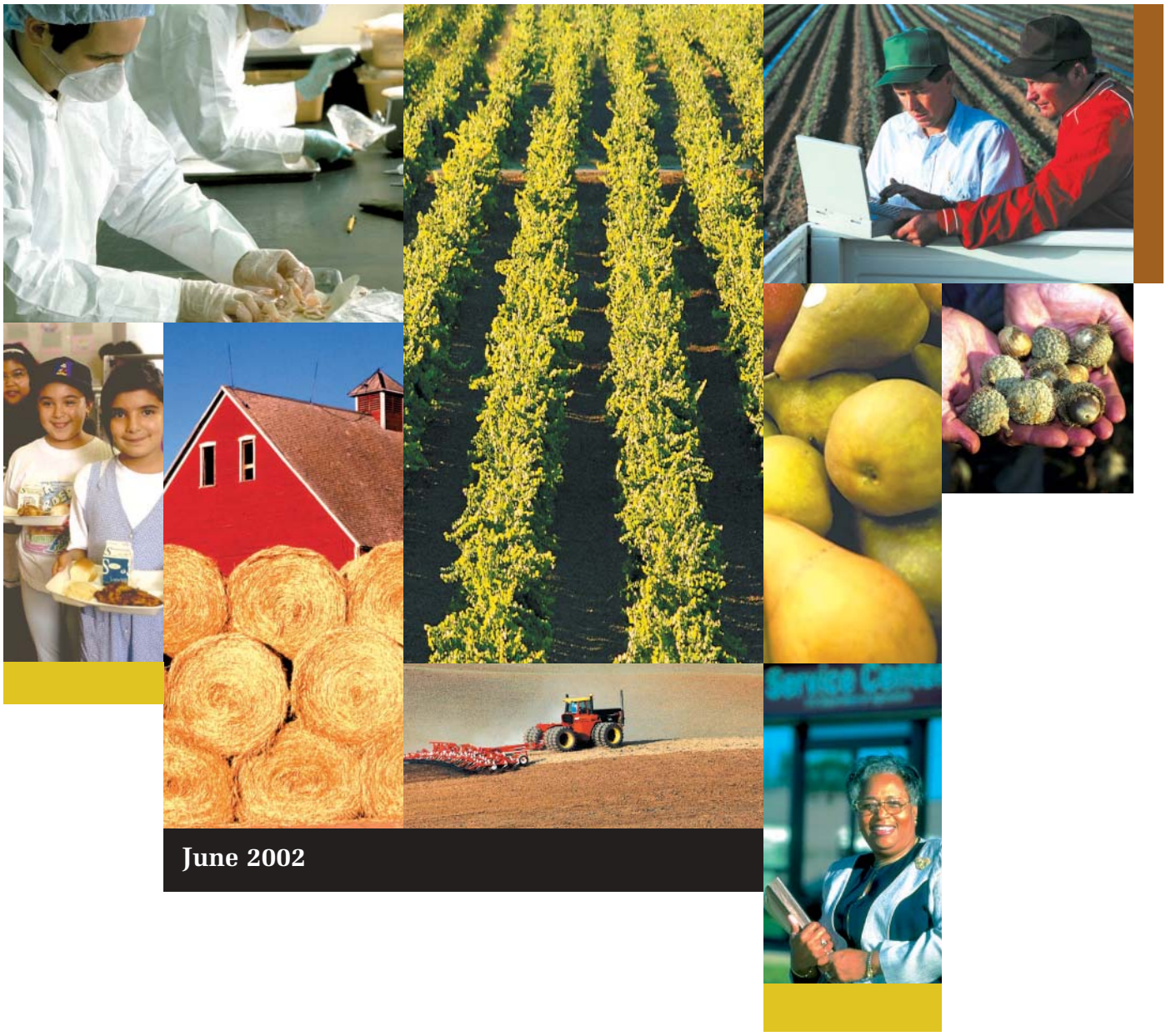
United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of the Chief
Information
Officer

eGovernment
Program

eGovernment Strategic Plan

FY 2002-FY 2006



June 2002

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Message from the Deputy Secretary

Consumers, nonprofits, and businesses are increasingly becoming accustomed to the electronically-enabled conveniences and services offered in the private sector. These heightened expectations of prompt and convenient satisfaction are likewise increasing citizens' and business partners' demands for the same level of service from the public sector. To address this trend, the President has emphasized the need for expanding electronic government (eGovernment) to make government information and services accessible, help employees be more productive and save taxpayer dollars. In addition, through legislation such as the Government Paperwork Elimination Act and the Freedom to e-File Act, Congress is mandating action in this regard.

eGovernment is the future and will become an increasing part of our business. eGovernment must be embraced as it is a prerequisite to operating a results-oriented, market-driven department in today's world. To be successful, we must realize eGovernment is about more than technology. It is about fundamentally transforming how we conduct our business. It will require all of us—headquarters and the field, all mission areas, agencies and staff offices, executives and non-executives, technical IT professionals and program leads—to act and to act boldly. This is indeed a new day, one that will require working differently, collaboration, openness to new ideas, leveraging our investments, and an emphasis on being citizen-centered in all that we do.

This Strategic Plan is a roadmap for the future. In charting our new course, the Plan underscores that USDA already has a strong agency-based foundation upon which to build. From electronic lending and benefits solutions to Web-based commodity information, from farmer-focused forms automation to Internet-based mapping technologies, and from a consumer food safety hotline to interagency sites on recreation and nutrition, we already have an impressive eGovernment track record. But we must challenge ourselves to integrate more across agencies within USDA as well as with other Federal and State agencies. We must commit ourselves to developing new ways of delivering our products, services and information to empower citizens, help our business partners, and equip our employees to serve customers and solve problems.

Working together, we can achieve our goals and realize the promise of eGovernment.

James R. Moseley
Deputy Secretary

Introduction

Purpose

USDA has developed an eGovernment Strategic Plan to establish a comprehensive vision and direction for the Department and its agencies for the use of electronic commerce for the next five years (FY 2002-2006). The plan is intended to:

- Begin incorporating eGovernment into USDA and agency annual performance and business operating planning and budgeting processes
- Build on USDA's current eGovernment capabilities and efforts
- Share USDA best practices
- Break down organizational silos by taking a citizen-centered view of program and service delivery
- Avoid redundant approaches and save money by leveraging resources—seeking opportunities to collaborate across USDA agencies, throughout the enterprise, and with other Federal departments (including Presidential eGovernment initiatives under the auspices of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), see Appendix E)
- Prioritize opportunities and devote resources to those with the largest impact
- Create a sense of ownership and shared vision for the Department to foster cultural change.

Process

To advance the President's Management Agenda and comply with guidance from OMB, the Deputy Secretary charged the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) with creating an eGovernment Program and facilitating a structured, Department-wide strategic planning process for eGovernment.

What is eGovernment?

eGovernment is the exchange of value, including services, programs and information, through an electronic medium. eGovernment includes interactions and relationships between:

- Government and citizens;
- Government and public and private entities
- Government and employees.

eGovernment is enabled by a wide range of electronic, multimedia, and digital solutions, such as:

- The Internet
- Personal Digital Assistants
- Call Centers
- Handheld Wireless Devices
- Machine-to-Machine Devices (i.e. Smart Tags)

This plan was crafted by an eGovernment Executive Council and Working Group—comprised respectively of champions and sponsors designated within each mission area and agency/staff office. Working Group and Executive Council members provided continual leadership, decision-making and help with communications over a three-month period and will now guide business case development, implementation, performance measurement and oversight.

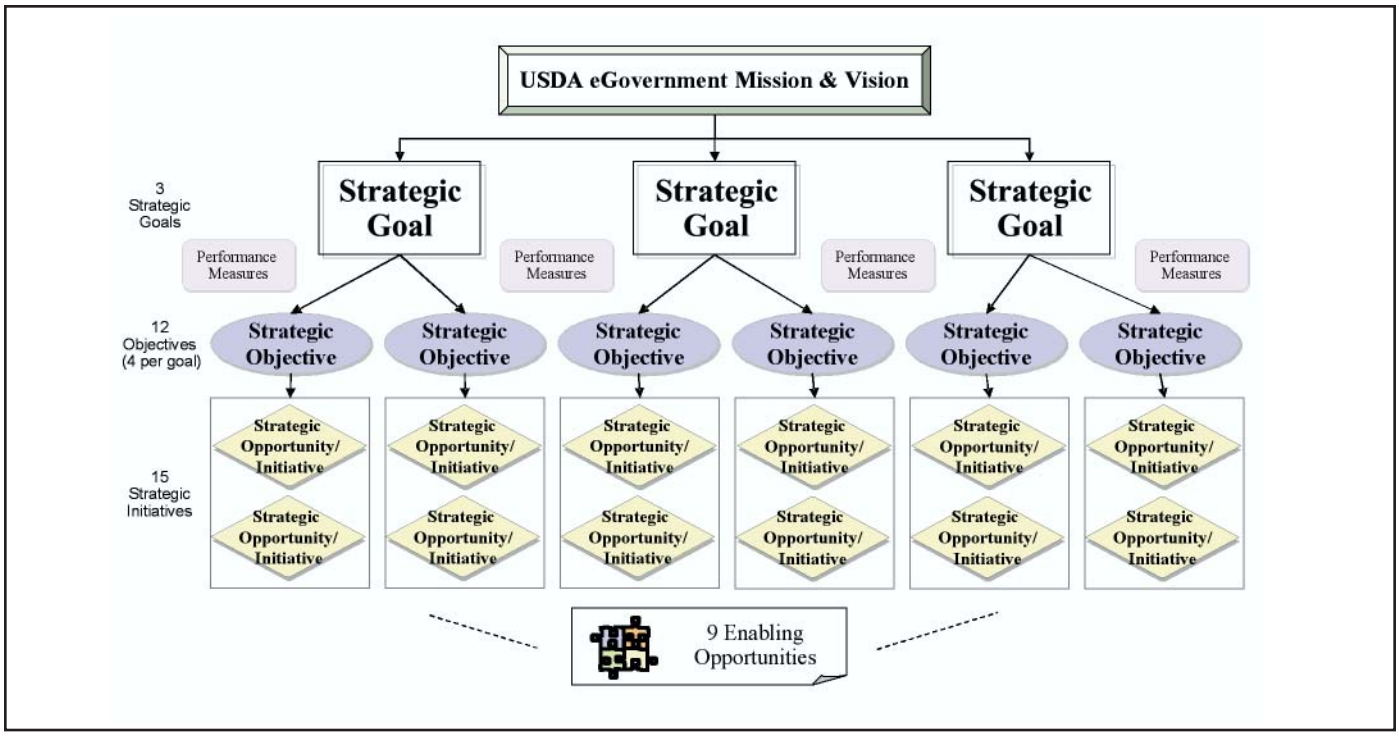
The unifying force for this plan was a relentless focus on our customers—the citizens we serve and how we as employees working with our business partners might serve them better—versus how we are currently organized. The Executive Council and the Working Group also emphasized utilizing technology to build core capabilities within our mission-critical business processes and key support functions, thus positioning eGovernment as an enabler, a means to an end rather than an end in itself.

The development of this plan involved more than 200 USDA employees who participated in interviews, visioning sessions and focus groups representing a broad cross-section of business and technology, management and non-management, field and headquarters personnel. Over 4,800 USDA employees also participated in an employee survey as part of this strategic planning exercise. These processes unearthed more than 60 ideas, suggestions, and opportunities. Through a prioritization process, these were screened and vetted, resulting in the 24 Departmental opportunity areas described herein. These 24 have been in turn approved by the Executive Council, Under and

Assistant Secretaries, and the Deputy Secretary.

A number of these 24 opportunities have been designated Smart Choice Candidates—high-priority initiatives on which the Department will focus its resources over the next 12-18 months. These Smart Choice Candidates, selected by the eGovernment Executive Council and approved by the Enterprise Information Technology Investment Review Board and Deputy Secretary, represent the most promising eGovernment opportunities, especially in the near term.

The Smart Choice Candidates will be pursued immediately with an intention to show demonstrable, measurable progress in these areas in the next 12-18 months. Business cases, integrated into the Department's Capital Planning and Investment Control process, will be written for all Smart Choice Candidates immediately in order to secure funding by FY 2004. Business cases for the



remainder of the initiatives will be written upon completion of those for the Smart Choice Candidates, with funding targeted for FY 2005.

Scope and Organization of Plan

USDA has 29 agencies and staff offices and more than 100,000 employees. USDA's structure and size—analogous to a federation or holding company—require agencies and staff offices to inform and provide input to Departmental strategy and goals. Similarly, agencies and staff offices must own the implementation of Departmental strategy.

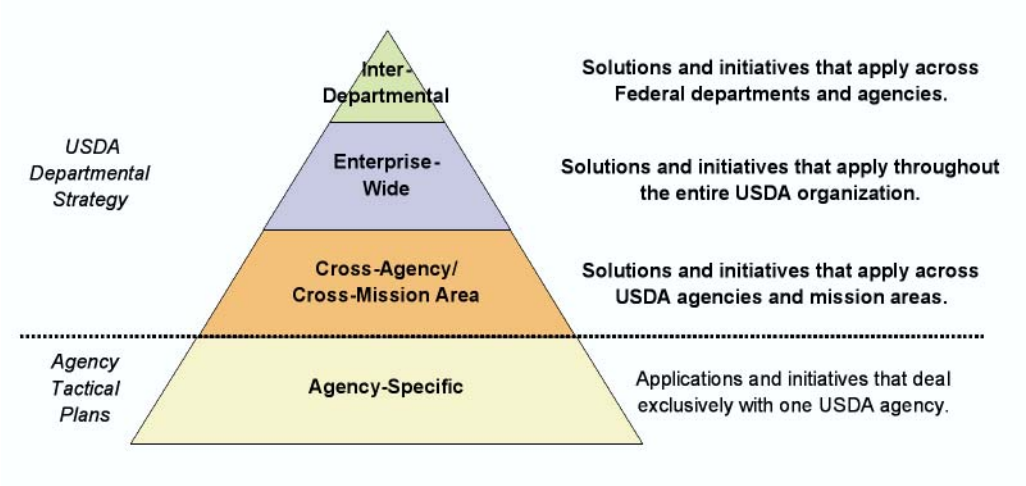
This requires delicately balancing agency independence with enterprise integration and stewardship to achieve "win-wins" that advance the good of the one and the good of the whole.

Therefore, this five-year Departmental eGovernment Strategy:

- Defines USDA's eGovernment mission and vision;
- Delineates three overarching goals and associated objectives supporting this mission and vision;
- Establishes performance measures for achieving these objectives;
- Presents short- and long-term actions to realize high-level, prioritized opportunities that are interdepartmental, Department-wide, or involve multiple USDA agencies
- Specifies the required capabilities and critical success factors for implementation.

Complementing this strategy are five-year Agency eGovernment Tactical Plans that outline:

- Existing and prospective agency-specific (i.e., involving only one agency) eGovernment



initiatives and priorities that support Departmental eGovernment goals and objectives;

- Current and prospective actions an agency is taking to implement the eGovernment initiatives included in this Departmental plan
- Specific actions (e.g., communications, training, policy enforcement) an agency is taking to promote and advance the Department's eGovernment Program at the agency level
- Agency-specific eGovernment implementation roadmaps
- Project-level performance measures aligned with the goal-and objective-based performance measures contained in this plan.

Agency Tactical Plans should be available in Spring 2002. Taken together, this Departmental Strategic Plan and the associated Agency Tactical Plans identify USDA's eGovernment priorities over the next five years.

