

assistance is in the form of a repayable cooperative agreement and includes a repayment portion that recognizes the investment risk taken by AARC.

Applicants are expected to provide at least a 1:1 match when seeking funding from AARC. The Center receives an annual appropriation from Congress and operates under a revolving fund. As

Center-funded projects become profitable and reimburse AARC, the money will be returned to the fund to help finance future projects.

For further information, contact the Alternative Agricultural Research and Commercialization Center, Fourteenth Street and Independence Avenue SW., Cotton Annex, Second Floor Mezzanine, Washington, DC 20250-0400. Phone, 202-690-1634.

Marketing and Regulatory Programs

This mission area includes marketing and regulatory programs other than those concerned with food safety.

Agricultural Marketing Service

The Agricultural Marketing Service was established by the Secretary of Agriculture on April 2, 1972, under the authority of Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1953 (5 U.S.C. app.) and other authorities. The Service administers standardization, grading, inspection, certification, market news, marketing orders, and research, promotion, and regulatory programs.

Market News The Service provides current, unbiased information to producers, processors, distributors, and others to assist them in the orderly marketing and distribution of farm commodities. Information is collected on supplies, demand, prices, movement, location, quality, condition, and other market data on farm products in specific markets and marketing areas. The data is disseminated nationally via a modern satellite system and is shared with several countries. The Service also assists countries in developing their own marketing information systems.

Standardization, Grading, and Classing Grade standards have been established for nearly 240 agricultural commodities to help buyers and sellers trade on agreed-upon quality levels. Standards are developed with the benefit of views from those in the industries directly affected and others interested. The Service also participates in developing international standards to facilitate trade.

Grading and classing services are provided to certify the grade and quality of products. These grading services are provided to buyers and sellers of live cattle, swine, sheep, meat, poultry, eggs, rabbits, fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, peanuts, dairy products, and tobacco. **Classing services** are provided to buyers and sellers of cotton and cotton products. These services are mainly voluntary and are provided upon request and for a fee. The Service also is responsible for the certification of turpentine and other naval stores products, and the testing of seed. **Laboratory Testing** The Service provides scientific and laboratory support to its commodity programs relating to testing of microbiological and chemical factors in food products through grading, certification, acceptance, and regulatory programs; testing of peanuts for aflatoxin; testing of imported flue-cured and burley tobacco for pesticide residues; and testing seeds for germination and purity. The agency also carries out quality assurance and safety oversight activities with respect to the Service's commodity division laboratory and testing activities relating to milk market administrators, resident grading programs, and State and private laboratory programs.

The Service also administers the Pesticide Data Program which, in cooperation with States, samples and analyzes fresh fruits and vegetables for pesticide residues. It shares residue test results with the Environmental Protection Agency and other public agencies.

Food Quality Assurance Under a governmentwide quality assurance program, AMS is responsible for the development and revision of specifications used by Federal agencies in procuring food for military and civilian uses. The Service coordinates and approves certification programs designed to ensure that purchased products conform to the specification requirements.

Section 32 Programs Under section 32 of the act of August 24, 1935, as amended (7 U.S.C. 612c), 30 percent of customs receipts collected during each calendar year are automatically appropriated for expanding outlets for various commodities. Portions of these funds are transferred to the Food and Nutrition Service of USDA and to the Department of Commerce. Remaining funds are used to purchase commodities for the National School Lunch Program and other feeding programs, for diversion to other outlets, and for administering agreement and order programs.

Regulatory Programs The Service administers several regulatory programs designed collectively to protect producers, handlers, and consumers of agricultural commodities from financial loss or personal injury resulting from careless, deceptive, or fraudulent marketing practices. Such regulatory programs encourage fair trading practices in the marketing of fruits and vegetables, require truth in seed labeling and in advertising.

Under the Egg Products Inspection Act (21 U.S.C. 1031–1056), the Service provides voluntary laboratory analyses of egg products, and controls the disposition of restricted shell eggs—eggs that are a potential health hazard.

Marketing Agreements and Orders These programs, under authority of the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937 (7 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*), help to establish and maintain orderly marketing conditions for certain commodities. Milk marketing orders establish minimum prices that handlers or distributors are required to pay producers. Programs for fruits, vegetables, and related specialty

crops like nuts and spearmint oil help stabilize supplies and market prices. In some cases, they also authorize research and market development activities, including advertising supported by assessments that handlers pay. Through orderly marketing, adjusting the supply to demand, and avoiding unreasonable fluctuations during the marketing season, the income of producers is increased by normal market forces, and consumer interests are protected through quality and quantity control.

