26, 1992). The ADA is described as the Emancipation Proclamation for the disability community.

Civil Rights Act of 1991

Congress passes the Civil Rights Act of 1991 (CRA) thereby overruling several Supreme Court decisions rendered in the late 1980s that had made it more difficult for plaintiffs to prevail in their employment discrimination suits and to recover fees and costs when they won their lawsuits. The procedural and substantive amendments under the CRA, which apply to Title VII, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA), the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act, provide for the first time that the parties can request jury trials and that successful plaintiffs can recover compensatory and punitive damages in intentional employment discrimination cases.

Regulations to Implement the Employment Provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (1991)

The EEOC issues final regulations and an interpretive appendix explaining the requirements of the Title I of the ADA, one year before the ADA is to become effective.

ADA Amendments Act of 2008

In September, Congress passes and President George W. Bush signs the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), to become effective January 1, 2009. In the ADAAA, Congress rejects the holdings of two Supreme Court decisions that narrowed the definition of "disability" (*Sutton v. United Airlines, Inc.*, 527 US 471 (1999) and *Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Kentucky, Inc. v. Williams*, 534 US 184 (2002)), thus eliminating protection for many individuals with disabilities whom Congress had intended to protect. The ADAAA expands coverage and protection in several ways.

Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009

In January, Congress passes and President Barack Obama signs the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009. This law overturned the Supreme Court's decision in *Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co., Inc.*, 550 U.S. 618 (2007), which severely restricted the time period for filing complaints of employment discrimination concerning compensation. In addition to amending Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, the law also amends the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act to clarify the time frame in which victims of discrimination may challenge and recover for discriminatory compensation decisions or other discriminatory practices affecting compensation.

Regulations to Implement the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act

In 2011, the EEOC issues revised regulations implementing the employment provisions of the ADA. The revised regulations reflect the changes to the definition of "disability" made by the ADAAA, in particular, Congress's mandate that the definition of disability be construed broadly.

In response to Executive Order 13164, issued in 2000, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued Departmental Manual DM-4300-2 entitled Reasonable Accommodations Procedures, <http://www.ocio.usda.gov/directives/doc/DM4300-002.pdf>, which sets forth the procedures to be used by employees, applicants, and others for requesting reasonable accommodations under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. GIPSA managers and employees who would like to receive more guidance with regarding accommodations and your rights and responsibilities as a disabled employee can contact David Walton, Reasonable Accommodation Program Coordinator at 301-851-2936.

If you believe you have been discriminated against based on a disability (physical or mental), your first step under this procedure is to contact a GIPSA's Civil Rights office within 45 calendar days of the date of the matter alleged to be discriminatory or, in the case of a personnel action, within 45 calendar days of the effective date of the action. An EEO official, such as the Civil Rights Director, specialist, or assistant, or an EEO counselor may offer you the opportunity to participate in the pre-complaint counseling process or, if determined appropriate, the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) method in lieu of traditional counseling.

Names in the News

Retirement

Randy Lunning retired June 2015. He began his career with FGIS in January/ February 1977. Prior to that he worked for a private agency for 2 years. In May of 1992 he accepted an ACG position with the Moscow Field Office and relocated from Saginaw, Michigan. He became the QAS in 1994. His plans for post-retirement include keeping busy with work around his house, traveling a little, doing some fishing and continuing he and his wife Pam's bicycling and hiking interests.

New Hire

Travis Burkel recently began his training in the Western Regional Office. Following one year to learn the ropes, Travis will relocate to the Resident Agent position in the Washington/Oregon area. He was born in Tucson, Arizona and grew up participating in 4-H. He owned/operated a small swine breeding program, showed cattle, and spent summers working on a small cattle ranch in Arizona. Travis interned with Customs and Border Protection as an Agricultural Specialist and interned at the Meat Science Laboratory, University of Arizona. He graduated from Arizona with a BS in Food Safety in 2013 and a MS in Agricultural and Resource Economics in 2015. While in school, he was a member of the University of Arizona Cycling and Triathlon teams.



Mark Craig joined the Management and Budget Services branch on June 15, 2015 as the Senior Budget Officer. Most recently served as the Deputy Director for Financial Management Division with the Department of State. Mark began his career in April 2002 as a Budget and Financial manager with the Director of National Intelligence and Defense Intelligence Agency.

Mark has extensive experience in the budget and financial arena where he has overseen the Budget process for some of the largest federal agencies, such as Department of Homeland Security, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Veterans Administration, and Department of State. Mr. Craig also is a Military Veteran serving with the US Navy for 20 years.

I.J. Pérez is one of GIPSA's newest members in Washington, D.C. where he is assigned as Public Affairs Specialist. He retired from active military service in 2014 and came on board June 14, 2015. I.J.'s military career spanned over three decades in command and staff assignments worldwide including several tours in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Pentagon.