All of these plans are living documents that will be revised periodically and integrated into the Department's financial, business and technical planning processes. They are strategic plans, not work plans. As such they offer a high-level roadmap to the future. They are directional, not directive; aspirational, not absolute.

Electronic copies of this plan and the corresponding Agency Tactical Plans are available on the USDA eGovernment web site at http://www.egov.usda.gov. Please contact the USDA eGovernment Mailbox, egov@usda.gov, with comments or questions about this plan, suggestions for ways to improve eGovernment efforts at USDA, or willingness to get involved.

Executive Summary

"In recent years the pace of change has been unparalleled. Our producers now operate in a global, technologically advanced, rapidly diversifying, highly competitive business environment that is relentlessly driven by increasingly sophisticated consumers."[1]
— Ann M. Veneman
Secretary of Agriculture

For over a century, USDA has been a pillar of the American economy. Founded in 1862, the Department has a proud heritage of providing stability and assurance for the American people. Although we no longer live in an agrarian economy, the necessities of human life still revolve around an abundant, nutritious, and safe food supply, flourishing natural resources, and prosperous rural communities.

Ensuring continued American prosperity and world food security requires innovation, flexibility, and foresight. Globalization, new Presidential mandates and Congressional regulations, new programs and services, increasing sophistication of agriculture and food markets, and threats of bioterrorism are just some of the mission-critical challenges that will demand the attention and response of USDA over the next few years. This complex environment will present mounting obstacles to delivering USDA promise to the public. Furthermore, the public's heightened expectation for more products and services, delivered "better, faster, cheaper," is driving the Department to rethink its traditional business and create new approaches to fulfilling its mission.

The emergence of the Internet and eCommerce technologies presents dramatic new opportunities to transform the Department into a more results-oriented and responsive organization. We have new means of:

- Reaching out to farmers, rural businesses, low-income families, and agriculture-related companies throughout the world
- Transmitting information and knowledge real-time to our Federal, state and local government partners
- Provide virtual education and learning opportunities for a geographically-dispersed network of employees and partners.

Furthermore, the opportunities to streamline processes, reduce costs, and enhance internal efficiency will expand the Department's capabilities to deliver new programs and better services.

[1]"Food and Agriculture Policy: Taking Stock in the New Century." USDA, 2001, p. ii.

USDA eGovernment Mission		
Transform and enhance the delivery of USDA's programs, services and information.		
USDA eGovernment Vision		
USDA, electronically available any place, any time.		
Goal 1: Citizens	**Goal 2: Public and Private Organizations**	**Goal 3: Employees and the Enterprise**
"Improve citizens' knowledge of and access to USDA in order to enhance service delivery."	"Enhance collaboration with public and private sector organizations to develop and deliver USDA's mission."	"Improve internal efficiency by promoting enterprise-wide solutions."

Enabling USDA's mission and vision

eGovernment is a means to realizing the fundamental elements of USDA's organizational mission and vision. Thus, the Department's eGovernment mission, vision, goals and objectives flow from USDA's fundamental purpose and focus on the most critical issues of our business.

The mission statement attempts to convey our purpose and the vision statement our desired end state. Both will necessitate fundamental changes in our culture and operations.

USDA's first eGovernment goal represents the Department's commitment to making government citizen-centered and to responding more directly and effectively to the people USDA serves-including farmers, low-income families, school children, and rural communities. As the "People's Department," USDA is committed to serving people and empowering communities. This means that the human element in USDA services will not be diminished or displaced by the Internet. The Internet, supported by a robust USDA telecommunications infrastructure, will provide a channel for more purposeful interactions with the public and among employees.

The second eGovernment goal focuses on improving USDA's working relationship with public and private sector organizations—including Federal, state, and local governments, regulated and partner industry groups, university and research communities, nonprofit organizations, producers and agribusinesses, and international entities.

The third eGovernment goal will empower employees and improve operations within the Department. It focuses on ensuring employees can work more collaboratively within and across agencies and staff offices and can perform administrative functions quickly.

We will achieve the eGovernment mission, vision, and goals by capitalizing on short-and long-term strategic and enabling opportunities. The table below shows USDA's eGovernment goals and strategic objectives, together with, the 24 initiatives that we have committed to pursuing during the next five years. For detail on these initiatives, see section 3 of this plan.

Goal 1: Citizens

Improve citizens' knowledge of and access to USDA in order to enhance service delivery.

Strategic Objectives	eGovernment Opportunities
1.1 Promote a stable, safe, and affordable food supply and improve nutritional status. 1.2 Enhance the efficiency and commercial viability of agricultural producers and promote the expansion of agricultural trade. 1.3 Increase the capability of all citizens, especially those living in rural communities, to benefit from eGovernment. 1.4 Provide the public with information and services to benefit from and preserve natural resources and the environment.	**Strategic Opportunities:** **eEligibility** "One-stop shop" for customers to determine the USDA programs/services for which they are eligible, across all agencies **eLoans** Opportunity for citizens and businesses to apply for, obtain, and manage USDA loans (direct and guaranteed) via the Internet **eRulemaking** Online forum for accepting public and internal comments on proposed rules and regulations authored by USDA agencies **Nutrition/Dietary Guidelines/Food Safety Awareness** Personalized multimedia outreach and education program to improve citizens' nutritional habits and food safety awareness **Online Trade Assistance** Virtual center for USDA customers, regulated industries, and partners to learn about exporting agricultural commodities, such as accessing permits/requirements and gaining foreign market data **Enabling Opportunities:** **USDA Web Presence** Users, including citizens and partners, can navigate USDA's web site via portals based on their desired tasks or topics; uses a standard look and feel **eLearning** Employees and citizens can track their progress in completing personalized curricula and register for courses; management and trainers can track progress **Customer and Public/Private Organization Database** A single data store houses all citizen and public/private organization data for the use of all agencies **Service Center eEnablement and CRM** Service Center employees can manage the relationship between USDA and its customers by tracking visits, correspondence, inquiries and services provided through customer data summaries

Goal 2: Public and Private Organizations

Enhance collaboration with public and private sector organizations to develop and deliver USDA's mission.

Strategic Objectives	eGovernment Opportunities
2.1 Empower organizations by providing appropriate and meaningful data and knowledge for timely decision-making. 2.2 Enable business transactions with partners through user-friendly applications and seamless integration across the Department. 2.3 Streamline oversight, regulatory, and cooperative activities with standardized electronic solutions. 2.4 Provide leadership in intergovernmental initiatives to improve service delivery.	**Strategic Opportunities:** **eGrants** Central source for all organizations that receive USDA grant assistance (e.g., rural businesses, state/local governments, and universities) to access, apply for, and manage awards for all USDA grants **eMaps** Capabilities for users to generate environmental and social maps to display electronically, via the Internet **ePermits/eCertificates** Electronic options to issue permits, certificates, and other regulation-based verifications to USDA customers and partners **Food Safety and Security Tools** Real-time access to government agencies for entering and tracking data for decision-making purposes and for investigations into causes of food-borne illness **Web-based Supply Chain Management of Food** Supply chain management technologies that enable USDA agencies and their partners (primarily USAID, school districts, domestic producers, state agencies, and industry), to manage commodity purchasing and food distribution seamlessly

Goal 3: Employees and the Enterprise

Improve internal efficiency by promoting enterprise-wide solutions.

Strategic Objectives	eGovernment Opportunities
3.1 Foster seamless collaboration to make informed decisions and minimize redundancy to achieve USDA's mission. 3.2 Increase USDA employees' skills, understanding, access and use of available eGovernment tools. 3.3 Develop and enhance administrative and support functions that satisfy employee and enterprise needs in an effective, efficient and interoperable manner. 3.4 Create and maintain a management and technical infrastructure capable of supporting USDA's eGovernment vision.	**Strategic Opportunities:** **Survey Capability** Global survey instrument, including survey capabilities and/or outsourcing arrangements to perform surveys requiring data collection from both internal and external sources **Department-wide eProcurement (IAS)** Streamlined and automated contract management and acquisition processes throughout USDA, with ultimately enhanced support of USDA mission-critical activities **Financial Management Tools** Capabilities including online reporting for existing financial management packages and a global eCommerce capability to handle billing needs **Human Resources Online** Employees enabled to manage human resource-related issues online and assist in human resource planning and administration through a single Internet interface **Physical Asset Management** Efficient USDA management of all physical assets, including real estate, vehicles, plans, computers, and furniture, at headquarters and in the field **Enabling Opportunities:** **eAuthentication** User authentication solution for citizens, partners and employees **Application Hosting** Enhanced application-hosting capabilities to establish a tiered service model **Data Management** Guiding principles and framework for implementing a corporate data management program, including an enterprise taxonomy and metadata model **Information Management** Integrated solution allowing USDA and employees to more easily store, track, and transmit documents electronically **Content Management** Departmental solution for managing the publishing, sharing, and classification of Web pages, documents, official records, and correspondence

These 24 eGovernment opportunities represent a balanced portfolio, with different types of opportunities requiring different levels of involvement and meeting different goals:

Type	Scope	Strategic Goal Met
Strategic: electronically automating a core business process or support function	**Interdepartmental:** USDA agencies and other Federal agencies/departments	**Citizens**
Enabling: policy, practices, technology and infrastructure supporting one or more strategic initiatives	**Enterprise-wide:** all USDA agencies	**Public & Private Organization**
	Cross-mission area and cross-agency: two or more USDA agencies	**Employees and the Enterprise**

The Transformation Journey

To realize our vision and achieve our goals, we must create the right environment for success. This will require a transformational journey that will affect the entire organization. Fulfilling the intent of this plan will depend on infrastructure and technical improvements, human and financial capital, participation by USDA partners, and strong executive leadership and support.

The 15 success factors, listed below, will be critical to USDA's eGovernment implementation efforts. If the eGovernment initiatives in this plan represent the "what" of our eGovernment efforts, these success factors reflect the "how" of making eGovernment happen:

1. Executive leadership and sponsorship
2. Effective governance, with clear roles and responsibilities
3. A cultural shift committed to collaboration and integration
4. Financial support for new development, ongoing maintenance, and retirement of outdated legacy systems
5. Skills development and training
6. Understanding of eGovernment by USDA stakeholders
7. Supporting telecommunications infrastructure improvements
8. Required technical capabilities
9. Assurance of privacy and security in cyber-transactions
10. An integrated Information Technology capital planning and investment control process that prioritizes eGovernment initiatives
11. A structured, established enterprise architecture
12. Formal linkages with information collections
13. Reengineering of key business processes
14. A measurable and attainable timeline for opportunities/initiatives
15. Partnerships with private sector and government entities.

1.0 A Challenging New Environment

USDA's Mandate For Change

For over a century, the USDA has been a pillar of the American economy. Founded in 1862, the Department has a proud heritage of providing stability and assurance for the American people. Although we no longer live in an agrarian economy, the necessities of human life still revolve around an abundant, nutritious, and safe food supply, flourishing natural resources, and prosperous rural communities.

By promoting agricultural exports and improving the safety and competitiveness of domestic production, USDA helps to support over $1 trillion of economic activity a year and ensure jobs for one out of every six working Americans. Moreover, USDA

- Administers over 15 nutritional programs that feed more than 40 million people in need
- Fosters stewardship of 75% of the country's total land area
- Supports over 65 million people living in rural America
- Provides food assistance to 80 countries.

USDA's expansive reach and diverse mission truly make it "the People's Department," and its continued success will be crucial to American economic and social prosperity in the 21st century.

The Department faces a changing environment filled with new challenges and opportunities such as consumer-driven agriculture, increasing globalization, and advances in information and communications technology. These trends, among others, are bringing fundamental changes to the world in which USDA operates and fulfills its mission.

Leading USDA's move toward eGovernment are:

- Transformations in industries USDA supports and regulates
- Increasing expectations from citizens, private and public sector organizations, and employees
- Demands for electronic government, improved customer service, and citizen-centered government from the legislative and executive branches
- Internal challenges such as the need to "do more with less," a new focus on market-driven policies and programs, and emphasis on results-oriented solutions.

1.1 Mission-Critical Challenges

The Department's diverse agencies span nearly every major business function within government (benefits administration, loans, insurance, research, regulatory oversight, etc.), operating throughout the world to ensure accountability, oversight, and development of US industries and markets. The rapid adoption of information technology has radically transformed the sectors in which USDA fulfills its mission by fueling industry consolidation, enabling new value propositions, speeding service delivery, and increasing collaboration and information exchange. As the areas where the Department operates evolve, they will increase pressure on USDA to respond in ways that empower our constituencies, ensure fair market conditions, and enhance the competitiveness of American agriculture.

	Business Trends and Internet Impacts on the Industry	USDA Implications
Agricultural Production and Trade	• Advances in biotechnology promise benefits such as higher yields and more nutritious crops, although consumers remain suspicious of genetically modified foods • Consolidation has given the top four agribusinesses over 45% market share in more than 10 agricultural industries[2] • Smaller farmers are more vulnerable, as larger processors' market power increases and global competition brings lower commodity prices • Over a dozen agriculture-related eMarketplaces and commodity exchanges have started, but only those backed by major agribusinesses have shown signs of success • The Internet increases price transparency and the potential to link suppliers and buyers more directly	USDA can provide the appropriate tools, policies, and market conditions to ensure that small farmers are not further disadvantaged by technological and industry changes and that rural and other geographically-isolated farmers can benefit from new market opportunities presented by new and emerging technologies.
Consumer Food and Nutrition	• Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) in Food Stamps has resulted in overall cost savings of $424 million for both retailers and governments by streamlining processing and reducing handling costs[3] • Emphasis on homeland security and prevention of bioterrorism have increased pressure to ensure a safe and secure food supply • Only 12% of Americans have healthy diets; over 70% need improvement[4]; more effective education and outreach are needed to influence diet and eating habits	USDA can continue its innovation in assisting consumers, building on the success of EBT to improve benefits delivery and ensure a safe food supply. New channels and processes are necessary to improve the availability and quality of education on nutrition and food safety.
Rural Economic Development	• Rural Internet access has increased but still lags metropolitan areas (38% versus 44%)[5] • Rural unemployment continues to exceed that in urban areas, reaching as high as 9.4% in 2001[6] • Rural Americans continue to have less access than urban dwellers to essential services such as education and health care, especially specialized or advanced services	USDA's leadership in developing rural infrastructure will be critical to ensure that rural populations can benefit from distance learning and other Internet technologies.
Environmental Stewardship and Conservation	• Rising natural resource costs and the expansion of urban and suburban areas have intensified focus on conservation • Urban and suburban areas in particular face critical land use and planning issues • Conservation is becoming linked more closely to agriculture as sustainable resource use becomes more necessary • Geographic information systems (GIS) have helped environmental planners better analyze data and trends, leading to better decisions and more accurate forecasting	USDA will need to reach out to new constituents, partner with private landowners and discover ways to reduce depletion and educate the public.

[2]"Concentration of Agricultural Markets." William Heffernan, Douglas Constance, Robert Gronski and Mary Hendrickson; University of Missouri, 1996.
[3]"From Paper to Electronics: Creating a Benefit Delivery System That Works Better & Costs Less - An Implementation Plan for Nationwide EBT." Federal Electronic Benefits Transfer Task Force, 1994.
[4]Healthy Eating Index (1998), USDA Economic Research Service/Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion.
[5]"Falling Through the Net." Department of Commerce/NTIA, 2000.
[6]Current Population Survey, US Bureau of Labor Statistics/US Census Bureau.

