UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE

March 2003

By the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States of America

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, March 10, 2003, is the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of the Foreign Agricultural Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture; and

WHEREAS, the Foreign Agricultural Service was created in the earliest days of the administration of President Dwight D. Eisenhower and under the leadership Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson with the purpose of strengthening and increasing the development of foreign agricultural markets; and

WHEREAS, in 1953, the inaugural challenge to the new agency was fourfold:

- Supply American agriculture with current market information;
- Promote the sale of American farm products abroad;
- Remove obstacles to foreign trade; and
- Help other countries become better customers through technical assistance, foreign investment, greater use of credit and other means; and

WHEREAS, 50 years later, the Foreign Agricultural Service's mission to expand export opportunities for U.S. food, agricultural, fish, and forest products and to promote world food security remains as important today as it did at its inception; and

WHEREAS, the Foreign Agricultural Service, through its network of more than 80 overseas offices and with employees here in the United States, has helped America's food and agricultural sector boost exports from about $3 billion in 1953 to more than $53 billion today;

NOW, THEREFORE, in recognition of the many important contributions of the employees of the Foreign Agricultural Service to the American food and agricultural community and in salute of the Agency's 50 years of service to the Nation and the world, I, Ann M. Veneman, Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture, do hereby proclaim March 10, 2003, the 50th Anniversary of the Foreign Agricultural Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. I call upon employees, constituents and friends of the Department of Agriculture to honor the achievements of the Foreign Agricultural Service and recognize this historic anniversary.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 10th day of March 2003, the two-hundred twenty-seventh year of the Independence of the United States of America.

ANN M. VENEMAN
Secretary