New Position



Jason Jordan, who has been with the Technology and Science Division's (TSD) Inspection Instrumentation Branch (IIB) as an Agricultural Engineer since 2009, has recently been promoted to the position of Program Leader for the Type Evaluation Program Group within IIB. Jason has been primarily involved in evaluation of current and new grain inspection equipment, assessment of mechanical sampling system layouts for elevators, and conducting research for the development of new grain inspection methods during his time with FGIS. Prior to joining FGIS, Jason lived in Baton Rouge, Louisiana where he earned his Master's degree in Biological & Agricultural Engineering from Louisiana State University.

Greg Giese joined the Policies, Procedures, and Market Analysis Branch on June 14, 2015, as a Grain Marketing Specialist. He joins the Branch after four and one half years working for the Technology and Science Division, most recently as NIRT/MNR Group Leader in the Inspection Instrumentation Branch. Greg began his FGIS career in 2010 as the mycotoxin rapid test kit evaluation program coordinator in TSD.

Greg has extensive private sector experience in the chemical and food industries where he has managed chemical production facilities among other responsibilities. He served our nation for eight years in the United States Army.



Continued. See **Names** on page 5

Names in the News (cont.)

Temporary Assignments



On June 15, 2015, **Elena Reyes-Santos** joined the MBS team as a Program Analyst Intern. Before coming to GIPSA Reyes-Santos was working for the Agricultural Extension Service on a Technological and Administrative Education project for disadvantaged farmers in Puerto Rico. Elena was an intern for FSIS on 2013 as an Economist and worked for APHIS last year as a Plant Protection and Quarantine Technician Aid.

Elena has a Bachelor's in Animal Science and is currently an Agricultural Economics Master's degree candidate. She's interning through the HACU National Internship Program and plans to attend Veterinary Medicine School next year.

Kendall Bunch started June 15, 2015, as a Thurgood Marshall College Fund intern with the MBS staff. He is a Junior Accounting major at Jackson State university. Kendall's career goals are after attending and completing law school are to either enter into public policy or corporate law.



2015 Feds Feed Families Campaign

USDA will again lead the government-wide 2015 Feds Feed Families campaign with the support of the Chief Human Capital Officers Council and other agency partners.

The seventh annual campaign officially began with a celebratory national kick off at USDA Headquarters in Washington D.C., July 15 and runs through October 2.

Ensuring the success of this year's food drive are two dynamic volunteers from the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyard Administration—Ms. Ebony Broadwater, Chair and Ms. Pat Ogunyale, Champion. Together they will oversee GIPSA's efforts to assist our neighbors in need.

Last year, GIPSA and its field offices throughout the U.S. donated 196, 011 pounds of food and ranked among the top ten contributors in USDA. With your kindness we will step up to play another vital role in the fight against hunger. Every donation makes a difference especially during summer months when children do not have access to school lunch programs. Your generous contributions help parents close the gap between a parent's empty pantry shelf and a child's well-nourished meal. GIPSA employees are asked to bring non-perishable food items and place them into a designated collection box or take them directly to a local food bank. Field agencies may donate collections to local food banks and share the Feds Feed Families campaign goal of stretching across America in every state.

Donations of fresh food (fruit, vegetables, herbs, nuts) can be made directly to a food pantry in your community. Visit www.ampleharvest.org/fff to locate one near you.

This year Feds Feed Families participants can feed America's hungry by partnering with farmers across the country to provide access to fresh and nutritious foods for low-income populations and prevent unnecessary food waste. The process known as *gleaning* clears fields of unused produce. Feds Feed Families volunteers are encouraged to take advantage of gleaning by reaching out to the Society of St. Andrew <http://endhunger.org/> for opportunities in their community. Learn more about *gleaning* with the USDA United We Serve Tool Kit, http://www.usda.gov/documents/usda_gleaning_toolkit.pdf

Information about the most wanted items in area food banks is available from the [Capital Area Food Bank](#) Volunteers residing outside of the National Capital Area may visit www.feedingamerica.org for a list of regional food banks (non-perishable food only); www.ampleharvest.org/fff for a list of local food pantries (fresh produce as well as non-perishable food), or to send donations. These organizations can assist with pick-up and weighing donations.

Feds Feed Families receives collections and distributes them through its network of more than 500 partner organizations to the Capital Area Food Bank in Washington, D.C. Since 2009 the food drive has collected **nearly 39 million pounds of food**. More than **14.8 million pounds** were donated to food banks and pantries in 2014 alone. Last year USDA agencies contributed 6.2 million pounds—the largest single annual contribution of any federal department or agency in the history of the campaign.