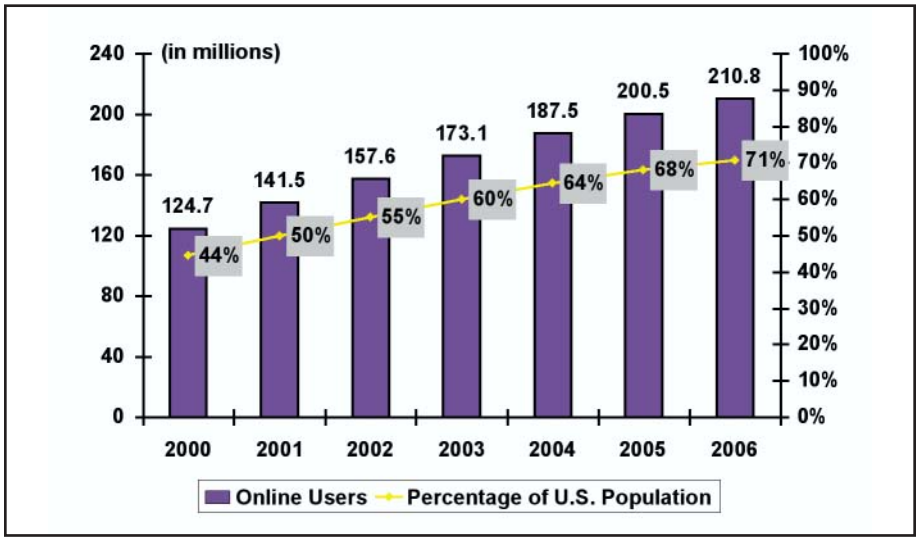
1.2 Rising Stakeholder Expectations

The proliferation of information and communication technologies has caused significant changes in the way people and businesses interact. Consumers now expect to conduct business transactions and access real-time information any time, any place. Further, consumers increasingly expect, and demand, to receive from government the same options and convenience they receive from the private sector.

Increasing use of services such as online banking and shopping confirms consumers' desire for convenient options like those afforded by eCommerce/eGovernment. The number of Internet users who made at least one purchase online grew 45% in 2000, to a total of 58%[7]. And online retail purchases are forecasted to rise from $34 billion in 2001 to more than $130 billion in 2006—a fourfold increase in only five years, despite the bursting of the dot.com bubble.

Moreover, the Internet's significant growth will continue with the number of Americans online reaching 210 million by 2006—71% of the U.S. population. Even more importantly, the quality of access will continue to increase; 20% of Internet users used a high-speed, broadband connection in late 2001, 90% greater than the number of high-speed connections at the end of 2000[9]. By 2006, 41% of home Internet use will be via high-speed connections.

Figure 1: Growth of U.S. Internet Use[8]



[7]Pew Internet & American Life Project survey, March 2001
[8]Jupiter Research Internet Population Model, October 2001
[9]Nielsen/NetRatings, November 2001

Figure 2: Growth of U.S. Internet Use & eCommerce[10]

Internet Usage	2001	2006
Percentage of U.S. Population Online	44%	71%
Business to Consumer eCommerce	$34 B	$128 B
Number of Consumers Using eCommerce	65 M	129 M
Business to Business eCommerce	$466 B	$5,450 B

Citizens

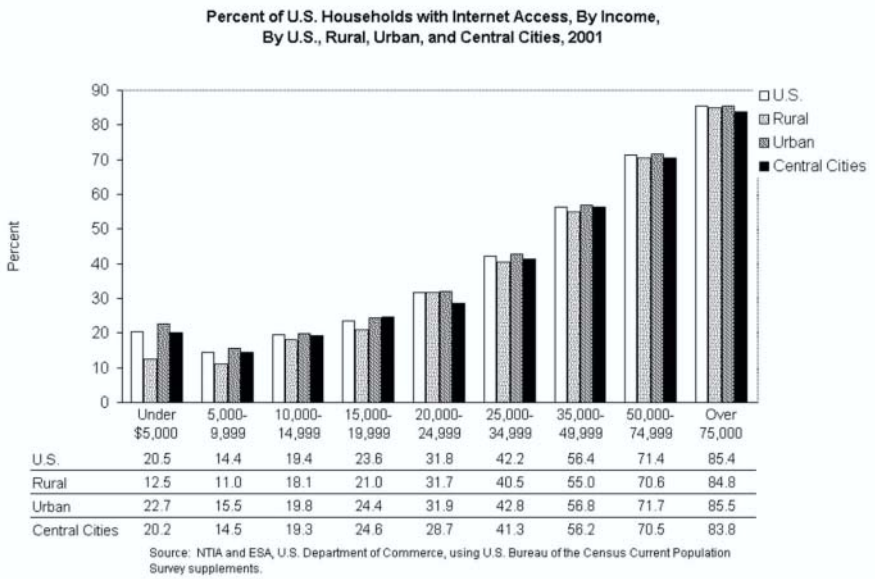
USDA's customers are already online in impressive numbers. Forty-one percent of farmers are online (according to USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service), proportionally close to the 44% of the total population using the Internet in 2001 (Jupiter Research).

While Internet use by both low-income Americans and rural residents lags other groups, both groups' use has been growing quickly: rural Internet use grew more than 70% from 1998 to 2000, and low-income use has grown 80% over the past year[11]—the fastest growth rate of any income group. Furthermore, 89% of all American children have Internet access at home or school.

Figure 3: Internet Access for Major Citizen Groups Served by USDA

Major Citizen Group	Estimated Total Number Served	Internet Access
Children	30 Million	89%[11]
Farmers/Producers	2.2 Million	43%[12]
Rural Communities & Businesses	2.5 Million (direct), 50 Million (indirect)	39%[13]
Low-Income Families & Individuals ($15-$25K/yr)	20 Million	24%
Landowners and Conservationists	10 Million	N/A[14]
All Americans	285 Million	44%[15]

[10]Jupiter Research Internet Population Model, October 2001
[11]Current Population Survey (August 2000), US Department of Labor/U.S. Census Bureau
[12]Farm Computer Usage and Ownership," National Agricultural Statistics Service, 2001.
[13]"Falling Through The Net: Toward Digital Inclusion", US Department of Commerce, 2000.
[14]NTIA and ESA, US Department of Commerce (from 2001 Current Population Survey).
[15]Jupiter Internet Population Model, Jupiter Research, 2001.



	Under $5,000	5,000-9,999	10,000-14,999	15,000-19,999	20,000-24,999	25,000-34,999	35,000-49,999	50,000-74,999	Over 75,000
U.S.	20.5	14.4	19.4	23.6	31.8	42.2	56.4	71.4	85.4
Rural	12.5	11.0	18.1	21.0	31.7	40.5	55.0	70.6	84.8
Urban	22.7	15.5	19.8	24.4	31.9	42.8	56.8	71.7	85.5
Central Cities	20.2	14.5	19.3	24.6	28.7	41.3	56.2	70.5	83.8

Source: NTIA and ESA, U.S. Department of Commerce, using U.S. Bureau of the Census Current Population Survey supplements.

Public and Private Partners

Business-to-business commerce has been the fastest-growing sector of the Internet, with innovations in knowledge management, supply chain management, electronic payments, and eProcurement enhancing cost savings and organizational flexibility. With so much potential, B2B eCommerce is enjoying enormous growth—total transactions will rise from $460 billion in 2001 to over $5.4 trillion in 2006[16]— more than one-third of all B2B commerce in the US.

USDA's major partner organizations have pervasive Internet access. Ninety-eight percent of research and academic partners are online, as are at least 90% of banks, insurance companies, governments, and major agribusinesses.

Figure 4: Internet Access of Major Public/Private Organizations[17]

Organization	Internet Access
Colleges/Universities and Research Partners	98%
Insurance Companies/Agents	93%
Agribusinesses & Land-based Products Companies	93%
Federal, State and Local Agencies & Organizations	91%
Banks & Lenders	90%
Food Distribution and Supply Chain Companies	66%

[16]Jupiter Research, September 2001.
[17]Current Population Survey (August 2000), US Department of Commerce/NTIA, 2000.

USDA Employees

USDA's employees express rising expectations for the Internet, reflecting eagerness to realize the benefits of eGovernment. According to a December 2001 survey by the USDA Office of the Chief Information Officer[18]:

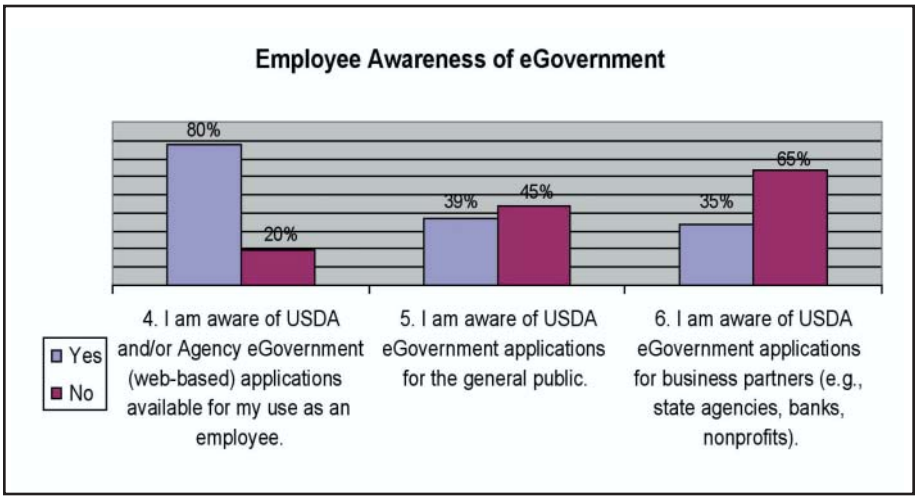
- 47% of USDA employees use agency intranet sites in their work.
- 53% use the Internet for business purposes.
- 76% would like to telecommute.
- 93% feel comfortable using technology and the Internet to complete business tasks.
- 60% either do not receive enough information electronically or do not receive appro priate information electronically.

Employees are generally aware of the eGovernment tools available for their use (as shown in Figure 5 below). But less than half of those surveyed were aware of USDA eGovernment applications for citizens or public and private organizations.

1.3 Legislative and Government Drivers

The need for—and promise of—eGovernment has spurred both legislation and Executive directives encouraging or requiring its implementation.

- The Government Paperwork Elimination Act of 1998 (P.L. 105-277) requires Federal agencies to enable their cus tomers and business partners to conduct all transactions online by 2003. Specifically, the law (as implemented by the Office of Management and Budget) requires that "Federal agencies, by October 21, 2003, provide individuals or entities that deal



[18]Note: The eGovernment survey was administered via e-mail and the World Wide Web; accordingly, the survey's sample may be somewhat biased toward already technically savvy employees. As a test the survey instrument was also given to a small group of field employees in paper format.

with agencies the option to submit information or transact with the agency electronically, and to maintain records electronically, when practicable."

- The Freedom to E-File Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-222) accelerates the schedule for USDA to make both information and transactions available electronically, with some agencies required to enable electronic forms and most transactions utilizing online functionality by October 2002.
- The Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-229) gives electronic signatures the same legal standing as written signatures, empowering Federal agencies, including USDA, to conduct truly paperless transactions.
- The President's Management Agenda makes "Expanding Electronic Government" one of five major initiatives for reforming government[19]; it aims to enable the public to easily transact with and receive quality service from the Federal government, regardless of channel. It also stresses citizen-centered government—presenting government services based on citizens' needs instead of agencies' organizational structure. To ensure success of the President's Management Agenda, OMB and the President's Management Council created a Quicksilver Task Force to develop government-wide eGovernment initiatives; 24 USDA initiatives have been approved, and planning for their implementation is underway.

Legislation and directives such as GPEA, E-File, ESIGN, and the President's Management Agenda offer guidance for eGovernment and the impetus for agencies to evolve in order to meet rising stakeholder expectations. Additionally, they encourage agencies to use technology to reap the increased productivity, employee efficiency, and cost savings seen in the private sector. Finally, OMB and the General Accounting Office, as well as Congress and the White House, are closely monitoring the progress of all Federal agencies toward meeting these legislative and executive mandates. (Further information on legislation and executive directives appears in Appendix D.)

1.4 Internal Challenges: Doing More With Less

Besides the many external forces affecting the future of USDA, a number of internal factors—including budgetary and resource pressures, insufficient collaboration and coordination to deliver integrated programs, and inadequate employee tools—are shaping how the Department and its employees perform in the changing environment.

First, USDA is challenged to do more with fewer resources. Our responsibilities are expanding, especially in environmental stewardship and food assistance.

[19]The President's Management Agenda, Fiscal Year 2002. The four other major government-wide initiatives are strategic management of human capital, competitive sourcing, improved financial performance, and budget and performance integration.

Programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program and the WIC Program have grown significantly, and this growth is expected to continue.

But USDA's budget, does not reflect this growth. The overall budget has been shrinking for the past few years, and several agencies have seen annual declines of more than 10%. Financial constraints have brought a new focus on efficiency and innovative ways to stretch limited resources. Accordingly, USDA must streamline processes and reduce costs through new channels and service delivery mechanisms.

Second, USDA's evolution has led to the development of separate agencies and mission areas. While advantageous in building expertise in each agency, this pattern has perpetuated organizational silos. As the challenges facing USDA become more complex and intertwined, separate approaches and programs are proving insufficient. Integrated approaches, with participation by multiple agencies, will be critical to providing holistic solutions for the nation's food and farm system. Such unified approaches require the ability to collaborate, share information, and manage organizational knowledge.

Finally, USDA employees often lack the tools they need to perform their jobs effectively. Specifically:

- Different technical environments not only make IT support difficult, but also slow communications between agencies due to network bottlenecks and differing data formats.
- Managers and executives do not have the financial reporting tools they need to make effective decisions and forecasts.
- Employees need continual access to training and education opportunities to execute their jobs quickly, especially workers in geographically dispersed field locations and county-based Service Centers.
- Constantly increasing telecom munications (bandwidth/capacity) requirements are multiplied by eGovernment mandates and the need for 7x24 performance guarantees.

2.0 Establishing a Departmental Strategic Direction:

USDA's eGovernment Mission, Vision, Goals and Objectives

Emerging information and communications technologies present a wealth of opportunities for USDA to dramatically transform the way it does business. USDA will need innovative approaches to solve its mission-critical challenges and provide leadership in an uncertain environment.

The eGovernment Strategic Plan articulates a bold vision and strategic agenda to exceed future expectations and operate a world-class organization. eGovernment will be a cornerstone of change for the Department—expanding capabilities, enabling delivery of new services to customers, and helping USDA reach out to farmers, rural businesses, low-income families, and agriculture-related companies around the world through new channels.

2.1 eGovernment Mission and Vision

USDA eGovernment Mission

Transform and enhance the delivery of USDA's programs, services and information.

