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interest to the United States and other nations; taps the U.S. agricultural community to provide technical assistance and professional development and training programs to assist economic development in lower income nations; serves as U.S. liaison with international organizations; and organizes overseas trade and investment missions.

These activities serve the needs of other USDA agencies, the Agency for International Development, other public and private institutions, foreign nations, development banks, and the U.S. university and agricultural communities.

For further information, contact the Information Division, Foreign Agricultural Service, Deparment of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250–1000. Phone, 202–720–7115.

Research, Education, and Economics

This mission area's main focus is to create, apply, and transfer knowledge and technology to provide affordable food and fiber, ensure foods safety and nutrition, and support rural development and natural resource needs of people by conducting integrated national and international research, information, education, and statistical programs and services that are in the national interest.

Agricultural Research Service

The Agricultural Research Service (ARS) provides access to agricultural information and develops new knowledge and technology needed to solve technical agricultural problems of broad scope and high national priority. The goal is to ensure adequate availability of high quality, safe food, and other agricultural products—to meet the nutritional needs of the American consumer, sustain a viable and competitive food and agricultural economy, enhance the quality of life and economic opportunity for rural citizens and society as a whole, and maintain a quality environment and natural resource base.

All administrative and management responsibilities of the four Research, Education, and Economic agencies—Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), Economic Research Service (ERS), and National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)—are administered by the ARS Administrative and Financial Management Unit headquartered in Washington, DC.

Research activities are carried out at 104 domestic locations (including Puerto Rico) and 3 overseas locations. Much of this research is conducted in cooperation with partners in State universities and experiment stations, other Federal agencies, and private organizations. A national program staff, headquartered in Beltsville, MD, is the focal point in the overall planning and coordination of ARS' research programs. Day-to-day management of the respective programs for specific field locations is assigned to eight area offices.

Area Offices—Agricultural Research Service

Office	Address
BELTSVILLE AREA—Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, National Arboretum, Washington, DC	Bldg. 003, Beltsville Agricultural Research Ctr. W., Beltsville, MD 20705
MIDSOUTH AREA—Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee	P.O. Box 225, Stoneville, MS 38776
MIDWEST AREA—Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Wisconsin	1815 N. University St., Peoria, IL 61804
NORTHERN PLAINS AREA—Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming	Suite 150, 1201 Oakridge Rd., Fort Collins, CO 80525–5562
NORTH ATLANTIC AREA—Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, West Virginia	600 E. Mermaid Ln., Philadelphia, PA 19118

Area Offices—Agricultural Research Service—Continued

Office	Address
PACIFIC WEST AREA—Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Washington	800 Buchanan St., Albany, CA 94710
SOUTH ATLANTIC AREA—Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Virgin Islands, Virginia	P.O. Box 5677, Athens, GA 30613
SOUTHERN PLAINS AREA—Arkansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas	Suite 230, 7607 Eastmark Dr., College Station, TX 77840

The National Agricultural Library (NAL), administered by ARS, provides information services over a broad range of agricultural interests to a wide cross-section of users, from research scientists to the general public. The Library assists its users through a variety of specialized information centers. Its staff uses advanced information technologies to generate new information products, creating an electronic library as it improves access to the knowledge stored in its multimedia collection of more than 2 million items.

Information is made available through loans, photocopies, reference services, and literature searches. A subject profiling system for selective searches of agricultural data bases is available for USDA scientists. Citations to the agricultural literature are stored in the Agricultural Online Access (AGRICOLA) data base, available through online computer systems and on compact disc. The Library also distributes in the U.S. the AGRIS data base of citations to the agricultural literature prepared by centers in various parts of the world and coordinated by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

For further information, contact the Information Staff, Agricultural Research Service, Department of Agriculture, 6303 Ivy Lane, Room 450, Greenbelt, MD 20770. Phone, 301–344–2340.

Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service

The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) expands the research and higher education functions of the former Cooperative State Research Service and the education and outreach functions of the former Extension Service. The result is better customer service and an enhanced ability to respond to national priorities.

The Service links the research and education resources and activities of USDA and works with the following institutions: land-grant institutions in each State, territory, and the District of Columbia; more than 130 colleges of agriculture; 59 agricultural experiment stations; 57 cooperative extension services; 63 schools of forestry; sixteen 1890 historically Black land-grant institutions and Tuskegee University; 27 colleges of veterinary medicine; 42 schools and colleges of family and consumer services; twenty-nine 1994 Native American land-grant institutions; and 127 Hispanic-serving institutions, including 81 members and 45 associate members of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities.

In cooperation with its partners and customers, CSREES provides the focus to advance a global system of research, extension, and higher education in the food and agricultural sciences and related environmental and human sciences to benefit people, communities, and the Nation.

The Service's mission emphasizes partnerships with the public and private sectors to maximize the effectiveness of limited resources. Its programs increase and provide access to scientific knowledge; strengthen the capabilities of land-grant and other institutions in research, extension, and higher education; increase access to and use of improved communication and network systems; and promote informed decisionmaking by producers, families, and social conditions in the United States and globally. These conditions include improved agricultural and other economic enterprises; safer, cleaner water, food, and air; enhanced

stewardship and management of natural resources; healthier, more responsible and more productive individuals, families, and communities; and a stable, secure, diverse, and affordable national food supply.