Management and Budget Services (MBS) Employee Duties

Marianne Plaus, Washington, D.C.

Over the past few months, GIPSA’s Management and Budget Services has experienced the loss and gain of employees. In May, we said, “good-bye,” to Ruth Ortiz who had worked in the budget arena for a number of years. Then, in June, we welcomed I.J. Perez and Mark Craig, who serve as GIPSA’s Public Affairs Specialist and Budget Officer, respectively. In light of these changes, we are including an updated MBS organizational listing so that you, our colleagues, will know whom to contact for assistance.

Office of the Director
**Marianne Plaus, Director/
 Budget Officer**
 (Marianne.Plaus@usda.gov,
 202-690-3460)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MBS Secretary/Administrative Oversight NFC Employee Roster Distribution Work Orders (Non move) keys, painting, etc. (Wash. DC) FMMI Role Assignment & Security <p>Susan Martin 202-720-0231 Susan.M.Martin@usda.gov</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training (non-technical) and Required Training AgLearn Administration and Policy Career Guidance and Training Referrals IDPs Leadership Development and 360 Assessments New Employee Orientations Supervisory Training Mentoring Program <p>Caroline Thorpe 202-690-2332 Caroline.C.Thorpe@usda.gov</p> 
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Budget Services
Mark Craig, Supervisor
 (Mark.Craig@usda.gov,
 202-731-8441)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Officer responsible for GIPSA’s budget formulation, execution, and justification processes <p>Mark Craig 202-720-7363 Mark.Craig@usda.gov</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> B2 Adjustments IAS Requisition Budget Approval Inter-Agency, Green Book, and Working Capital Fund Agreements IPAC Bill Review & Research OPM Background Investigations FMMI Role Assignment & Security Motorpool and Utility Funding Quarterly Unliquidated Obligations Certification Review <p>Tammi Lindsey 202-690-4188 Tammi.Lindsey@usda.gov</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information Technology (IT) Capital Planning & Oversight IT Budget Coordination & Oversight Tellico Communications Funding (Mettel, Network, and TOPS) <p>Tyhisa Luckey 202-690-4612 Tyhisa.N.Luckey@usda.gov</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocations Cost Allocation/Distributors Employee Rosters and Operating Plans Status of Funds FMMI Main POC Accounting/SHC Codes <p>Huong Nguyen 202-720-0273 Huong.T.Nguyen@usda.gov</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Formulation and Justification Budget Data Requests and Cross-Cuts Agency Fleet Management - Main POC MAX Data Entry <p>Vacant 202-720-6719</p> 
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Management Services
Lisa Fyall, Supervisor
 (Lisa.Fyall@usda.gov,
 202-720-7045)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awards Program Coordinator Personnel Action Processing (SF 52) GIPSA Idea Hotline Human Resources Management Guidance and Liaison (e.g., Position Descriptions and Job Announcements) Web TJA Issues Performance Plans Succession & Workforce Planning <p>Lisa Fyall 202-720-7045 Lisa.Fyall@usda.gov</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IAS Requisitions for PSP and MBS Travel Coordinator (Concur, TDY, Relocation, and Travel Cards) LinPass Coordinator PSP Investigator Badges <p>Rose Alexander 202-690-0881 Rose.D.Alexander@usda.gov</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grain Advisory Committee Issuance Management Telework Coordinator Transit Subsidies Employee Assistance Program Coordinator Conference Coordination <p>Terri Henry 202-205-8281 Terri.L.Henry@usda.gov</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awards, Retirement, and Length-of-Service Administrative Assistant for the Information Technology Staff Renovation of Office Space (Wash. DC) Safety and Health (assists Mark Kemp) <p>Adam Kennedy 202-720-1741 Adam.M.Kennedy@usda.gov</p> 
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Regulatory Services
R. Dexter Thomas, Supervisor/Lead and Regulatory Analyst
 (R.Dexter.Thomas@usda.gov,
 202-720-6529)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acting Chief of Staff Liaison to the Office of the General Counsel Public Affairs Oversight Regulatory Affairs <p>R. Dexter Thomas 202-720-6529 R.Dexter.Thomas@usda.gov</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COOP and Pandemic Planning Employee Wellness Program Safety Officer Health Surveillance Agreement Workers Comp Workplace Violence Coordinator <p>Mark Kemp 202-720-0061 Mark.L.Kemp@usda.gov</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e-Authentication POC Paperwork Reduction Coordinator Records and Information Collection Management Regulations (research, development, drafting) <p>M.Irene Omade 202-720-8479 M.Irene.Omade@usda.gov</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Affairs Internal Communications Develops and coordinates communications plans and strategies Serves as a liaison with the USDA Office of Communications, other USDA agencies, and other federal agencies to advise on matters pertaining to GIPSA GIPSA Newsletter. <p>Ignacio Perez (202) 720-9322 Ignacio.J.Perez@usda.gov</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage GIPSA's Freedom of Information ACT Coordinator & Privacy Act (PA) Requests Internal and Management Controls GAO, OCFD, and OIG Audit Liaison Privacy Act Coordinator <p>Joanne Peterson 202-720-8087 Joanne.C.Peterson@usda.gov</p> 
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Executive Leadership Program Graduates

Congratulations to Executive Leadership Program participants for GS 12-13, who graduated June 12, 2015.