The fundamental mission of eGovernment is to better achieve and fulfill the USDA's mission and vision. To this end, the USDA's eGovernment mission establishes the Internet and information technology as a primary means for organizational "transformation." Transforming and enhancing delivery of the Department's core programs, services and information necessitates significant changes in the current nature and execution of the Department's program delivery. Successful fulfillment of this mission would involve initiatives that are:

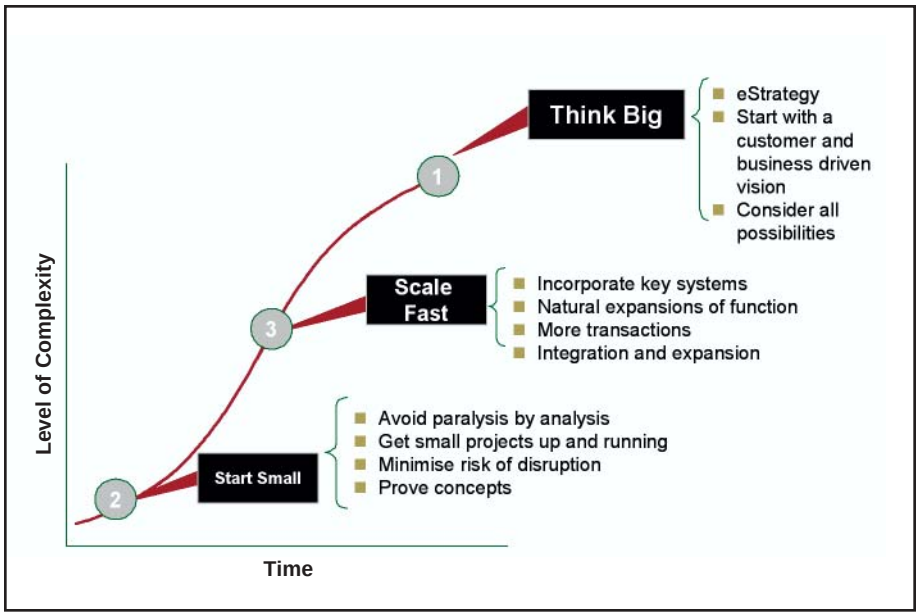
- **Innovative**—delivering programs and services in new and better ways
- **Comprehensive**—satisfying all of customers' USDA-related needs
- **Integrated**—working across USDA agencies to provide front and back-end solutions.

USDA eGovernment Vision

USDA, electronically available any place, any time.

While articulated simply, USDA's eGovernment vision statement represents a powerful and ambitious commitment by the Department to create and operate a virtual enterprise. This vision calls for offering all USDA programs, services and information electronically. This vision will require:

- Multiple channels—Internet, Integrated Voice Response Systems (IVRs), cell phones, Personal Digital Assistants, smart machines/kiosks
- Convenience and ease of use—designing systems and interfaces around users' intentions and needs
- Sufficient infrastructure—making services accessible through sufficient and redundant telecommunications capabilities.



2.2 Guiding Principles

As the USDA transforms itself from traditional business to an eGovernment environment, a set of clear guiding principles, anchored in USDA's fundamental guiding principles, will provide a common set of values to direct the change journey for attainment of the mission and vision.

1. Think Big, Start Small, Scale Fast. Leadership must be willing to generate bold new ideas and envision the future of the organization. Once the larger vision has been articulated, then "small steps" and "quick wins" can be developed, tested and rolled out to initially obtain clear, measurable results.

2. Build on Current Successes. Leverage existing capabilities and efforts as bases on which the entire USDA enterprise can expand. This must include documenting and sharing best practices across agencies.

3. Innovate and Transform. eGovernment must be about USDA's business, not technology. Leadership must embrace new models of conducting business, addressing root causes instead of symptoms, and building eGovernment solutions into new or significantly expanded programs from the outset.

4. Collaborate, Partner, Respect. USDA agencies must work together to drive change. Multiple agencies often serve the same customer, so collaboration will be critical to providing a unified customer experience. This means striking a balance between agency flexibility and corporate responsibility, agency independence and corporate synergies. This principle also requires seamless and mutually reinforcing interaction with OCIO efforts in Enterprise Architecture, Cybersecurity, IT Capital Planning, telecommunications, and infrastructure. Governance is key here.

5. Augment, Don't Replace. USDA will add channels and services to improve interactions with the public while maintaining traditional channels to ensure access for all stakeholders. Being first and foremost about people and for people, USDA cannot and will not allow technology to diminish the importance of human connections. We must employ technology to make human interactions more valuable.

6. Educate, Market, Advocate. USDA must educate customers, partners and employees on the value of eGovernment. Similarly, USDA must share the good news about its eGovernment efforts with regulatory bodies.

2.3 eGovernment Strategic Goals

Goal 1: Citizens

Improve citizens' knowledge of and access to USDA to enhance service delivery.

This goal reflects the Department's commitment to create a citizen-centered government. It affirms that USDA will use eGovernment to provide services and programs in a way that is convenient, user-friendly, and designed to meet the needs of the American public.

The Department will strive to increase citizen awareness of USDA programs; streamline service delivery to reduce time and complexity in receiving services; and enhance the ability for program beneficiaries to improve their lives from USDA's programs, services and information. Continuous improvements in interactive and collaborative technology will cause the Department to constantly rethink the way it can most directly and effectively respond to and fulfill the demands of the people it serves—including farmers, low-income families, schoolchildren, landowners/conservationists, and rural Americans.

Goal 2: Public and Private Organizations

Enhance collaboration with public and private sector organizations to develop and deliver USDA's mission.

This goal focuses on improving USDA's working relationship with public and private organizations—including Federal, state, and local government agencies, regulated and partner industry groups, university and research communities, and non-profit organizations. The Department partners with public and private organizations across the world to deliver many programs and services. USDA will improve collaboration with

these groups to seamlessly provide programs, share information and provide resources to enhance their organizational capabilities. USDA will likewise use information technology to enhance its relationship with industries it regulates by improving two-way communication and providing more timely responses and data.

Goal 3: Employees and the Enterprise

Improve internal efficiency by promoting enterprise-wide solutions.

This goal will empower employees and improve operations within the Department by ensuring that employees can work more collaboratively within and across agencies and in the field. Electronic solutions to administrative functions will reduce time spent on repetitive data entry. Minimizing duplicative processes and functions will foster a continuously learning, knowledge-rich enterprise.

2.4 eGovernment Strategic Objectives and Performance Measures

Goal 1: Citizens

Improve citizens' knowledge of and access to USDA in order to enhance service delivery.

Objectives	Expected Performance Measures
Objective 1.1 Promote a stable, safe, and affordable food supply and improve nutritional status.	• Increase in the number of eligible persons participating in USDA food assistance programs • Increase in citizen awareness and use of nutrition and food safety education programs • Improvement in measures of food inspection accuracy and quality
Objective 1.2 Enhance the efficiency and commercial viability of agricultural producers and promote the expansion of agricultural trade.	• Increase in farmer/producer satisfaction with USDA farm assistance services • Decrease in program delivery time, such as application submission/approvals and payment disbursement • Increase in the number of farm technical assistance and education programs delivered online • Increase in participation in agricultural export assistance programs
Objective 1.3 Increase the capability of all citizens, especially those living in rural communities, to benefit from eGovernment.	• Increase in the percentage of rural Americans with access to the Internet • Increase in the capacity of Internet access points managed by USDA or USDA service providers. • Increase in the number of rural citizens receiving USDA training or services via the Internet
Objective 1.4 Provide the public with information and services to benefit from and preserve natural resources and the environment.	• Increase in people using the Internet for environmental and recreational permits and National Forest information • Increase in the number of conservation program applications, status reports, and communications transmitted online • Increase in the number of conservation aid recipients receiving education through electronic channels

Goal 2: Public and Private Organizations *Enhance collaboration with public and private sector organizations to develop and deliver USDA's mission.*	
Objectives	**Expected Performance Measures**
Objective 2.1 Empower organizations by providing appropriate and meaningful data and knowledge for timely decision-making.	• Increase in the number of USDA data products available electronically • Increase in the number of channels through which data is available (e.g., the Internet, telephone, and wireless devices) • Reduction in time between data collection and release to the public
Objective 2.2 Enable business transactions with partners through user-friendly applications and seamless integration across the Department.	• Decrease in completion time for transactions between USDA and partner organizations • Increase in partner organizations' satisfaction with USDA services • Increase in the number of services and processes integrated across USDA agencies and/or mission areas • Increase in the number of transactions that can be completed online • Increase in partner organizations' use of Internet-based tools
Objective 2.3 Streamline oversight, regulatory, and cooperative activities with standardized electronic solutions.	• Decrease in multiple requests to partner organizations for the same data • Decrease in partner organizations' burdens from mandatory regulatory/oversight activities • Decrease in time burdens from cooperative activity reporting • Increase in the number of mandatory and voluntary reporting transactions that can be submitted electronically
Objective 2.4 Provide leadership in intergovernmental initiatives to improve service delivery.	• Increase in the number of services provided and initiatives coordinated in conjunction with other Federal agencies and departments • Increase in the number of processes and initiatives coordinated in conjunction with State and local governments • Reduction in time spent by both citizens and public and private organizations on interactions with the Federal Government • Increase in the number of citizens and partner organizations who can transact with the Federal Government through a single point of contact

Goal 3: Employees and the Enterprise

Improve ineternal efficiency by promoting enterprise-wide solutions.

Objectives	Expected Performance Measures
Objective 3.1 Foster seamless collaboration to make informed decisions and minimize redundancy to achieve USDA's mission.	• Increase in communication among USDA employees across agencies and mission areas • Increase in collaboration and information sharing among USDA employees • Reduction in redundant applications, systems and/or processes
Objective 3.2 Increase USDA employees' skills, understanding, access and use of available eGovernment tools.	• Increase in the number of USDA employees with individual access to USDA networks/intranets and the Internet • Increase in the number and percentage of USDA employees receiving training relevant to eGovernment • Increase in the percentage of USDA employees using eLearning to complete eGovernment and other training needs • Increase in the percentage of USDA employees with adequate eGovernment skills
Objective 3.3 Develop and enhance administrative and support functions that satisfy employee and enterprise needs in an effective, efficient and interoperable manner.	• Decrease in time spent on support functions and administrative tasks • Increase in the number of support and administrative functions deployed Department-wide • Decrease in redundant support systems across agencies and/or mission areas • Increase in employee satisfaction with support and administrative functions
Objective 3.4 Create and maintain a management and technical infrastructure capable of supporting USDA's eGovernment vision.	• Increase in the number of systems upgraded for compatibility with eGovernment or new eGovernment-related information and computer systems installed • Increase in the accuracy of management reporting and analysis • Increase in the number of management processes reviewed or redesigned for compatibility with eGovernment initiatives and services

3.0 Charting a New Path:
Making USDA Electronically Available, Any Place, Any Time

Making the USDA "electronically available any place, any time" involves transformation of the organization's culture, people, processes and technology. To realize our collective vision, we must integrate and expand upon our current eGovernment efforts and support solutions that reach beyond the boundaries of individual USDA agencies.

The Department has a strong eGovernment foundation to build on, as several agencies have already implemented innovative eGovernment initiatives consistent with our eGovernment vision. USDA is a government pioneer in providing information and services – such as benefits, food safety information for consumers, and loans – electronically through customer cards/electronic benefits transfer, call centers, and the Web. (Appendix A highlights several eGovernment successes that meet the Department's eGovernment strategic objectives as outlined in Section 2.4.)

To expand these capabilities and create new initiatives, the USDA will pursue 24 eGovernment opportunities, both strategic and enabling (see sections 3.1 and 3.2 for details.)

- **Strategic opportunities** are initiatives that directly fulfill USDA's mission, achieve USDA eGovernment strategic goals and objectives, and/or relate to USDA's core business processes.
- **Enabling opportunities** are technology and/or process initiatives that directly support strategic eGovernment initiatives and applications.

A number of these initiatives have been designated Smart Choice Candidates — high-priority initiatives on which the

Department will initially focus its resources. Selected by the eGovernment Executive Council and approved by the Enterprise Information Technology Investment Review Board and Deputy Secretary, these initiatives represent the most promising eGovernment opportunities, especially in the near term.

USDA will pursue the Smart Choice Candidates immediately to demonstrate measurable progress within 12-18 months. Business cases, integrated into the Department's Capital Planning and Investment Control process, will be written for all Smart Choice Candidates immediately in order to secure funding by FY 2004. Business cases for the remainder of the initiatives will be written upon completion of those for the Smart Choice Candidates, with funding targeted for FY 2005.

3.1 eGovernment Strategic Opportunities

The opportunities described on the next page represent the key areas on which USDA's Department-wide eGovernment Program will focus for the next five years and beyond. They were crafted by the Executive Council and Working Group — after a series of visioning sessions, focus groups, surveys, interviews and examination of best practices — and approved by the Deputy Secretary and EITIRB.

Many of the strategic opportunities meet more than one USDA eGovernment goal by satisfying the needs of multiple stakeholders — citizens, public and private organizations, and employees. Each opportunity touches across other Federal departments, extends throughout the USDA, or affects at least two mission areas or agencies. Many of the opportunities also relate to one of the interdepartmental Presidential eGovernment initiatives, and USDA will participate in and coordinate with these related initiatives (Appendix E describes the Presidential initiatives).

On the following page are USDA's 15 eGovernment strategic opportunities, with Smart Choice Candidates shaded brown:

Opportunity	Primary Goal	Secondary Goal	Expected Scope	Related Presidential Initiative?
eEligibility	Citizens	N/A	Interdepartmental	Yes
eLoans	Citizens	Public/Private Organizations	Interdepartmental	Yes
eRulemaking	Citizens	Public/Private Organizations	Interdepartmental	Yes
Nutrition/Dietary Guidelines/ Food Safety Awareness	Citizens	Employees and the Enterprise	Cross Mission Area	No
Online Trade Assistance	Public/Private Organizations	Citizens	Interdepartmental	Yes
eGrants	Public/Private Organizations	N/A	Interdepartmental	Yes
eMaps	Public/Private Organizations	Citizens	Interdepartmental	Yes
ePermits/Certificates	Public/Private Organizations	Citizens	Cross Mission Area	Yes
Web-based Supply Chain Management	Public/Private Organizations	Employees and the Enterprise	Interdepartmental	No
Food Safety and Security Tools	Employees and the Enterprise	Public/Private Organizations	Cross Mission Area	No
Department-wide eProcurement	Employees and the Enterprise	Public/Private Organizations	Enterprise-wide	Yes
Financial Management Tools	Employees and the Enterprise	N/A	Enterprise-wide	No
Human Resources Online	Employees and the Enterprise	N/A	Enterprise-wide	Yes
Physical Asset Management	Employees and the Enterprise	N/A	Enterprise-wide	Yes
Survey Capability	Employees and the Enterprise	Citizens, Public/Private Organizations	Cross Mission Area	No

3.1.1 Strategic Opportunties: Citizens

eEligibility

Description: eEligibility will be a "one-stop" eligibility shop for customers to determine the USDA programs and services for which they are eligible across all USDA agencies. Once citizens and public/private organizations create an initial prescreening profile and determine their potential eligibility, they will be able to apply through multiple mechanisms to manage the application process online. Internally, customer relationship management capabilities will be built to assist program administrators in managing and communicating with citizens.

Value Proposition: This initiative will directly expand the reach of the Department to increase USDA's program participation and allow more citizens to benefit from programs designed to assist them. This initiative could allow well over 50 million potential program beneficiaries, including farmers, low-income families, schoolchildren, seniors, and rural households, to quickly determine what benefits they are eligible to receive from USDA.

Short- and Long-term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• One central eligibility location on USDA's Web site • Comprehensive listing and search tool for all USDA programs • Contact information for appropriate state and local offices	• Real-time eligibility for all USDA programs given customer-entered data • Applications routed to the appropriate Federal, state, or local agency • Integrated citizen management capability to track status of program application and applicant's file • Proactive identification of potential eligibility candidates from customer database

eLoans

Description: eLoans will provide opportunities for citizens and businesses, including farmers, producers, and rural entrepreneurs, to apply for, obtain and manage USDA loans (direct and guaranteed) via the Internet. This initiative should include online customer access to accounts, credit approval and income verification, bill presentment, automatic disbursement to bank accounts and loan documentation routing to appropriate local representatives. eLoan services should be provided through a common customer interface to simplify customer access to multiple agency services. The initiative requires full integration with the corresponding government-wide Presidential eGovernment initiative.

Value Proposition: This initiative will empower farmers/producers, rural businesses, and rural homeowners to proactively manage their accounts in the manner most convenient to their own schedules and preferences. Additionally, as a major provider of Federal loans, USDA will significantly benefit from electronic loan processing and management.