Federal marketing orders originate with a request from a producer group to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Secretary can conduct hearings and referenda based on the producer group's proposal for a marketing order. Producer and handler assessments finance their operations.

In carrying out the Government role, the Service ensures that persons interested in the development and operation of the programs have a fair hearing and that each marketing order works according to Federal law and established rules and guidelines. **Plant Variety Protection Program** Under authority of the Plant Variety Protection Act (7 U.S.C. 2321 *et seq.*), the Service administers a program that provides for the issuance of "certificates of plant variety protection." These certificates afford developers of novel varieties of sexually reproduced plants exclusive rights to sell, reproduce, import, or export such varieties, or use them in the production of hybrids or different varieties for a period of 18 years.

Research and Promotion Programs The Service monitors certain industry-sponsored research, promotion, and information programs authorized by Federal laws. These programs provide farmers with a means to finance and operate various research, promotion, and information activities for cotton, potatoes, eggs, milk and dairy products, beef, pork, wool, mohair, honey, watermelon, limes, mushrooms, soybeans, fresh cut flowers, popcorn, kiwi fruit, and canola and rapeseed.

Transportation Programs The Service is also responsible for the development of an efficient transportation system for rural America that begins at the farm gate and moves agricultural and other rural products through the Nation's highways, railroads, airports, and waterways, and into the domestic and international marketplace. To accomplish this, AMS conducts economic studies and analyses of these systems, and represents agricultural and rural transportation interests in policy and regulatory forums. To provide direct assistance to the transportation community, AMS supplies research and technical information to producers, producer groups, shippers, exporters, rural communities, carriers, governmental agencies, and universities.

The Service carries out responsibilities of USDA's former Office of Transportation under the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 (7 U.S.C. 1281), the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (7 U.S.C. 1621), the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954 (7 U.S.C. 1691), the Rural Development Act of 1972 (7 U.S.C. 1921 note), the International Carriage of Perishable Foodstuffs Act (7 U.S.C. 4401), and the Cooperative Marketing Act of 1926 (7 U.S.C. 451-457).

Organic Standards Under the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (7 U.S.C. 501-522), the Service assists a National Organic Standards Board in developing national organic standards.

Other Programs Other marketing service activities include financial grants to States for marketing improvement projects. The agency also has responsibility for the conduct of studies of the facilities and methods used in the physical distribution of food and other farm products; for research designed to improve the handling of all agricultural products as they move from farm to consumers; and for increasing marketing efficiency by developing improved operating methods, facilities, and equipment for processing, handling, and distributing dairy, poultry, and meat products.

The Agricultural Marketing Service manages the Pesticide Recordkeeping Program in coordination with the National Agricultural Statistics Service and the Environmental Protection Agency. The Service has developed educational programs and assists State agencies in inspecting applicator records.

Field Organization Programs and activities in the field are carried out through a variety of different types of organizations reporting to their respective Washington components.

For further information, contact the Information Staff, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, DC 20250. Phone, 202-720-8999.

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[For the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service statement of organization, see the *Code of Federal Regulations*, Title 7, Part 371]

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service was reestablished by the Secretary of Agriculture on March 14, 1977, pursuant to authority contained in 5 U.S.C. 301 and Reorganization Plan No. 2 of 1953 (5 U.S.C. app.).

The Service was established to conduct regulatory and control programs to protect and improve animal and plant health for the benefit of man and the environment. In cooperation with State governments, the agency administers Federal laws and regulations pertaining to animal and plant health and quarantine, humane treatment of animals, and the control and eradication of pests and diseases. Regulations to prevent the introduction or interstate spread of certain animal or plant pests or diseases are also enforced by the Service. It also carries out research and operational activities to reduce crop and livestock depredations caused by birds, rodents, and predators.

Plant Protection and Quarantine Programs Plant protection officials are responsible for programs to control or eradicate plant pests and diseases. These programs are carried out in cooperation with the States involved, other Federal agencies, farmers, and private

organizations. Pest control programs use a single tool or a combination of pest control techniques, both chemical and nonchemical, which are both effective and safe.