Cam Anderson—P&SP-WRO
 Caleb Bott—P&SP WRO
 Kendra Kline—FGIS—Office of the Deputy Administrator
 Gilbert Sanchez—OA—IT Staff
 Andrew Ping—FGIS FMD—Portland

Below are comments from two of the the most recent graduates of this program.

Caleb Bott: The Executive Leadership Program proved to be a challenging, yet very worthwhile and rewarding experience for me. The nine month program provided me with several unique opportunities to build upon my leadership knowledge and experience. During the program, I had the opportunity to participate in two, four-week developmental assignments. The first developmental assignment I completed with P&SPs Litigation and Economic Analysis Division in Washington, DC. The second assignment I completed with USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service in Lakewood, Colorado. Other requirements of the program included interviewing several executive leaders, completing a three-day job shadowing assignment, and completing several additional assignments. While completing these assignments, I had the privilege of meeting several great leaders and was able to glean valuable information from each of them. I thoroughly enjoyed participating in the Executive Leadership Program and I thank the Agency for allowing me this awesome opportunity to expound my leadership abilities.



Gilbert Sanchez: Participating in this year's Executive Leadership Program has been a very rewarding experience that allowed me to work on strengthening the core leadership competencies identified in my Leadership Development Program. I am looking forward to using the skills that I learned from this program in my future as a leader in the Federal Government.

This program has allowed me to learn many new skills, meet new people, experience new and exciting things, and even encouraged me to help the community by volunteering at a local nonprofit that advocates for people with disabilities. This program has given me a much better understanding of leadership and was able to focus on topics such as emotional intelligence, team building, 360 assessments, critical thinking, conflict management, external awareness, and leadership challenge to name a few. I was also able to learn about the OPM Executive Core Qualifications and how they relate to leadership.

One of the many highlights of my program was during my developmental assignment with the Office of Leadership and Career Development at the Bureau of Prisons (BOP). I was able to do a site visit to Cumberland Federal Prison and go on a tour of the facility. This was a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the BOP and get a different perspective of the bureau, as compared to working in the Central Office in Washington DC. I was also able to meet and have a discussion with the Warden, Associate Warden, and Captain of Corrections at the facility. I was able to witness leadership in action by observing the way the Warden, Associate Wardens, Captain and rest of the staff work together to accomplish the mission of the bureau at this facility.

I have really enjoyed being part of this year's Executive Leadership Program and feel honored to have been selected to participate. This program has challenged me to step outside my normal comfort zone and learn new skills. I look forward to continue working on developing my own skills and gaining the necessary experience needed to become a leader. I believe as a result of this program I am more confident in myself and my abilities and look forward to a great career in the Federal Government.

A Shout-Out Goes to...

- *On June 11, 2015, Dan Knight, Abhai Singh, and Edward Chi visited the Master Scale Depot in Chicago, Illinois. While here, they set up my tablet computer. Noticing that I did not have a regular monitor, they ordered me a new 24 inch monitor. This has made my job much easier. We have an internal Quality System that includes a Quality Manual, Standard Operating Procedures, Standard Administrative Procedures, Good Laboratory Practices and Statistical Quality Control Charts. The new monitor has made the job of maintain and improving these documents much easier.*

FEDERAL RETIREMENT & BENEFITS FERS AND CSRS WEBINARS

Whether you are eligible to retire now or in 30 years, you need to know about your federal retirement and benefits. The more you know, the better you will be able to make decisions and prepare for your financial future. MRP Benefits Specialists are offering an informative webinar that will help you know more about your retirement plan and benefits. Each webinar is expected to last up to 2 ½ hours, and will include time for a Q&A session.

No registration is required, but you must get approval from your supervisor before attending. There is no call-in number for these presentations. All audio will only be delivered online.

Webinars were held for CSRS Employees and FERS Employees on July 28 and July 15 respectively.

Upcoming dates are as follows:

CSRS Presentations

· August 19, 2015, 2:00 p.m. ET/1:00 p.m. CT/ 12:00 a.m. MT/11:00 a.m. PT

FERS Presentations

· August 25, 2015, 9:00 a.m. ET / 8:00 a.m. CT / 7:00 a.m. MT / 6:00 a.m. PT

For questions, please email Earl Bilek at Earl.E.Bilek@aphis.usda.gov.