Specifically, a consolidated approach will reduce delays in processing and receiving financial payments, provide a more efficient, streamlined loan process, and reduce the time customers and employees spend seeking and providing personal updates, completing forms, and performing administrative tasks. This initiative could also improve the internal processes of handling loans, shorten decision time, and remove human error.

Short and Long Term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Completion and submission of loan applications online • Automatic notification of loan application status • Customer account updates available online • Online bill presentment and loan statements • Provision of guarantee providers' contact information • Online risk management education and resources	• Integration with industry and partners for guaranteed loans and risk-management tools • Real-time integration with customer data to determine qualification, assess preliminary approvals/denials and provide counseling • Proactive management of high-risk accounts and defaults

eRulemaking

Description: eRulemaking will be an online forum for accepting public and internal comments on USDA agencies' proposed rules and regulations. It will expedite collaboration by receiving and processing comments on all USDA policies, procedures and regulations that impact the general public and USDA constituency groups, such as environmentalists, regulated industries; and benefits recipients (including both individuals and businesses).

Value Proposition: This initiative is designed to promote democratic participation and "bring Washington closer to the people." It will directly improve the quality of USDA's policies, many of which rely heavily on industry and public knowledge and comment, and will further improve policy/regulation adoption and awareness. Furthermore, eRulemaking will instill a greater sense of trust in USDA and improve the satisfaction of citizens and organizations that work with USDA.

Short and Long-term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Rules and public commentary portal • Feedback and comments capability for citizen and industry input • Third-party webcast capability for oral presentations/announcements of policies, regulations or procedures	• Moderated discussion boards and chat rooms for real-time comment and dialogue • Aggregation of all comments provided through multiple sources (email, discussion boards, phone calls) to a single source for searching and viewing by regulators and/or policymakers • Proactive solicitation of comments from experts and notification to relevant groups

Nutrition/Dietary Guidelines/Food Safety Awareness

Description: The Nutrition/Dietary Guidelines/Food Safety Awareness initiative will involve a personalized multimedia outreach and education program to improve citizens' nutritional habits and food safety awareness. This campaign will focus on nutrition and eating habits for school children, low-income families, and the general population, and will use traditional media outlets, such as television and radio, and new media, such as the Web and grocery store kiosks, to encourage healthy and safe eating habits. In addition to information services, people will be connected with local dieticians, conduct online dietary assessments, and be provided with a wealth of nutritional information based on a personal profile. Besides Departmental efforts, opportunities exist to develop an interdepartmental approach by collaborating with the Department of Health and Human Services and building off the US Surgeon General's healthy eating campaign.

Value Proposition: By empowering Americans with valuable information and resources on nutrition and food safety, this initiative will be a vehicle to help millions of people improve and ensure their health. Specifically, this initiative strives to improve the nutritional status and dietary intake of children, high-risk nutrition groups, and the American public in general. Education and awareness, especially from a trusted brand such as USDA, has been proven to be one of the most effective means of influencing nutritional habits.

Short and Long Term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Comprehensive redesign of Nutrition.gov to centralize USDA nutrition information (including healthy menus and the Interactive Healthy Eating Index) and to ensure that the site links consumers to scientifically sound information • Brand awareness of Nutrition.gov and FoodSafety.gov through advertising/marketing campaign • Targeted outreach to school children and low-income program recipients • Partnership with the Office of Surgeon General and Department of Health and Human Services • Extension and promotion of Meat and Poultry Hotline, especially strong Web integration	• "Push" technologies to promote and alert about food safety and nutrition (available via email, pager, cell phone, instant messenger or PDAs) • Customer personalization of Nutrition.gov and integrated 800 number for routing calls to local dieticians, outreach programs and food safety hotlines. • Collaboration with industry, including retailers for nutrition promotion in grocery stores

3.1.2 Strategic Opportunities: Public and Private Organizations

eGrants

Description: eGrants will involve a central source for all organizations/agencies that receive USDA grant assistance (including rural businesses, state and local governments, and universities) to access, apply for, and manage awarding and management of all USDA grants. Seamless integration with back-end capabilities will allow USDA agencies to manage the grant lifecycle online from customer applications through USDA financial disbursements. This initiative will be developed in conjunction with the Presidential eGrants initiative, which will be a one-stop shop for all Federal grants.

Value Proposition: eGrants will provide public and private organizations faster, more flexible and more direct means in which to navigate and manage USDA's grant process. Similar to online loan management, eGrants will enable better two-way communication between USDA agencies and grant recipients and more efficient financial allocations and performance reporting.

Short and Long-term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Partnership and participation in interdepartmental eGrants effort • Comprehensive listing and search engine for all USDA grants • Online grant applications, eligibility and procedures	• Web-based grants management workflow system over entire grant lifecycle • Grant-writing collaboration capability and integration with web-based grants management system • Web enablement of entire grant lifecycle, including performance reporting

eMaps

Description: eMaps will provide capabilities for users to generate environmental and social maps to be displayed electronically via the Web. This initiative will allow farmers, rural planners, conservationists, researchers, and other agriculture and land management specialists to enhance planning and development with tools and real-time information about land usage.

Value Proposition: This initiative will empower practitioners and researchers with tools to enhance their decision-making and analysis processes. By allowing users to analyze data geospatially, eMaps enables better discovery of trends, more specific and robust analyses, and more accurate forecasting. Finally, it will leverage USDA's existing GIS data, which is some of the best in the world.

Short and Long-term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Consolidation of existing Departmental efforts and definition of requirements for Department and Inter-departmental application • Online retrieval capability for currently available GIS data	• Subscription capability for other Federal Departments and partners, potentially including revenue generation opportunities

ePermits/eCertificates

Description: The ePermits/eCertificates initiative will provide electronic options to issue permits, certificates and other regulation-based verifications to USDA's customers and business partners. This Internet-based tool will allow users to submit permit applications, receive notifications of expirations, and access options for renewal. Internal workflow technologies will be used to appropriately route submissions for application reviews, scheduling of physical inspections and other appropriate actions to the responsible USDA agencies.

Value Proposition: Submitting applications and receiving permits and certificates via the Internet or through an interactive voice response system will save USDA applicants a tremendous amount of time and effort spent on one of USDA's most paper-intensive processes. It will also reduce burdens on USDA by reducing data entry, processing, and issuance/delivery time and expense.

Short and Long term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Permit and certificate applications completed and submitted online • Applications routed to the appropriate agency • Online payments and annual renewals	• User authentication • Automatic notification of renewals • Automatic scheduling and notification of inspection/certification visits. • Automatic creation and mailing of permits and/or certificates • Integrated citizen relationship management

Online Trade Assistance

Description: Online Trade Assistance will establish a virtual export center for USDA customers, regulated industries, and partners to learn about exporting agriculture commodities, including accessing export permits and requirements, and gaining market information about potential selling opportunities. The online export environment would focus on expanding marketing opportunities for small agriculture producers, reduce information gaps and search time, and create an opportunity for collaboration within the industry. This initiative would allow small farmers to aggre-

gate supply in order to fulfill international demand, access a central location for agricultural trade promotion, and use an export assistance toolkit that would provide step-by-step guidance and assistance for exporting agriculture products. This initiative will integrate with the Presidential International Trade effort.

Value Proposition: This initiative will help achieve USDA's goal to increase U.S. agriculture market share from 18% to 22% of the world market. It will empower small, medium and disadvantaged farmers with education and toolkits to expand their reach. Finally, it would also provide a central resource for the meat and poultry industry and other USDA-regulated industries to expedite their international trading processes, further encouraging exports.

Short and Long Term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Collaboration with existing Federal export assistance efforts • Definition of customer requirements and "pain points" through focus groups for exporting and marketing products • User-supported knowledge base of best practices and lessons learned during export process • Integration with International Trade Data System efforts	• Online "wizards" that guide citizens and/or part ners through the export process; from online wizards, users have access to all relevant forms, contact information, and assistance • Integration with new CRM capabilities to provide real-time assistance, both live and via online chat • Integration with customer and public/private partner database to enable collaboration

Web-based Supply Chain Management of Food

Description: This initiative will leverage supply chain management technologies to enable USDA agencies (including FAS, FSA, AMS, FNS) and their partners (primarily USAID, US school districts, domestic producers, state agencies and industry), to manage commodity purchasing and food distribution seamlessly for USDA programs. Such capabilities should allow USDA to replace many isolated initiatives with flexible new technologies that provide real-time inventory management, food tracking and estimated delivery cycles, order fulfillment, and financial management and allocation.

Value Proposition: USDA's commodity operations measure over $7 billion every year. Enhancing USDA's commodity programs with an electronic supply chain capability will dramatically reduce costs for USDA agencies and their partners and improve the delivery and management of one of USDA's largest functions. In addition, supply chain improvements will reduce duplicative processes, improve service to customers and partners, and streamline administrative functions. Finally, this initiative will support US national defense and security interests by enhancing USDA's ability to effectively provide international food assistance.

Short and Long term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Departmental effort to build on FATES solution to include functionality for all appropriate agencies • Construction (on paper) of model that includes real performance data from system and manual processes to understand potential benefits all participating partners and agencies • Limited-use pilot program	• Integration with specialized portals for buyers and sellers • Just-in-Time (JIT) inventory tracking and purchasing capabilities across the supply chain • Advanced data mining and reporting capabilities in central data repositories

3.1.3 Strategic Opportunities: Employees and the Enterprise

Department-wide eProcurement (IAS)

Description: This initiative reinforces USDA's Integrated Acquisition System (IAS), a web-based solution designed to streamline and automate contract management and acquisition processes throughout USDA.

Value Proposition: IAS is being pursued in conjunction with multiple agency efforts (including FSA, the Forest Service, and NRCS). Efforts to provide a single gateway for all USDA suppliers and buyers will optimize the value of USDA's investments in this area by passing along cost savings to every agency that uses the system. With over $2 billion in procurement transactions each year, an eProcurement solution has the potential to show significant impact. The IAS will provide a streamlined eProcurement tool that will allow USDA to use the functionality in the government-wide Presidential initiative called the Integrated Acquisition Environment (IAE).

Short and Long term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Implementation of IAS as Department-wide procurement solution • Migration effort from existing legacy procurement systems and processes to Departmental solution	• Integration with financial management tools • Integrated document management capability to be used with industry partners for seamless information exchange • Fully electronic bidding and contract system • Integrated eProcurement solution with eMarketplaces in the private sector • Integrated eProcurement solution with Department supply chain management solution for full automation of inventory and asset management

Financial Management Tools

Description: Financial Management Tools will provide Department-wide financial management capabilities including online reporting for existing financial management packages and a global eCommerce capability to handle billing needs. This initiative will focus on providing tools for managers and program directors to quickly access budgeting and financial information, as well as providing reporting capabilities between agencies, the National Finance Center and the Department of the Treasury.

Value Proposition: Improved and updated financial management tools will enhance decision-making, increase transparency, enhance stewardship of USDA resources and enhance the trust and credibility in USDA's financial reporting.

Short and Long term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Reporting engine to aggregate and report on legacy data across disparate financial systems	• Online invoice/tracking/payment system • Online connectivity between NFC financial management applications and agency data for real-time status checks, packaged analysis, and decision support capabilities

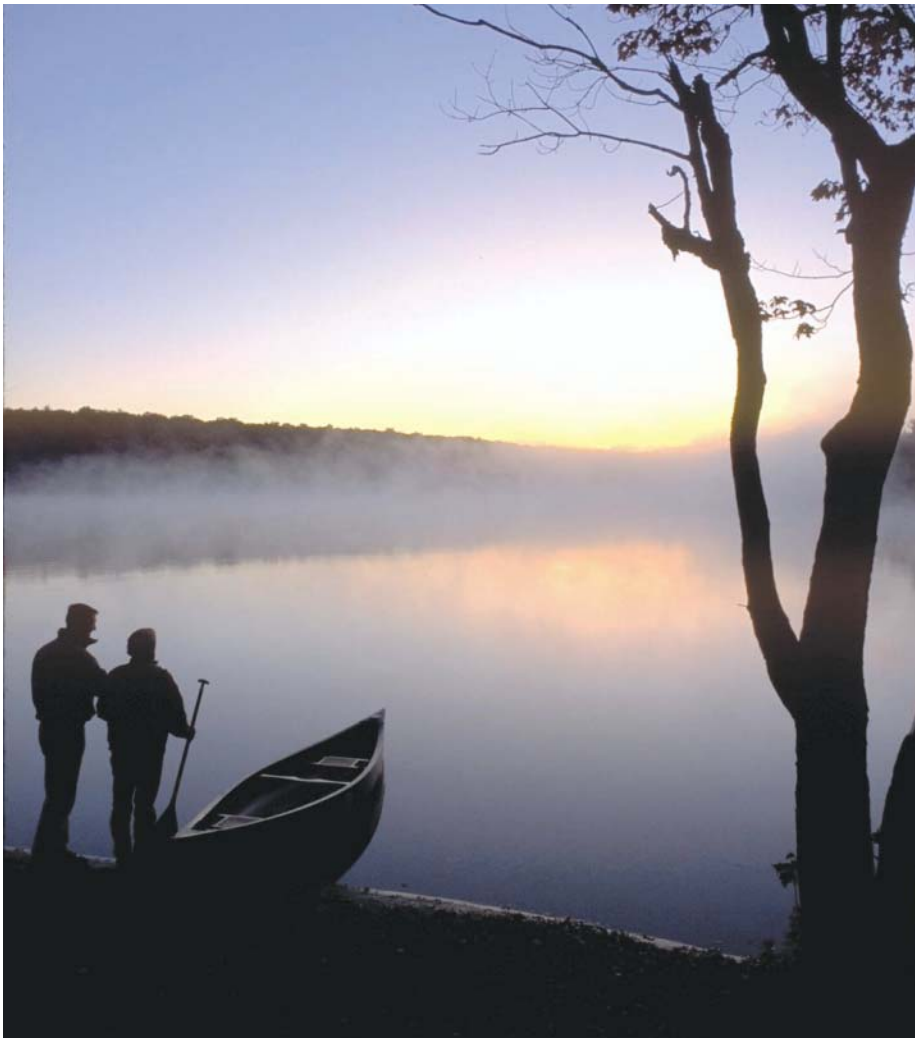
Food Safety and Security Tools

Description: The Food Safety and Security Tools initiative will focus on developing interdepartmental capabilities for collaboration, real-time data collection, and tracking and retrieval of port- and plant-specific data regarding food and animals. All Government parties with responsibility for food safety (including USDA agencies as well as other Federal and state agencies) will have real-time data entry and access to tracking data for decision-making and investigations into the causes of foodborne illness.

Value Proposition: Homeland security heightens the expectations that USDA can effectively respond to emergencies, quickly communicate outbreaks, and thoroughly prevent threats of bio-terrorism. By ensuring the safety of the US food supply and improving USDA's execution of its mission, this initiative will be critical to protecting the health of all Americans.

Short and Long term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Active collaboration on existing efforts in other government Departments (FDA, EPA, Customs) • Integration with the Presidential Wireless initiative to improve instant communications capability • Hardware and software tools for field staff	• Smart ID tags that link to a central data repository to assist in tracking food from initial processing to distribution • Develop a harmonized coding system for identification of products. • Handheld computers for field workers for data input and access at time of need • Integration with industry and government shipping and tracking data to provide field workers richer data upon which to act. • Advanced data mining and reporting capabilities on central data repositories



Human Resources Online

Description: Human Resources Online will enable employees to manage human resource-related issues online and assist in human resource planning and administration. This initiative will allow centralized online HR functions such as benefits administration, time and attendance, workforce planning, and recruiting to be managed through one Internet interface. It will provide self-service tools for employees to update their personal information, check vacation time, and access benefits information. It will also allow managers to assess their human resource needs quickly, provide greater insight on employees' skill sets and make available internal job postings and listings.