Agricultural quarantine inspection officials administer Federal regulations that prohibit or restrict the entry of foreign pests and plants, plant products, animal products and byproducts, and other materials that may harbor pests or diseases. Inspection service is maintained at all major sea, air, border, and interior ports of entry in the continental United States and in Hawaii, Alaska, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Bahamas, and Bermuda. Services also are provided on a regular or on-call basis at some 500 outlying ports and military installations throughout the country.

Other responsibilities include the inspection and certification of domestic commodities for export, regulation of the import and export of endangered plant species, and ensuring that imported seed is free of noxious weeds.

Veterinary Services Animal health officials are responsible for programs to protect and improve the health, quality, and marketability of U.S. animals and animal products. The programs are carried out through cooperative links with States, foreign governments, livestock producers, and other Federal Agencies.

Service officials exclude, control, and eradicate animal pests and diseases by carrying out eradication and control programs for certain diseases, providing diagnostic services, and gathering and disseminating information regarding animal health in the U.S. through land, air, and ocean ports. They also certify as to the health status of animals and animal products being exported to other countries and respond to animal disease incursions or epidemics which threaten the health status of U.S. livestock and poultry.

Regulatory Enforcement and Animal Care The Service administers Federal laws concerned with the humane care and handling of all warm-blooded animals bought, sold, and transported—including common carriers—in

commerce and used or intended for use as pets at the wholesale level, or used or intended for use in exhibitions or for research purposes. The agency also enforces the Horse Protection Act of 1970, which prohibits the soring of horses at shows and sales.

The Service ensures compliance with APHIS regulations concerning plants and animals through comprehensive investigations, sound enforcement, and strong educational efforts.

International Services Service activities in the international arena include conducting cooperative plant and animal pest and disease control, eradication, and surveillance programs in foreign countries. These programs provide a first line of defense for the United States against threats such as screwworm, medfly, foot-and-mouth disease, and other exotic diseases and pests. The Service also provides international representation concerning sanitary and phytosanitary technical trade issues, and manages programs for overseas preclearance of commodities, passengers, and U.S. military activities.

Biotechnology, Biologics, and Environmental Protection The Service is responsible for the regulation of genetically engineered organisms and products that present a plant pest risk. Regulation is carried out through a permit system. The Service also administers a Federal law intended to ensure that all veterinary biological products, whether developed by conventional or new biotechnological procedures, used in the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of animal disease are safe, pure, potent, and effective. The Service regulates firms that manufacture veterinary biological products subject to the act, including licensing the manufacturing establishment and its products, inspecting production facilities and production methods, and testing products under a surveillance program.

Animal Damage Control Animal Damage Control officials cooperate with States, counties, local communities, and agricultural producer groups to reduce crop and livestock depredations caused

by birds, rodents, and predators. Using methods and techniques that are biologically sound, environmentally acceptable, and economically feasible, they participate in efforts to educate and advise farmers and ranchers on proper uses of control methods and techniques; they suppress serious nuisances and threats to public health and safety caused by birds, rodents, and other wildlife in urban and rural communities; and they work with airport managers to reduce risks of bird strikes. In addition, they conduct research into predator-prey relationships, new control methods, and more efficient and safe uses of present methods such as toxicants, repellants and attractants, biological controls, scare devices, and habitat alteration.

For further information, contact Legislative and Public Affairs, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250. Phone, 202-720-2511.

Grain Inspection, Packers, and Stockyards Administration

The Grain Inspection, Packers, and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) comprises the former Federal Grain Inspection Service and the former Packers and Stockyards Administration.

The primary task of GIPSA is to carry out the provisions of the United States Grain Standards Act (7 U.S.C. 71 *et seq.*), the Packers and Stockyards Act of 1921, as amended (7 U.S.C. 181-229), the Truth in Lending and Fair Credit Billing Acts (15 U.S.C. 1601 *et seq.*), and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (15 U.S.C. 1691 *et seq.*) with respect to firms subject to GIPSA. The Administration also manages the provisions of section 1324 of the Food Security Act of 1985 (7 U.S.C. 1631), certifying State central filing systems for notification of liens against farm products and ensures integrity in the inspection, weighing, and handling of U.S. grain.