Have an idea?

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

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Information Technology Efforts in the Field

Edward Chi, Washington, D.C.



GIPSA Information Technology (IT) staff visited the Toledo Field Office in Maumee, Ohio, in June to better understand grain program operations, conduct maintenance, and discuss future IT requirements with FGIS senior managers.

After meeting with Lynn Thomas, members of his team, and touring various grain elevators, the IT group headed north to the FGIS Master Scales at the Bedford Park, Illinois train yard. At that location a two-man crew calibrates GIPSA's own test weights used in test car units. Weights vary from 25 to 10,000 pounds and once calibrated, they are sent via rail to sites around the country for scales used in official grain weight certification.

The IT staff proudly supports the work conducted throughout field offices and gratefully acknowledges Mr. Thomas in Toledo and Mr. Marcus Harwitz in Bedford Park for a memorable visit.

The National Grain Center (NGC) Report

Asian American & Pacific Islander heritage Month

The National Grain Center held an Asian-Pacific American Heritage celebration June 10, 2015. Josh Liang organized the event. Ganga Murthy and Mani Ramaswamy presented a video on “Hinduism”, Ajit Gosh presented “What’s in Their Mind,” in which he explained how the motivations and plans of Indian emigrants to the United States often changed after arriving in the States and Josh gave a presentation on Asian culture from his perspective growing up as an Asian American. Lunch was catered from Zwagat (an Indian restaurant) and included:

Vegetable Samosa	Deep fried vegetable dumpling
Naan	Indian bread
Beef Curry	Beef with curry sauce
Chicken Tika Masala	Chicken with curry sauce
Vegetable Kurma	Vegetable with spices
Egg Biryani	Fried rice with vegetables, eggs with spices
White Rice	Plain Basmati Rice with some peas and carrots
Rasa Malai	Desert made with cheese in sweet milk sauce
Mango Lasssi	Sweet mango drink made with mango with buttermilk
Green chutney	ground coconut with green chillies, coriander, garlic, mint etc.
Tamarind chutney	sweet sauce made with Tamarind
Onion Chutney	sweet and sour chutney made with onions, red chillies, tamarind etc.



Sunflower Growing Competition



Last year, Ron Metz (DIOO) organized a bean-growing competition on the the National Grain Center patio—with entries from different groups, including the FMD, FMD Ladies, Biotechnology, and BAR/GSL. For this year’s competition, Sunflowers is the grain of choice. Sunflower seed is a standardized grain under the USGSA. You can find it on our website in the Grain Inspection Handbook II chapter 11. The Dakotas, Minnesota, Kansas, Colorado, Texas, and California are the major producing states. The tallest sunflower was recorded at 25 feet.

This contest is for bragging rights to see how many sunflower seeds can be grown (harvested) on the patio from one bucket and the tallest sunflower that can be grown in the bucket. We will use galvanized buckets from last year’s contest. Farmers must bring their own dirt and seed. Family farming is encouraged and is the strength of American Agriculture.

So far, two buckets have been placed, and one is already sprouting! The harvest and weigh-in can be expected at the end of summer.

The National Grain Center (NGC) Report (cont.)

Laboratory Eye Safety



According to Prevent Blindness America, eye injuries in the workplace are very common. Thousands of eye accidents happen each day and one in 10 injuries requires one or more missed workdays. It is estimated that using the correct eye protection could lessen the severity or even prevent 90 percent of eye injuries. Federal law requires all laboratory workers to wear proper eye protection. The type of eye protection required depends on the type of work you are doing.

"Protective equipment including personal protective equipment for eyes, face, head and extremities, protective clothing, respiratory devices, and protective shields and barriers shall be provided, used and maintained in a sanitary and reliable condition wherever it is necessary by reason of hazards of processes or environment, chemical hazards, radiological hazards or mechanical irritants encountered in a manner capable of causing injury or impairment in the function of any part of the body through absorption, inhalation or physical contact." (29 CFR 1910.132(a))

All National Grain Center laboratory personnel must be familiar with... and trained on use of safety equipment," as stated in the National Grain Center's Chemical Hygiene Plan (CHP) that is comprised of six "SAFE" policy documents. A copy of the CHP is available for reference at inNGC or I:\MO Common\inTSD\Documents\National Grain Center Chemical Hygiene Plan.pdf.

Within SAFE-1, Basic rules and Procedures for Working with Chemicals, employees are required to "assure that appropriate eye protection is worn by all persons, including visitors, where chemicals are stored or handled." Reference is made to SAFE-03, Protective Apparel and Equipment, which states:

"Eye goggles and face shields must meet ANSI Z87.1 criteria for approved use while using and/or handling hazardous chemicals. Laboratory personnel shall wear the appropriate eye protection when working with chemicals."