Value Proposition: This initiative will consolidate multiple efforts in the Department and its agencies; further, successful agency initiatives, such as CAMS, can be leveraged to achieve results quickly across the Department. Significant cost savings can be achieved by moving to an Internet-based HR system, and employees will be able to spend more time on mission-critical work instead of administrative tasks. Service will also be delivered more quickly, leading to higher job satisfaction and lowered administrative costs.

Short and Long-term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Consolidation of time and attendance efforts into one Department-wide solution • HR portal with informational content and centralized contact capability • Definition of formal strategy and investigation outsourcing opportunities • Employee database enhanced to include secure, expanded, editable data about each employee • Web-based employee directory integrated with enhanced employee database • Partnerships with industry leaders in online classified ads (monster.com, hotjobs.com) to advertise USDA positions outside traditional government recruiting mechanisms	• Online benefits and compensation access across the Department • Standard online recruiting tool and recruiting support solution • Web-based travel management and expense reporting, tracking, and approval system

Physical Asset Management

Description: Electronic tracking mechanisms will be deployed to efficiently manage all USDA-owned physical assets, including real estate, vehicles, planes, computers, furniture, etc. in USDA Headquarters and the all state and local offices.

Value Proposition: This initiative will improve security, reduce theft, and mitigate waste, fraud, and abuse. It will also provide insight in reducing costs, recommending upgrades at the necessary times and optimizing asset usage. Finally, asset management allows the Department to better track inventory and manage surplus goods.

Short and Long-term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Online maintenance request tracking system • Service request assignment tool (management tool for work allocation) • Automatic notification system for security/emergency events • Online equipment registration	• Asset tracking database and reporting capability • Security tags on all physical assets in all USDA buildings for active tracking and management • RF-ID tags for sensitive assets to constantly report status of asset to central data repository • Integration with eProcurement capability to purchase new assets and manage surplus goods based on reports generated from asset management system

Survey Capability

Description: Survey Capability for the Department will provide a global survey instrument: a suite of survey capabilities and/or outsourcing or insourcing arrangement to perform surveys requiring data collection from both internal and external sources.

Value Proposition: This initiative will save agencies money and enable surveys to be delivered and analyzed more quickly. It will provide agencies with tools to learn more from their customers, consolidate existing data collection methods, and improve customer service.

Short and Long term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Consolidation of agency efforts and definition of requirements for Department-wide solution • Investigation of outsourcing and insourcing opportunities for certain surveys	• Survey solution integrated with customer database to ensure data collection is not redundant • Survey "creation center" for agencies that would like to conduct surveys; purchase, creation, and management of survey is conducted from one central location • Robust online reporting and data analysis capabilities

3.2 eGovernment Enabling Opportunities

Below are USDA's eGovernment enabling opportunities; opportunities identified as Smart Choice Candidates are shaded in brown.

Opportunity Area	Primary Goal	Secondary Goals	Expected Scope of Initiative	Related Presidential Initiative:
Application Hosting	Employees and the Enterprise	NA	Enterprise-wide	No
Citizen and Public/Private Organization Database	All	NA	Enterprise-wide	Yes
Service Center eEnablement and CRM	Citizens	Employees and the Enterprise	Cross Mission Area	Yes
Data Management	All	NA	Enterprise-wide	No
Information Management	All	NA	Enterprise-wide	Yes
eLearning	Employees and the Enterprise	Citizens	Enterprise-wide	Yes
Content Management	All	N/A	Enterprise-wide	No
USDA Web Presence and Portal Strategy	All	NA	Enterprise-wide	Yes
eAuthentication	All	NA	Enterprise-wide	Yes

Application Hosting

Description: Application hosting will enhance current Department-wide application hosting capabilities to establish a tiered service model. Cross-Mission Area efforts and Department-wide efforts will be able to use this model to sign service level agreements (SLAs) to obtain various levels of service to host their eGovernment applications.

Value Proposition: Although current hosting capabilities exist, enhanced capabilities will accommodate the deployment not only of more applications, but additionally the higher-quality, more interactive applications required for eGovernment initiatives such as eLoans and eGrants.

Short and Long term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Evaluation of existing hosting capabilities and creation of recommendations for change • Evaluation of current staffing model based on coming eGovernment applications	• Regional data centers hosted by same group • Service Level Agreement model to be utilized by agencies and the Department for hosting new applications • Vendor assessment group for making Department-wide decisions on software (coordinate with Enterprise Architecture group) • Standardized eGovernment technical architecture (Microsoft, Sun, etc.)

Citizen and Public/Private Organization Database

Description: The Citizen and Public/Private Organization Database will create a single data store that houses citizen and public/private organization data (while maintaining compliance with Federal privacy laws and regulations). All internal USDA agencies will contribute to, access, and use this data as it relates to their needs and access rights; further, this data can also be used for authentication of citizens and industry partners.

Value Proposition: Few USDA agencies have all of their customer and partner information centrally stored in an easily accessible and maintainable manner; further, agencies do not share customer information, requiring citizens and public/private organization that interact with multiple USDA agencies to provide duplicative information. This capability will reduce the information-sharing burden placed on the public, enable cross-agency collaboration, and provide enhanced customer service. Further, a common customer database is a necessary prerequisite for cross-agency customer relationship management capabilities.

Short and Long term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Standards for data model/information to be stored • Aggregation and consolidation of all existing customer and partner databases • Development, deployment, and population of initial database • Creation of API/stored procedures for standard queries to the database from any online application	• Advanced reporting capabilities on repository • Online application for citizen use to search repository on non-private data for collaboration purposes • Applications to support “communities of interest” and "communities of buyers" based on database profiles and participation

Content Management

Description: Content management will consist of a Departmental solution(s) for managing the development, approval, publishing, sharing, and classification of web pages, documents, multimedia, official records, and correspondence.

Value Proposition: As the Department transitions to more electronic creation and use of information, new tools and processes must be created to facilitate the creation and sharing of this information both internally and externally. Content management prevent USDA from "re-inventing the wheel" by giving visibility to the knowledge employees have built throughout the Department. Content management also increase collaboration enterprise-wide, throughout the Federal government, and with the private sector, potentially saving significant time and resources.

Short and Long term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• A corporate taxonomy for consistent classification of all information • Vendor analysis of content management capability and execution of pilot • Employee directory for knowledge sharing purposes • Yahoo-style directory of all internal sites, classified using the corporate taxonomy	• Advanced search and retrieval capabilities (potential integration with web site search capabilities to locate document types in addition to web pages) • Integration of Agriculture Library for primary knowledge managers to review content and facilitate consistent classification, and manage corporate taxonomy • Integration of content management toolset in to all information sharing processes • Knowledge sharing "culture" throughout the Department by using knowledge contributions as formal job performance metric

Data Management

Description: Provide the guiding principles and framework for implementing a corporate data management program, including: 1) The definition of a Department-wide data dictionary for back-end data sharing, 2) The creation of centralized databases "of record" and a corporate data architecture, and 3) Data life-cycle management and data sharing strategy.

Value Proposition: The number of legacy systems at USDA and the public and private organizations with which it interacts is very large. A data management strategy with all of its components will enable the Department to better perform back-end integration to enable enhanced services and consolidate disparate data stores into databases of record. This translates to the reuse of data, large time savings for system integration, additional support for a knowledge management capability, and an opportunity to lead government and industry in setting data standards.

Short and Long-term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Common data dictionary (consistent with Federal datasets and standards) for future development of database-driven applications • Identification of redundant data elements across the Department • Development of Department data management strategy for use by all application development efforts • Develop migration plan for legacy data	• Consolidation of redundant data to "databases of record" throughout the Department • Department-wide data warehouses that include robust API's for interaction with all applications • Archiving, storage, backup and aging strategy • Participation in and leadership of data exchange forums

eLearning

Description: The eLearning Engine will be a Department-wide eLearning curriculum platform to facilitate online training. A curriculum management system would allow employees and citizens to track their progress in completing a pre-defined curriculum, register for new courses, and allow management and trainers to track progress and add new courseware to the online repository. This capability allows any employee or customer to develop, monitor, and manage their respective training curriculum while leveraging common training content. This capability also allows individual agencies to publish courseware to one location to enable sharing of courseware and cross-agency collaboration.

Value Proposition: A top priority for the Department is training of its employees. The definition of a Department-wide curriculum management system will facilitate the migration to a hybrid model of online and classroom-based training. This will ensure training goals can be met more effectively than with an exclusively classroom-based curriculum.

Short and Long term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Department-wide curriculum management capability (outsourced or developed) • Online registration capabilities for offline course material • Migration of existing online course material to run within curriculum management system • Definition of standards (user interface, language support, system requirements, etc.) for eLearning applications	• Outsourcing arrangements for migration of offline curriculum to be provided online • USDA Graduate School as an online university • Advanced business simulation capabilities • Integration with knowledge management system to provide training at "point of need"

Information Management

Description: Development of a Departmental solution for managing documents, official records, and correspondence electronically. This initiative would specifically develop:

1. Electronic management of records (including record identification, expiration tracking, and archiving);
2. Workflow capabilities (defining the flows, paths, and sign-off points that documents, records, and correspondence need to follow); and
3. A search capability for the intelligent storage and retrieval of documents and records.

This initiative will integrate with the corporate taxonomy development effort under the content/knowledge management initiative.

Value Proposition: As the Department transitions to using more electronic forms of information, ensuring that information moves throughout the organization and can be appropriately stored and easily retrieved is critical. A Department-wide model would provide multiple benefits, not only consolidating multiple ongoing data and records management efforts, but also greatly accelerating and improving agencies' ability to comply with Federal records management requirements and the information collection/reuse requirements outlined in the Paperwork Reduction Act and Government Paperwork Elimination Act.

Short and Long term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Consolidation of current agency efforts and definition of Department-wide requirements • Approval and enforcement of electronic records management policy • Pilot for single end-to-end workflow process for a standard office document, an official record, and/or a correspondence • Department-wide deployment of the controlled correspondence initiative	• Deployment of document/records/ correspondence management client software to all PC's in the Department (or creation of a web-based solution) • Advanced search and retrieval capabilities (potential integration with web site search capabilities to locate document types other than web pages) • Integrated solution with NARA for outsourcing storage and archiving capabilities • USDA forms made available online using document/record management and workflow capability

Service Center eEnablement and CRM

Description: This initiative will provide internet access for Service Center customers and integrated capabilities for Service Center customers to interact with USDA through multiple channels, i.e. telephone calls, Internet accounts and in-person visits. This initiative would allow Service Center employees to manage the relationship between USDA and its customers by tracking visits, correspondence, inquiries and services provided through customer data summaries. Citizens would be provided a similar customer experience regardless of the method in which they interact with the Service Center.

Value Proposition: Service Center CRM is important for USDA aim of providing better service and for the President's goal of 'citizen-centered government.' CRM capabilities will allow USDA employees to provide improved customer/citizen service by empowering them with more complete information and customer histories. They will enable the development of robust self-service and online service tools that can be integrated with other means of communicating and transacting with the Department, allowing customers to conduct business with USDA using whatever channel they prefer most.

Short and Long term Vision:

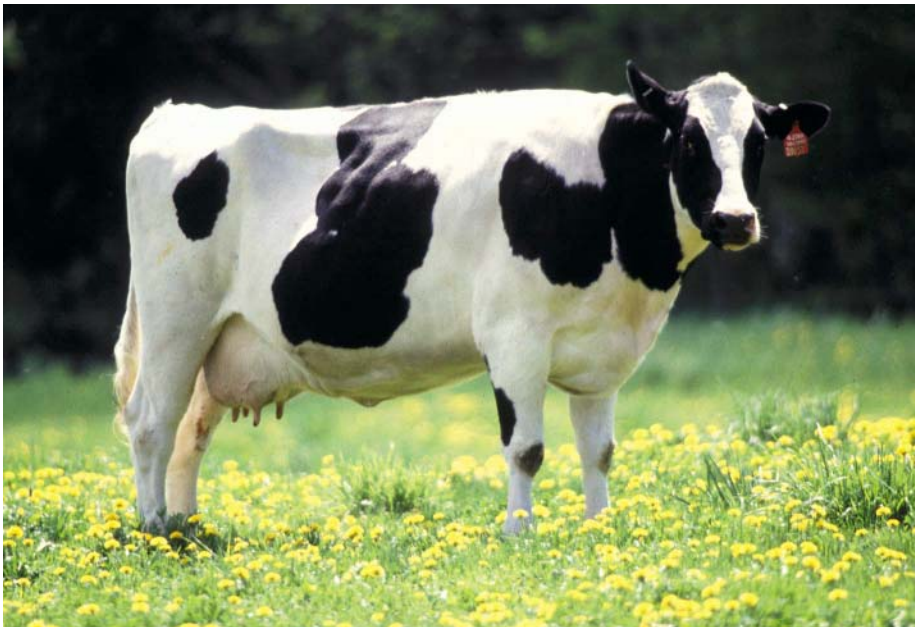
Start Small	Think Big
• Multiple interaction points for citizens to achieve similar tasks including phone, email, Web, and fax). • Single '1-800-ASK-USDA' phone number citizens can call to reach any agency • Kiosks at Service Centers to enable online access for those customers without home access	• Computer centers with Internet access for citizens in Service Centers • CRM package for use by Service Representatives and Call Centers to better manage customer relationship and have real-time access to relevant information • Integration with customer database to enable Service Center to provide more guidance and personalization online and to help customers more effectively • Global "work order" number for all tasks that follow the lifecycle of a business process. Customer can reference that number at any point and Service Representative can retrieve relevant data and status of completion, etc.

eAuthentication:
eAuthentication will be a Department-wide strategy to define policies and a set of solutions for electronic alternatives to traditional ink signatures for citizens, partners and employees. This initiative will outline the specifications for selecting the most appropriate method based on risk and security levels and will develop a core set of Departmental capabilities around each one. This initiative will be developed in conjunction with the Presidential authentication initiative.

Value Proposition: A user authentication and authorization capability is critical to enabling eGovernment. Properly identifying, verifying, and authenticating users will enable USDA to execute business transactions and accept data online. Further, implementing a consistent solution will enhance capabilities for cross-agency and cross-initiative integration and reduce design, implementation, and support costs.

Short and Long term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Publishing of electronic signatures guidance for the Department • Enhanced employee database to serve as globally available user authentication tool • Guidance/vendor analysis on PKI or similar solutions	• Integration with other Federal Departments on cross-government user authentication and rights management



USDA Web Presence and Portal Strategy

Description: One of the essential components of the eGovernment Program will be to enhance USDA's web presentation to improve usability and provide a consistent customer experience. This initiative will allow all users to navigate USDA's websites and portals based on their desired tasks or topics, rather than by USDA's organizational structure. The initiative should redesign and restructure USDA's web sites based on standard user-interface guidelines for a consistent look and navigation across all USDA sites and web-based applications. The initiative also includes the definition of a portal strategy to ensure the Department is implementing their customer-centric portals consistently and in a manner that can be integrated with other Department applications.

Value Proposition: As USDA's web presence matures, and increasing amounts of data and applications are available online, USDA must ensure a simple and consistent user experience across the Department. While many USDA agency web sites and future portals are unique and do not share customer groups, these web standards will instill a high level of usability and ease of navigation, ultimately translating to a more effective customer experience. The web presence is also highly visible to all of USDA's constituencies and will likely become the primary information dissemination mechanism; how information and applications are presented will shape opinions about working with USDA.