The Service provides research, extension, and education leadership through programs in Plant and Animal Production, Protection, and Processing; Natural Resources and Environment; Rural, Economic, and Social Development; Families, 4–H, and Nutrition; Partnerships; Competitive Research Grants and Awards Management; Science and Education Resources Development; and Communications, Technology, and Distance Education.

The Service's partnership with the land-grant universities and their representatives is critical to the effective shared planning, delivery, and accountability for research, higher education, and extension programs.

As a recognized leader in the design, organization, and application of advanced communication technologies and in meeting the growing demand for enhanced distance education capabilities, CSREES provides essential community access to research and education knowledge and connects the private citizen to other Federal Government information.

For further information, contact the Communications, Technology, and Distance Education Office, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250–0906. Phone, 202–720–4651. Fax, 202–690–0289. TDD, 202–690–1899. E-mail, CSREES@reeusda.gov. Internet, http://www.reeusda.gov/.

Economic Research Service

The mission of the Economic Research Service (ERS) is to provide economic and other social science information and analysis for public and private decisions on agriculture, food, natural resources, and rural America. The Service produces such information for use by the general public and to help the executive and legislative branches develop, administer, and evaluate agricultural and rural policies and programs.

The Service produces economic information through a program of research and analysis on: domestic and international agricultural developments; statistical indicators of food and consumer issues and concerns, including nutrition education and food assistance, food safety regulation, determinants of consumer demand for quality and safety, and food marketing trends and developments; agricultural resource and environmental issues; and the effect of public and private actions and policies on national rural and agricultural conditions, including the transformation of the rural economy, the financial performance of the farm sector, and the implications of changing farm credit and financial market structures.

For further information, contact the Information Services Division, Economics Research Service, Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20005–4788. Phone, 202–219–0310.

Office of Energy and New Uses The Office of Energy and New Uses serves as the focal point for all energy-related matters within the Department. The Office is responsible for developing and coordinating all USDA energy policies; reviewing and evaluating all USDA energy and energy-related programs; evaluating the economics of new nonfood uses for agricultural crops; serving as economic liaison on new uses issues; and providing liaison with the Department of Energy and other Federal agencies and departments on energy activities that may affect agriculture and rural America. A major component of this is the responsibility for the coordination and evaluation of the departmental Biofuels Program.

The Office also represents the Department in meetings with agriculture, industry, and consumer groups to discuss effects of departmental energy policies, programs, and proposals on the agricultural sector and rural economy.

For further information, contact the Information Services Division, Economic Research Service, Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20005–4788. Phone, 202–219–0310.

National Agricultural Statistics Service

The National Agricultural Statistics Service prepares estimates and reports on production, supply, price, and other items necessary for the orderly operation of the U.S. agricultural economy.

The reports include statistics on field crops, fruits and vegetables, dairy, cattle, hogs, sheep, poultry, aquaculture, and related commodities or processed products. Other estimates concern farm numbers, farm production expenditures, agricultural chemical use, prices received by farmers for products sold, prices paid for commodities and services, indexes of prices received and paid, parity prices, farm employment, and farm wage rates.

The Service prepares these estimates through a complex system of sample surveys of producers, processors, buyers, and others associated with agriculture. Information is gathered by mail, telephone, personal interviews, and field visits.

The 45 State-Federal offices, serving all 50 States, and the national office prepare weekly, monthly, annual, and other periodic reports for free distribution to the news media, Congress, and survey respondents. The reports are available to others free on the Internet, or on a subscription basis. Information on crop and livestock products appears in about 400 reports issued annually. Cooperative agreements with State agencies also permit preparation and publication of estimates of individual crops and livestock by counties in most States.

The Service performs reimbursable survey work and statistical consulting services for other Federal and State agencies and provides technical assistance for developing agricultural data systems in other countries.

For further Information, contact the Executive Assistant to the Administrator, National Agricultural Statistics Service, Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250–2000. Phone, 202–720–5141.

Natural Resources and Environment

This mission area is responsible for fostering sound stewardship of 75 percent of the Nation's total land area. Ecosystems are the underpinning for the Department's operating philosophy in this area, in order to maximize stewardship of our natural resources. This approach ensures that products, values, services, and uses desired by people are produced in ways that sustain healthy, productive ecosystems.

Forest Service

[For the Forest Service statement of organization, see the *Code of Federal Regulations,* Title 36, Part 200.1]

The Forest Service was created by the Transfer Act of February 1, 1905 (16 U.S.C. 472), which transferred the Federal forest reserves and the responsibility for their management from the Department of the Interior to the Department of Agriculture. The forest reserves were established by the President from the public domain under authority of the Creative Act of March 3, 1891 (26 Stat. 1103). The protection and development of the reserves (which became the national forests in 1907) are governed by the Organic Act of June 4, 1897, as amended (16 U.S.C. 473–478); the Multiple Use-Sustained Yield Act of June 12, 1960 (16 U.S.C. 528–531); the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1601–1610); and the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (90 Stat. 2947). The Weeks Law of March 1, 1911, as amended (16 U.S.C. 480), allowed the Government to purchase and exchange land for national forests.

Objectives The Forest Service has the Federal responsibility for national leadership in forestry. As set forth in law, its mission is to achieve quality land management under the sustainable, multiple-use management concept to