The Administration is responsible for establishing official U.S. standards for grain and other assigned commodities, and for administering a nationwide official inspection and weighing system. It may, in response to formal application, authorize private and State agencies to

perform official services under the authority contained in the act.

Two of GIPSA's three grain inspection divisions are located in Washington, DC; the third is located in Kansas City, MO. Most employees work in field offices around the Nation.

Inspection The United States Grain Standards Act requires that, with some exceptions, all U.S. export grain be officially inspected. At export port locations, inspection is performed by GIPSA or by State agencies that have been delegated export inspection authority by the Administrator. For domestic grain, marketed at inland locations, the Administrator designates private and State agencies to provide official inspection services upon request. Both export and domestic services are provided on a fee basis.

To ensure that the official U.S. grain standards are applied uniformly nationwide, GIPSA's field offices provide oversight, guidance, and assistance to non-Federal agencies performing inspection activities, both at export and inland inspection points.

Buyers and sellers may request appeal inspections of original inspection results, first from a field office and then, if desired, from GIPSA's Board of Appeals and Review. The Administration maintains a quality control program to monitor the national inspection system and to ensure that all field locations accurately and uniformly apply the U.S. grain standards.

Weighing Official weighing of U.S. export grain is performed at port locations by GIPSA or by State agencies that have been delegated export weighing authority by the Administrator. For domestic grain marketed at inland locations, the weighing services may be provided by GIPSA or by designated private or State agencies. Weighing services are provided on a fee basis, upon request.

As with inspection activities, GIPSA field offices provide oversight, guidance, and assistance to non-Federal agencies performing official weighing services. With the support of the Association of American Railroads and user fees, it conducts a railroad track scale-testing

program which includes an annual testing service for all State and railroad company-owned master scales. The Administration is the only entity, public or private, which connects all railroad track scales to the national standards. Standardization The Administration is responsible for establishing, maintaining, and, as needed, revising official U.S. standards. Such standards exist for corn, wheat, rye, oats, barley, flaxseed, sorghum, soybeans, triticale, sunflower seed, canola, and mixed grain. It is authorized to perform applied research to develop methods of improving accuracy and uniformity in grading grain.

It is also responsible for standardization and inspection activities for rice, dry beans, peas, lentils, hay, straw, hops, and related processed grain commodities under the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, as amended (7 U.S.C. 1621). Although standards no longer exist for hay, straw, and hops, GIPSA maintains inspection procedures for and retains authority to inspect these commodities.

Methods Development The Administration's methods development activities include applied research or tests that produce new or improved techniques for measuring grain quality. Examples include new knowledge gained through study of how to establish the framework for real-time grain inspection and develop reference methods to maintain consistency and standardization in the grain inspection system, and the comparison of different techniques for evaluation of end use quality in wheat. Included in this program area are also the development of a new wheat classification system, evaluation of prototype wheat hardness meters, and adapting measurement techniques for pesticides, mycotoxins, heavy metals, vitamins, and grain odor for use in the official grain inspection system.

Compliance The Administration's compliance activities ensure accurate and uniform implementation of the act, applicable provisions of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, and related

regulations—including designating States and private agencies to carry out official inspection and weighing functions and monitoring, and overseeing and reviewing the operations of such agencies to ensure adequate performance.

The agency administers a registration program for all firms that export grain from the United States. In conjunction with the Office of the Inspector General, it carries out a program for investigating reported violations, and initiates followup and corrective actions when appropriate. The total compliance program ensures the integrity of the national inspection and weighing system. Packers and Stockyards Activities The Packers and Stockyards Act is an antitrust, trade practice, and financial protection law. Its principal purpose is to maintain effective competition and fair trade practices in the marketing of livestock, meat, and poultry for the protection of livestock and poultry producers. Members of the livestock, poultry, and meat industries are also protected against unfair or monopolistic practices of competitors. The act also protects consumers against unfair business practices in the marketing of meats and poultry and against restrictions of competition that could unduly affect meat and poultry prices.

The provisions of the Packers and Stockyards Act are enforced by investigations of violations of the act with emphasis on payment protection; detecting instances of commercial bribery, fraud in livestock marketing, and false weighing; requiring adequate bond coverage for commission firms, dealers, and packers; and the surveillance of marketing methods at public markets and in geographical market areas of the country.

For further information, contact the Grain Inspection, Packers, and Stockyards Administration, Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250. Phone, 202-720-0219.