Short and Long term Vision:

Start Small	Think Big
• Comprehensive UI style guide for all USDA web-based portals, web sites, and online applications along with templates and graphics for use • Definition of Departmental requirements for a portal capability • Definition and scope for main USDA portal • Agency pilot as a proof of concept prototype • Suite of portal products for Department-wide use • Advanced search engine for searching all USDA web sites	• Robust metadata standards for all publicly and internally available web pages in order to yield better search results • Usability lab for testing all online applications to ensure ease of use • Multiple portals based on customer need • Integration with other high priority initiatives • Global style sheet standards across the Department

4.0 Execution and Delivery

USDA will implement the initiatives described above over the next five years. This section outlines how the Department will do so, including:

- The sequence of initiatives and estimated development time
- Governance and leadership policies to ensure appropriate implementation and maintenance
- The importance of integrating eGovernment into USDA's IT capital planning process, improving this process, and developing new sources of funding
- The skills and training required to implement and use eGovernment
- The internal technical capabilities needed to develop, launch, and maintain the strategic and enabling initiatives.

4.1 High-level Time Line

As mentioned previously, the eGovernment Executive Council has designated, and the CIO and Deputy Secretary have approved, 12 of the 24 initiatives as high–priority Smart Choice Candidates. Their implementation will begin immediately in order to show measurable progress in the first 18 months of executing this plan.

Time (months)

	eGovernment Initiative	High Priority Areas	1-6	6-12	12-18	18-24	24-30	30-36	36-42	42-48	48-54	54-60
1	**eRulemaking**											
2	**Survey Capability**											
3	**Nutrition/Dietary Guidelines/Food Safety Program**											
4	**Physical Asset Management**											
5	**Financial Management Tools**											
6	**Department-wide eProcurement** (IAS)	High Priority										
7	**Online Trade Assistance**	High Priority										
8	**Food Safety and Security Tools**	High Priority										
9	**eMaps**											
10	**Human Resources Online**											
11	**eLoans**	High Priority										
12	**eEligibility**											
13	**eGrants**	High Priority										
14	**ePermits/Certificates**											
15	**Web-based Supply Chain Management**	High Priority										
1	**USDA Web Presence (UI Guidelines and Portal Strategy)**	High Priority										
2	**eAuthentication**	High Priority										
3	**Customer and Public/Private Organization Database**											
4	**Service Center CRM and eEnablement**											
5	**Data Management**	High Priority										
6	**Application Hosting**											
7	**Content Management**	High Priority										
8	**eLearning**	High Priority										
9	**Information Management**	High Priority										

Start Small development time

Think Big development Time

Ongoing enhancements and maintenance

Key points about the timeline include:

- USDA must revisit many of the initiatives regularly as business requirements change. For example, the USDA web presence will require regular updates as new technology and applications are deployed online.
- Most enabling initiatives will be completed in the short term to lay the groundwork for development and enhancement of long-term strategic initiatives.
- All of the initiatives will require maintenance and enhancements after their initial implementation.
- Despite the emphasis on high-priority initiatives, we will persue as many opportunities as human, financial, and technical resources allow. The short-term (Start Small) and long-term (Think Big) actions required suggest the importance of moving them forward, to varying degrees, during this five-year period.

4.2 Governance

eGovernment crosses major organizational boundaries and raises critical issues of strategy, policy, and control. Successfully capitalizing on the eGovernment opportunities delineated in this plan will require effective leadership across USDA, together with the creativity to align the organization and key policies in a way that translates a vision into productive results.

Details of these topics reside in a governance document and in the eGovernment Working Group and Executive Council Charter on the USDA eGovernment Web site.

Leadership

Fortunately, many traditional leadership qualities are relevant to implementing eGovernment. Good communication, organization, and negotiation skills are imperative. However, to effectively lead the development of eGovernment opportunities and direct the eGovernment change journey successfully, our leaders must also develop and exhibit additional behaviors. Effective leaders of eGovernment must:

- Work toward achieving USDA's eGovernment mission, vision, strategic goals, and objectives
- Create and use a broad perspective outside their own agencies to formulate a direction and facilitate efforts that will benefit the Department as a whole
- Cope with the risk that comes with accelerated timelines and new technologies
- Understand eGovernment projects' needs in relation to agency or Department needs

- Be sensitive to the needs of other stakeholders and encourage an atmosphere of understanding and open communication within the agency and the Department
- Balance top-down pressure with bottom-up concerns
- Take advantage of the next best course of action when targeted opportunities fall through and redirect the eGovernment initiative
- Maintain high motivation and a tireless work ethic

Given these leadership characteristics, it is clear these qualities need to be exhibited beyond the executive level. As initiatives progress and stakeholder commitment expands, leaders can be found at many levels, from the most junior developer to a senior executive sponsor. At USDA, leaders can be segmented into three types: sponsors, change agents and champions.

Sponsors, such as the Secretary and Deputy Secretary, Under and Assistant Secretaries, and agency Administrators, demonstrate their support by providing direction, funding, and resources. Their responsibilities include:

- Sanctioning, launching and sustaining eGovernment efforts
- Being accountable for the success of eGovernment at USDA
- Allocating essential resources throughout USDA
- Building and maintaining visible commitment.

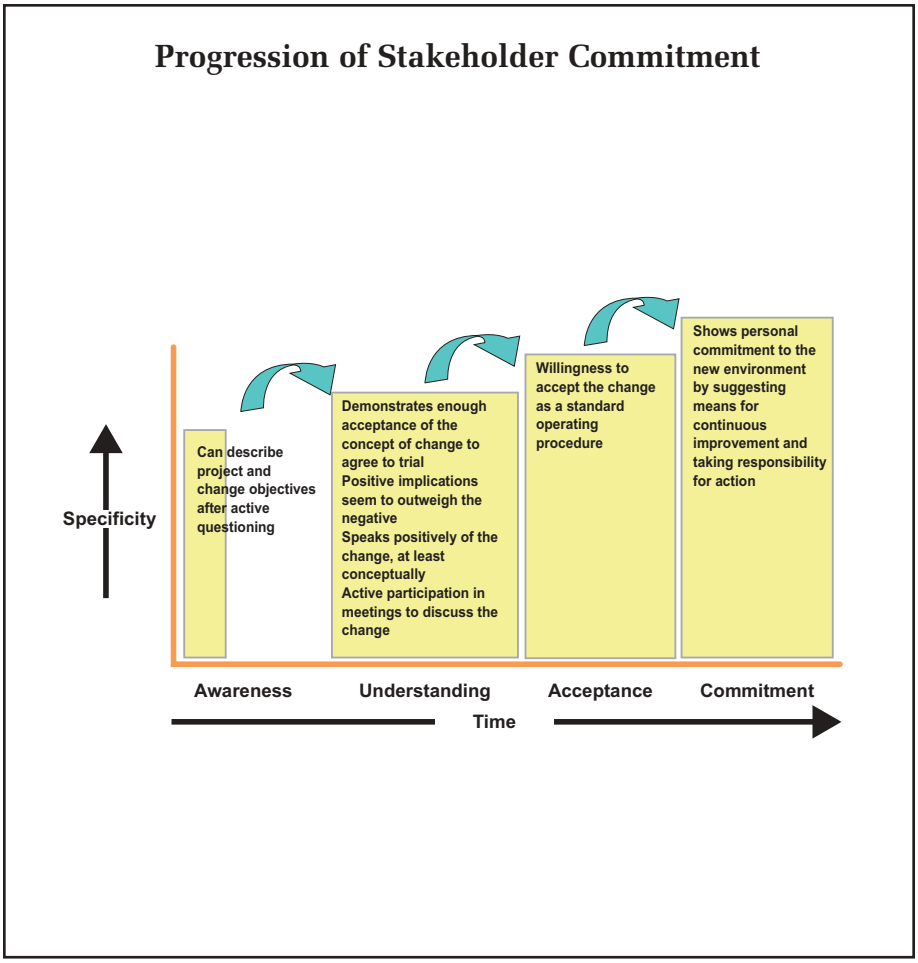
Change agents are equally vital to eGovernment as the official advocates who make internal and external audiences aware of changes. Change agents include the eGovernment Executive Council and Working Group, webmasters, and eGovernment project managers. Their responsibilities include:

- Displaying ownership and establishing proper direction and focus
- Identifying eGovernment opportunities
- Assessing potential problems and overcoming issues and risks
- Highlighting success stories and sharing best practices.

eGovernment champions not only serve as initiators by motivating co-workers to embrace eGovernment, but also demonstrate their long-term unyielding commitment in their day-to-day activities. eGovernment champions can be found at all levels, but examples include full time eGovernment representatives from each mission area, Program Leads, and IT professionals. Leadership responsibilities include:

- Maintaining proper direction and focus,
- Creating excitement and motivating others,
- Gaining commitment from co-workers
- Implementating individual eGovernment initiatives.

Effective implementation of eGovernment at USDA will require leaders to understand and help people navigate four stages of stakeholder expectations about change of the magnitude involved in eGovernment transformation. Communication and leadership play a critical role in ensuring users pass through each stage successfully. The four stages are:



Moving USDA stakeholders along this spectrum will demand ongoing leadership, as well as collaborative working relationships between OCIO and agencies and staff offices, the field and headquarters, executives and non-executives, and USDA and the public and private organizations it partners with to deliver information, services and programs to the public.

Structure

The governance structure for eGovernment reaches the highest levels of the Federal government as both a top priority for Congress and a central tenet of President Bush's Management Agenda. Within USDA, the Deputy Secretary serves as the executive sponsor for eGovernment and has charged the Office of the Chief Information Officer with leading a Departmental eGovernment Program that facilitates collaboration and provides overall strategic direction and tactical guidance to the agencies and staff offices.

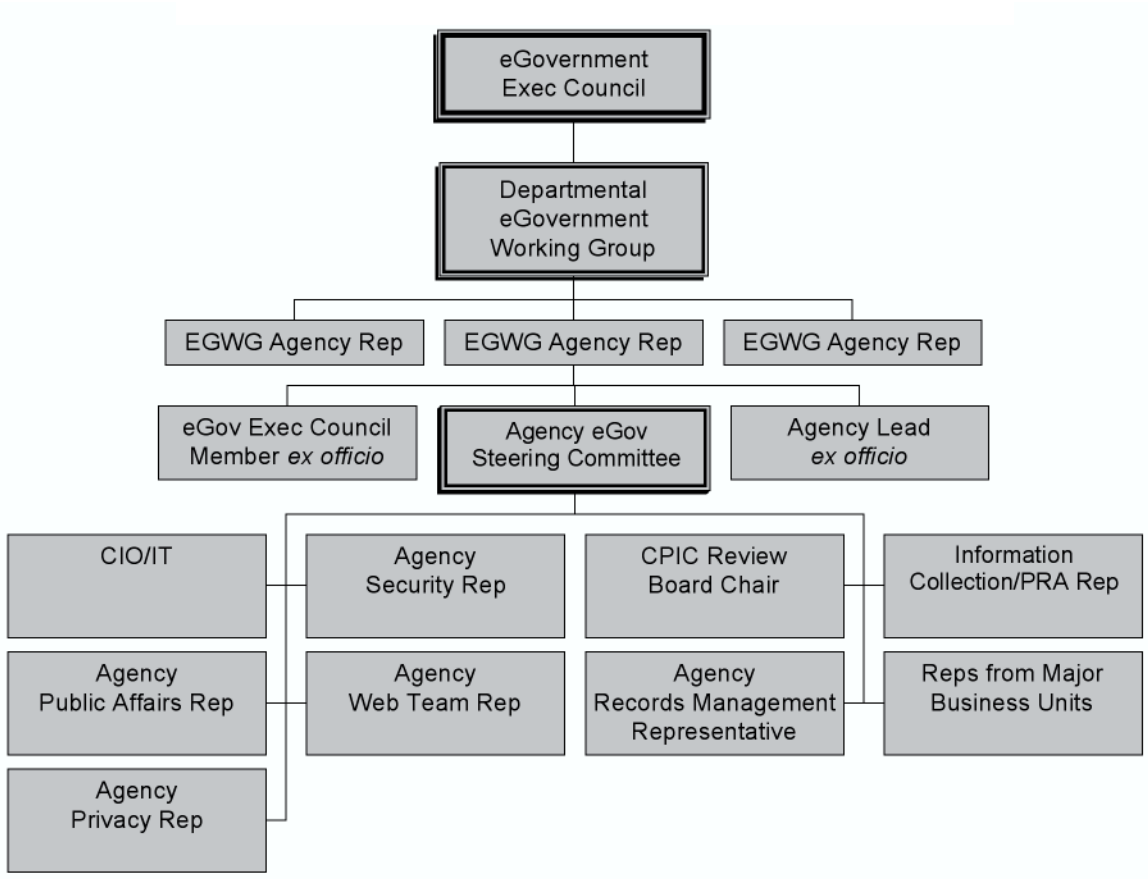
To ensure a department-wide approach to eGovernment, the OCIO worked closely with agencies and staff offices to define an organizational structure that could execute a Department-wide Program and guide the long-term change journey. The following chart represents the structure of USDA's eGovernment Program.

The Executive Council is an advisory board of senior executive program leaders appointed by their Under Secretaries to represent their mission areas. The Council provides guidance and makes final decision in establishing the Department's eGovernment goals, objectives, and initiatives and communicates eGovernment as a priority to all USDA managers and employees. Council members further raise cross-agency issues and act as the eGovernment champions in their mission areas.

Working Group members are executive sponsors designated by their agency Administrators. They represent their agencies and work actively to develop the eGovernment mission, vision, goals and objectives. Working Group members coordinate their agencies' eGovernment efforts, including refining and implementing Agency Tactical Plans.

Agency eGovernment steering committees, chaired by each agency's Working Group member, help define agency-specific issues to bring to the Department-wide forum. These committees are generally composed of program leaders as well as specialists in such eGovernment-related issues as web sites, capital planning and investment control, public affairs, information technology, security, privacy, information collection

eGovernment Program Structure



and PRA forms management, records management, and telecommunications.

As the Department advances from the strategic planning stage of eGovernment into tactical planning and implementation, this governance structure will become critical, providing the means of:

- Establishing a shared vision
- Sharing best practices and lessons learned
- Solving common problems
- Raising and resolving issues
- Making key program decisions.

The shared management structure of the Deputy Secretary's office, the OCIO, and the Department-wide eGovernment Executive Council and Working Group translates into comprehensive oversight and integration of USDA's eGovernment efforts. Agency eGovernment leaders will face the challenge aligning their efforts with the direction of the Departmental program, while accommodating their agency's unique needs and eGovernment environment.

The responsibility of the agency eGovernment steering committees to oversee and integrate agencies' eGovernment projects and related activities is the key link between governance at the Departmental and agency levels. Just as the Executive Council and Working Group oversee and coordinate eGovernment efforts across the Department, each agency's eGovernment steering committee provides integration across all the eGovernment initiatives in which that agency participates. Each project should also have its own formal project management structure that rolls up into this agency-level program management.

Given that this plan delineates a full range of eGovernment opportunities, from internal USDA interagency efforts to enterprise-wide efforts to interdepartmental efforts, each of these types of initiatives will require increasingly complex degrees of collaboration with an increasing number of parties. The specific level of project management collaboration will differ according to the type of initiative and according to the nature of the initiative itself, but in all cases collaboration will be necessary from the requirements stage through to the implementation and maintenance phase.

Finally, USDA has changed Senior Executive Service performance measures to ensure that agency and Departmental leadership provide stewardship to eGovernment. All SES leadership will be held accountable at the objective and project levels, as appropriate.