Similar requirements are provided in FGIS Directive 4790.3, Personal Protective Equipment and Safety Equipment:

"Chemical hazard goggles or plano (plain glass) spectacles meeting ANSI Z87.1 - 1989 criteria will be provided and worn when performing any task involving the handling or use of corrosives or toxic chemicals."

Prescription eyeglass wearers are provided prescription safety glasses at no cost as an alternative to wearing safety glasses over their "street" glasses. The Technology and Science Division has a Prescription Safety Glasses Purchase written policy and procedure allowing employees in positions requiring eye protection to obtain prescription safety glasses. A new pair may be provided annually or if the individual's prescription changes significantly. The policy document specifies:

"The two technical requirements for the safety glasses are they MUST meet ANSI Z87.1 standards and they MUST have non-detachable side splash guards."

Safety glasses need to be worn when a chemical is being used. This includes other persons in close proximity to the one using the chemical. On the other hand, safety glasses are not required to be worn in a lab if chemicals are not in use nearby, however, specific circumstances may still warrant use of safety glasses. Other forms of eye protection such as goggles or splash hoods may be more appropriate when handling corrosive materials; they also must meet ANSI specifications. Wearing more than one form of eye protection may be warranted in some situations.



The National Grain Center (NGC) Report (cont.)

Feds Feed Families 2015

It is FEDS FEED FAMILIES FOOD Drive, time again. Food drives are Harvesters' best source of high-quality nonperishable foods and household or personal care items. All products collected during food drives are distributed in our region through Harvesters' network of more than 620 nonprofit agencies. Every \$1 helps Harvesters provide three meals. Food and fund drives also raise awareness about the issue of hunger in the community. It takes all of us working together to solve hunger

This year Brooke Rodriguez and Shayle Williams assisted by Janine Goodson will be leading the National Grain Center's Feds Feed Families campaign. They plan to have alternating bake sales and luncheons every week. The week of June 29th was a luncheon, the following week a bake sale, and so on until the end of August. I am sure we can count on everyone here at the National Grain Center to help with donations because who does not like to eat!



HARVESTERS' MOST NEEDED ITEMS (No glass please!)

Food

Canned Vegetables
Canned Fruit
Boxed Meals - (Hamburger Helper, Pasta Roni)
Canned Meat/Tuna
Peanut Butter
Canned Soup
Cereal – hot and cold

Household Products

Soap
Deodorant
Shampoo
Toilet Paper

Combined Federal Campaign 2015



April Johnson and Darcie Tone-Pah-Hote will be coordinating the Combined Federal Campaign for FY 2015.

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



The National Grain Center (NGC) Report (cont.)

Employee Spotlight: Darcie Tone-Pah-Hote

Q: Where are you from?

A: I was born in El Paso, Texas, and then my family moved to a farm outside of Jamesport, Missouri.

Q: Where did you attend school? What degree(s) do you have?

A: I graduated high school from Gilman City, Missouri, and then I attended Missouri Western State University. While at Missouri Western, I earned both my Bachelors in Biochemistry with American Chemical Society Accreditation and my Masters of Applied Science in Chemistry.

Q: What is the most interesting part of your job and/or what is your favorite part of your job?

A: It may sound silly but I like watching the DNA form in the microcentrifuge tubes while doing extractions. I also like to work with the electrophoresis gels.

Q: What is your position title and duties/responsibilities?

A: I am a Physical Scientist in the Biotechnology lab. I do GMO testing on different grains, evaluate qualitative and quantitative test kits, and assist in administering the proficiency program.

Q: How long have you been at the National Grain Center?

A: One year and three months almost.

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: Photography, Horseback Riding, Playing with my Children, Reading, Writing, Genealogy, and Baking.

Q: Who is the biggest influence in your life?

A: My family. In particular my mother and maternal grandmother.

Q: What is the last book you read and/or what book are you currently reading?

A: The last book I read was a Junie B. Jones, First Grader book that I read to my daughter Sylvia. Right now I occasionally get to read bits and pieces of Game of Thrones: Dance With Dragons.

Q: What is your favorite movie? Why?

A: It depends on what era and genre we are talking about. I am a bit of a movie buff. I am very eclectic with my movie collection. I suppose if I absolutely HAD to pick just one, it would be Princess Bride. It has action, romance, science fiction, and comedy all wrapped into one movie.

Q: What would you say is your greatest accomplishment?

A: Other than my girls I would say getting my Master's degree while raising Sylvia and working.

Q: What is your dream vacation?

A: A trip to Ireland, not only for relaxation but to work on my family's genealogy.

Q: As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

A: It was a toss-up between a doctor, teacher, marine biologist, or horse rancher.

Q: What is your favorite band and song?

A: To pick just one is not possible. Like with my movies, I am very eclectic on my taste in music. I listen to classical, jazz, R&B, rap, rock, oldies, country... It just depends on my mood and who I am with.



The National Grain Center (NGC) Report (cont.)

Guatemala Rice Importer Grading Seminar



Front Row (left to Right): Luis Mazariegos, Arrozgua-Guatemalan Rice Association; José Juan Alvarado, Arrozgua-Guatemalan Rice Association; Mónica Romelia Morales, Arrozgua-Guatemalan Rice Association; Mynor Waldemar Archila Ortiz, Arrozgua-Guatemalan Rice Association;

Second Row (left to Right): Rick Millerd, USDA, GIPSA; Enrique Godoy, ALCSA (Arrocera Los Corrales S.A.); David Pineda, ALCSA (Arrocera Los Corrales S.A.); Ramon Luevano, USDA, GIPSA

Mexican SENASICA Representatives Tour NGC



SENASICA's mission is to regulate, administer, and promote agroalimentary health, safety and quality, reducing the hazards inherent to agriculture, aquaculture, livestock production, and fishery activities in benefit of producers, consumers, and industry.

Unified Grain Moisture Algorithm (UGMA) Seminar

Inspection Instrumentation Branch Chief Cathleen Brenner and Dr. Dave Funk, Grain Quality Analytics were joined by Eric Jabs, Deputy Director, Quality Assurance and Compliance Division to present an overview of the Unified Grain Moisture Algorithm (UGMA) Compatible Moisture Meters.

The day-long seminar was geared towards grain elevator operators located in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota. The UGMA Compatible moisture meters have been the official moisture meters since 2012. Grain handlers in the upper Midwest have had some concerns about how the meters function during the cold weather months. The seminar explained how the meters operate, the approval process for the meters, the acceptable tolerance ranges for the meters, and how FGIS monitors meter performance.



Ed Stallman, Manager, Grand Forks Field Office; Mary Alonzo, Director, Technology and Science Division and representatives of Perten Instruments and DICKEY-john also participated in the seminar, held of the Northern Crops Institute in Fargo, North Dakota.

The National Grain Center (NGC) Report (cont.)

Quality Assurance Specialist (QAS) Seminars

In June, the Board of Appeals and Review concluded the final of six grain grading seminars for federal and official agency Quality Assurance Specialists. The seminars were conducted from April 15th to June 4th. The 2-day seminars were hosted at the National Grain Center in Kansas City, Missouri, and facilitated by Board members Fred Felix and Rick Millerd.

The QAS seminars are an annual part of the Board's quality program, and they serve to provide formalized technical training to a large group of QASs based on their geographical area. This format allows the Board to focus on regional inspection issues and also allows for uniform and efficient delivery of training content.



The purpose of the seminars is to promote communication between QASs and the Board, align the field QASs on subjective grading factors, and to instill confidence through training. The seminar covered subjective grading factors in grains and select commodities. The seminar provides in-depth, hands-on training for subjective factors such as, damage, odor, and wheat of other classes. At the end of each seminar, breakout sessions were offered for QASs that wanted to train on specific grains or specific types of subjective factors.

Over 65 individuals attended this year's seminar. The attendees represented QASs from all of FGIS's field offices and twenty five official agencies. The QASs that attended were able to develop their technical knowledge and further refine their grading skills. Each participant at the seminar received a certificate of training, and at each seminar a special recognition was given in the form of a certificate of excellence for the individual(s) that had the most perfect scores on the damage test boxes. Below are the names of individuals recognized for their excellent work:

April 15-16th Craig Zoss, Sioux City
 April 22-23rd Debra Lofton, South Carolina
 April 29-30th Doug Riley, Missouri
 May 13-14th Cheyenne Mewes, Mid Iowa and Kyle Hankey, Kankakee
 May 20-21st Greg Zieber, GSL
 June 2-4th Greg Neill, Montana and George Banks Jr., League City Field Office

If you would like to make a contribution to "The National Grain Center (NGC) Report" please send information to Roger Friedrich, Leader, GIPSA, Digital Media Group roger.l.friedrich@usda.gov

**NGC
Report**

Issuance Report

Terri Henry, Washington, DC

Issued – FGIS Directive 9180.63, Inspection of Hullless Oats, dated June 15, 2015
 Issued – FGIS Directive 4735.2, Uniform and Identity Apparel and Dress Code Policy, dated June 17, 2015
 Issued – FGIS Directive 9180.49, Grading and Certification of Grain Containing Diatomaceous Earth and Silica Gel, dated June 19, 2015
 Cancel – FGIS PN-04-01, Special Statement for Peas
 Cancel – FGIS PN-09-04, Approval of Fluorescent Lamps
 Cancel – FGIS PN-11-04, Wilsonart D456-60 Café Crème Laminate Work Surface
 Cancel – FGIS PN-11-09, CHARM Sciences Rosa DON P/N Test Method
 Cancel – FGIS PN-12-04, Sample Collection Responsibilities for Verifying the Accuracy of Moisture Meter Calibrations Crop Year 2012
 Cancel – FGIS PN-12-06, DICKEY-John GAC 2100 Checktest Procedures for the Fall 2012 Checktest Cycle
 Cancel – FGIS PN-12-08, Transition to New Moisture Measurement Technology
 Cancel – FGIS PN-12-09, National Wheat Sample Collection Plan for the Pesticide Residue Program
 Cancel – FGIS PN-13-05, National Export Soybean Sample Collection Plan
 Cancel – FGIS PN-14-09, Revision of the Wheat Chapter of Grain Inspection Handbook II
 Cancel – GIPSA 4451-2 Travel Gainsharing

The following GIPSA directives are canceled, beside each directive is the Department Regulation (DR) employees should refer to for guidance. All DR's are located at the following website: <http://www.ocio.usda.gov/policy-directives-records-forms/directives-categories>

Cancel – GIPSA Directive 3140.2 GIPSA Microcomputer, Local Area Network (Lan) and Notebook Computer Policy
 New Guidance – DR 3140-001 USDA Information System Security Policy
 Cancel – GIPSA 3140.3 GIPSA Internet Use and Security Policy
 New Guidance – DR 3140-002 USDA Internet Security Policy
 Cancel – GIPSA 3140.4 GIPSA Electronic Mail Security and Privacy Policy
 New Guidance – DR 3525-000 USDA Internet and E-Mail Security
 Cancel – GIPSA 3140.5 Wireless Local Area Network (WLAN) Implementation
 New Guidance – DR3505-002 Wireless Networking Security Policy
 Cancel – GIPSA 3210.1 Development and Maintenance of GIPSA Web Sites
 New Guidance – DR3430-001 Web Site Development and Maintenance
 Cancel - GIPSA 3140-1 Information System Security (ISS) Programs
 New Guidance – DR 3140-001 USDA Information System Security Policy
 Cancel – GIPSA 4810.1 Workers Compensation
 New Guidance – DR4430-003 Workers' Compensation Program and DR 4430-005 Workers' Compensation Program: Return to Work
 Cancel – GIPSA 5600.2 Environmental Justice
 New Guidance – DR 5600-002 Environmental Justice



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.

Training Updates

Caroline Thorpe, Washington, D.C.

Mandatory Training Due

Course	Due Date	Trainees
Civil Rights: No Fear Act Comprehensive	Within 30 days of hiring (USDA)	New Employees
Cultural Transformation and Civil Rights: Harassment Prevention for Federal Employees Sexual Harassment Prevention for Federal Managers	September 30, 2015	All Employees and Managers
Cultural Transformation: Maximizing Employee Engagement	September 30, 2015	All Supervisors, Managers, and Executives
Cultural Transformation: Business of Coaching: Getting Ready to Coach	September 30, 2015	All Hiring Managers, Supervisors and SEPMS
CyberSecurity: FY2015 Informational Security Awareness	March 31, 2015	All Employees (284 complete-441 incomplete)
Ethics Training: To access see instructions below	June 30, 2015	All employees
<p>Click the Curriculum tab (circle) in the lower-right corner of your account Click "2015 Annual Ethics Training" Click the small triangle next to the "1 item from item pool" Choose one of the training options which are: Acquisition Leadership Classroom or Live Option: Only choose classroom training if you know you will be offered this option. The originator of the course will mark you complete (Usually the ethics office). The Hatch Act (Recommended for all employees who do not do contracting or are not "official leaders")</p>		
LincPass Training:	December 15, 2014 (Past due)	All Employees w/computer access (164 employees are incomplete)
Performance Training: Performance Management in USDA.	<u>Due: May 15, 2015</u>	All Employees whose Performance Training was incomplete for FY2014 due to technical issues.
Safety-New Course: "Active Shooter: What You Can Do." (Either Web-based or PDF version)	<u>April 30, 2015</u>	All Employees

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.

Continued, see **Training** on page 26.

Training *from page 25*

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 coaches 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.

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 \$50 per year. See if you can find someone in your office who writes well and may be able to work with you on a basic writing program.

Many of these items are not new, but reviewing what is available now since you completed your IDP may be of value if you feel the need to adjust your activities throughout the year.

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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Ignacio.J.Perez@usda.gov

By August 17, 2015



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

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