Process and Policy

Ensuring a robust, comprehensive policy framework is in place and aligned with the USDA eGovernment mission, vision, goals and objectives is essential not only to achieving those goals but also to maintaining the stability and integrity of the eGovernment Program. The nature of eGovernment necessitates a variety of policies and procedures, including:

- IT Capital Planning and Investment Control,
- Information Collections Processes,
- System Development Methodology,
- Enterprise Architecture,
- Web and Application Hosting,
- Security,
- Authentication and Authorization,

- Privacy,
- Data Management,
- Electronic Records Management,
- Collaboration and Messaging,
- Internet Usage,
- User Interaction; and
- Telecommunications.

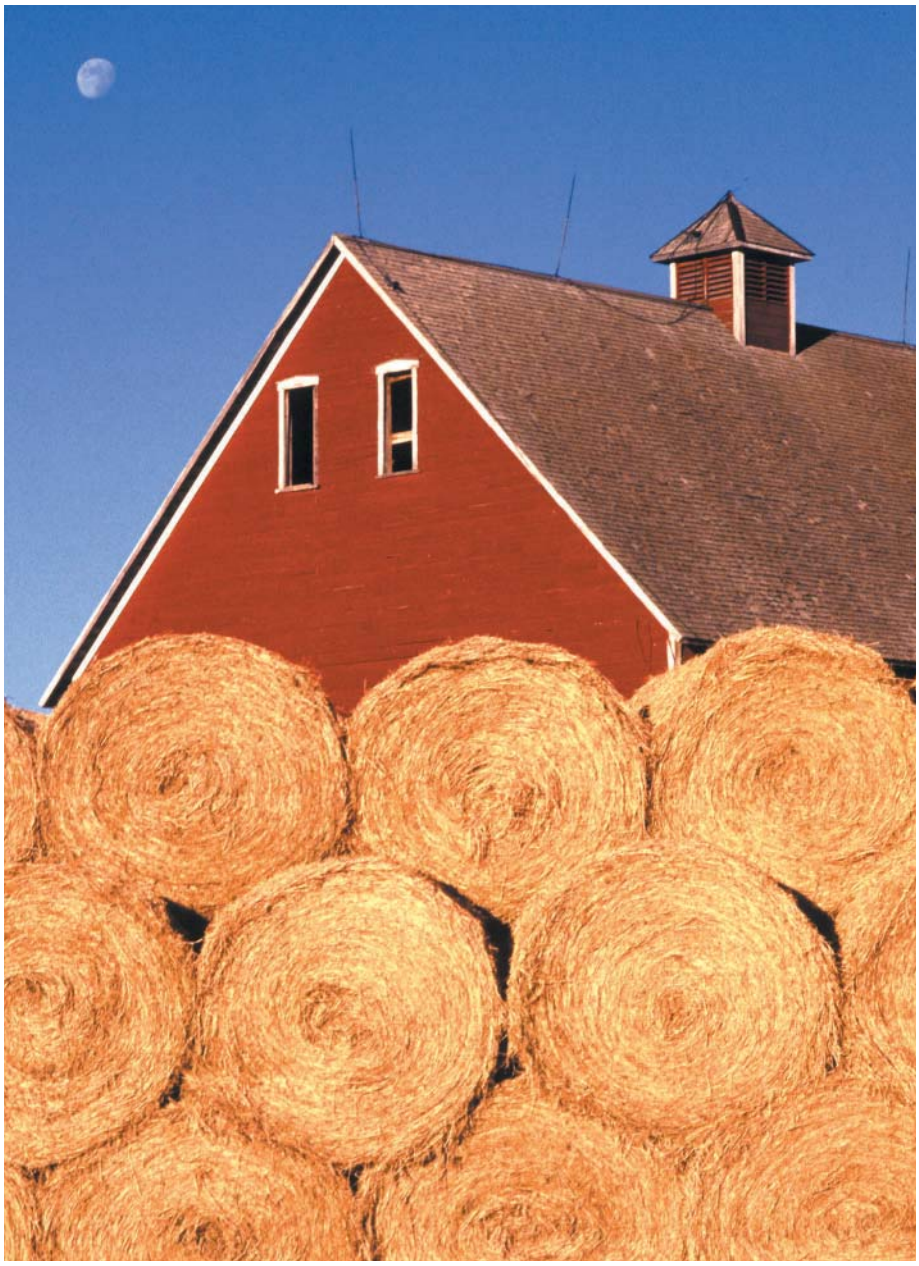
Many eGovernment issues are addressed by existing USDA policies, but are not communicated, monitored, or enforced adequately. And USDA policies ignore a number of areas critical to successful eGovernment implementation, including a department-wide solution to electronic signatures, a consistent web and application hosting approach, and user interaction guidelines.

For a successful eGovernment Program, USDA must ensure all affected agencies and staff offices are consistently involved in the full lifecycle of policies and directives regulating eGovernment. This lifecycle includes the steps of:

- Conception,
- Development,
- Communication,
- Monitoring, and
- Revision.

At the outset, stakeholders should have a role in determining the need for policies, standards and guidance. Likewise, all stakeholders should be involved during policy and standards development and given the opportunity to provide feedback before policies are finalized. When implementing new policies, proper communications are critical to gaining an appropriate level of awareness, acceptance and usage. If modifications to eGovernment-related policies, procedures, and standards are necessary, proper communications must also be taken to inform employees and affected partners of the amended policy.

Throughout this process, USDA should monitor and enforce the consistent implementation of



these policies to guarantee policy utilization. This phase should also include an assessment of how the current policies meet eGovernment needs and whether they need to be revised. As we follow this lifecycle for governing the implementation of eGovernment across the Department, USDA should aim to standardize eGovernment-related policies to accomplish the greatest impact across all agencies and staff offices while still allowing them flexibility in determining the procedures by which they comply with Departmental policy.

Additional treatment of these policy issues can be found in a recent gap analysis paper on eGovernment policies (available on the USDA eGovernment Web site). Moreover, additional information regarding the governing legislation spurring adoption of these policies can be found in Appendix D.

4.3 Finance

For the most part, USDA agencies receive funding as separate line items in Congressional appropriations bills, including separate capital and IT asset amounts by agency. This complicates USDA efforts to manage its portfolio of IT investments strategically, as mandated by Clinger-Cohen and encouraged by the President's Management Agenda, OMB and the Government Performance and Results Act. In a few instances, such as the Common Computing Environment (CCE) and Y2K initiatives, USDA has seen the benefit of centrally managed funding streams controlled by the Deputy Secretary and CIO.

The Department is currently in the process of revising its Capital Planning and Investment Control (CPIC) processes, managed by the EITIRB and chaired by the Deputy Secretary in order to effectively integrate eGovernment and GPEA. USDA is also amending its directions as part of a broader effort to ensure standardization and consistency of approach to IT Capital Planning across agencies and staff offices.

While IT investments for FY 2003 have already been identified, the Department will reevaluate each planned investment against the high-priority initiatives (the Smart Choices Candidates) and other criteria defined in the eGovernment strategy to ensure the alignment of mission area objectives. Investments that do not support the eGovernment goals set by the Executive Council may need revision.

Additional reviews will occur during the processes of acquisition approval, information collection approval, and rulemaking clearance. In each of these types of reviews, determinations will be made as to whether the program areas are supporting the eGovernment goals.

The Department has undertaken eGovernment strategic planning in accord with the President's Management Agenda and OMB guidance specifically encouraging the development of Department-wide eGovernment strategies that prioritize IT investments. Through this strategic planning, the creation of a robust eGovernment Program, thorough and timely responses to mandates like GPEA and E-File, and the development of an Enterprise Architecture, USDA is attempting to build the confidence of oversight groups and Congressional appropriators that the Department is on the right course to electronically-enabled modernization and business transformation–all in the hopes of increased funding for IT in general and eGovernment in particular, for the Department and its agencies.

The Department also recognizes the need to prepare stronger, consistent business cases to meet OMB standards for funding major investments.

In addition to improving processes and establishing more formal linkages with annual budgeting processes, USDA is exploring new ways to increase the funds available for eGovernment:

- Applying for competitive interagency funding. Last year GSA distributed $1.2 million for creative interagency efforts. This year President Bush has requested $20 million and a Congressional proposal has requested $200 million for a general eGovernment pool of funds for which Departments would compete. Similar to Y2K funding, this pool should increase over time.
- Leveraging resources from other Departments and other USDA agencies – through Presidential eGovernment Initiatives and partnerships with other Federal agencies and by combining efforts and funding streams across USDA agencies – economies of scale should be realized. Similarly, instead of several agencies attempting to solve common problems independently, human and financial resources can be saved by integrating efforts in to a Departmental endeavor. For example, one of our opportunity areas is Human Resources Online, toward which multiple agencies have been working on a solution. By combining efforts, the Department can create a single, more efficient solution to serve all its agencies.
- Securing funding for eGovernment solutions early in the authorization and appropriations cycle. As enabling a new process is much easier than fixing a broken one, all managers of new and significantly expanded programs should consider electronic options from the start. Similarly, any new information collections targeting over 50,000 respondents should be electronically enabled from inception.
- Testing new procurement options. Other government agencies (e.g., the Department of the Navy and the Office of Student Financial Aid at the Department of Education) have used creative, competitive procurement vehicles, including value-based arrangements such as share-in-savings, share-in-revenue, and incentive-based contracting, to partner with the private sector in the US and abroad. These arrangements change the risk-reward tradeoff for private sector firms and pay them for quantifiable results delivered.
- Imposing user fees and transaction-based charges that return to the IT capital pool for maintaining and improving eGovernment capabilities. Examples include minimal charges to suppliers for procurement transactions, to citizens on loan transactions, and to nonprofit organizations for an electronic grants system, plus withholding of a portion of state/local or nonprofit administrative overhead funding.
- Creating a pool of monies for future eGovernment spending based on demonstrated savings.

For example, if an eGovernment application were to save the Department an estimated $50 million annually, a portion of those resources should be apportioned to continual enhancements and improvements in information and communications technologies. This is an increasingly common practice in the private sector that USDA should replicate.

- Reprogramming funds from program dollars to IT/Capital dollars when surpluses exist.
- Segregating funds for new development from maintenance funds and setting dollar/percentage targets in both areas.
- Making an integrated, Departmental case for a centrally controlled pool of funds similar to CCE and Y2K for eGovernment under the auspices of the Deputy Secretary and CIO. These funds would facilitate transformation across USDA in line with Secretary Veneman's vision expressed in Food and Agricultural Policy in the Fall of 2001. OMB, the USDA Office of Budget Policy and Analysis (OBPA), and OCFO have expressed support for such funding of Department-wide solutions.

4.4 Skills and Training

Building an eGovernment application will require a multi-disciplinary team, consisting of personnel with five distinct skill sets:

- Project management
- Strategy development
- Business process development
- Technology development
- Change management.

This section describes the specific skills needed in those five areas to successfully deliver any future eGovernment applications, as well as skills necessary to successfully use eGovernment applications.

Skills Necessary to Build eGovernment

Project Management

Project management resources are required to coordinate the activities of the team and to communicate and collaborate with other efforts that may be concurrent. Specifically, project management includes understanding and gaining agreement on project objectives, deliverables, scope, risk, cost, approach, and other factors. Project managers are also responsible for ensuring that the team has the right skill set to complete the project and must track progress against a workplan.

Given the nature of the role, the necessary project management skill set revolves around leadership and organization abilities:

- Strong communication/interpersonal skills and a willingness to collaborate
- A working understanding of Internet technologies
- Work planning and resource management
- Writing skills
- Understanding of business processes and organization impacts due to business process change
- A strong business acumen to collaborate effectively with the business owners of the application

Strategy Development

Strategy Development involves planning and oversight related to USDA's overall direction, including assessment of the environment in which USDA operates (including both internal and external factors) and the creation and execution of plans to best accomplish the Department's mission in that environment. Strategy is usually set at the outset of application development to understand the broader impact of development and its financial effect on the overall business.

Key strategy development abilities include:

- Leadership skills
- Forecasting and analysis skills
- Understanding of business processes and the organizational impact of business process changes
- Strong communication/interpersonal skills, including writing skills
- Working knowledge of Internet technologies
- Strong business acumen to collaborate effectively with the business owners of an application.

The eGovernment Progrm has written a web-based eGovernment guidebook to help agencies and staff offices with long-term eGovernment strategic planning, as well as shorter-term tactical planning.

Business Process Development

Business processes are sets of activities that transform inputs into outputs (such as content, services, and products) for another person or process, usually with support from technology. A prerequisite to building eGovernment applications is reviewing and often reengineering the business processes applications will support. Therefore, people skilled in business process re-engineering must be part of any project team, bringing skills including:

- Expertise in business process methodologies
- Business process mapping and mapping tools
- Organizational development
- Application of Internet technologies
- Activity based costing
- Stakeholder analysis
- Writing.

Technology Development

Once business requirements for applications have been defined, technologists must become involved to design, build and maintain the application. Therefore, a technology team must possess skills to support the development, implementation, and operations of the eGovernment applications and systems.

Specific responsibilities may include application design, technical architecture design, database design and administration, user-interface design, application development, application testing, system testing, and stress testing. These tasks require skills in:

- Database administration
- Internet development technologies
- System administration
- Cybersecurity
- Technical architecture design
- Network architecture and administration
- User interface design
- Graphic design
- Usability
- Telecommunications
- Understanding of business processes and the organizational impact of business process changes
- Strong business acumen to collaborate effectively with the business owners of an application
- Writing (documentation, issue papers, etc.)

Change Management

When introducing new applications to our employees, inevitably many people will be asked to perform their jobs differently. Business processes, as well as the traditional organizational structures created to execute them, will require change in order to effectively utilize eGovernment. Commitment is needed from those individuals whose jobs are affected and who will see the largest change in their day-to-day lives as a result of the eGovernment initiatives.

Change management experts are necessary to ease these transitions. Their major activities usually include organization and/or team restructuring, training, and communications and marketing to not only build an awareness of new capabilities, but obtain an understanding of the nature and intent of the change, an acceptance that these new capabilities will help facilitate positive change, and ultimately, a commitment and personal ownership of the change initiative.

Effective change management requires:

- Understanding of business processes and the organizational

impact of business process changes
- Strong communication/interpersonal skills, including writing skills
- Working knowledge of Internet technologies
- Strong business acumen to collaborate effectively with the business owners of an application.

Successful Use of eGovernment Applications

While understanding the skills required to implement the eGovernment initiatives is important, it is also imperative to understand the skills necessary for employees, citizens, and private industry to accept and effectively utilize these new applications. In fact, it is crucial to the success of this plan that employees have the knowledge, skills, and support available to not only effectively use newly deployed applications, but also perceive the change as an accepted norm by articulating personal ownership, encouraging others to commit to using the new capabilities and ultimately have a real involvement and participation in the overall implementation of this plan.

To become an effective user and advocate of new eGovernment initiatives, there are specific skills that every employee, citizen, and private industry employee should work to develop. These include proficiency in using a Web browser and e-mail package and awareness of eGovernment capabilities, especially an understanding of how eGovernment can improve how employees do their jobs.

4.5 Required Technology Capabilities

As with legacy applications currently in operation at USDA, the deployment of eGovernment opportunities requires a suite of technical capabilities, supporting business processes, and organizational structure. This section will discuss the technical capabilities that must be present to build and maintain the applications defined in the 24 eGovernment initiatives outlined in this plan.

The chart below shows all technology capabilities that are necessary to realize the long-term eGovernment strategic vision. Although only technical capabilities will be discussed in this section, the processes and organizational structure that undergird these technical capabilities are critical components of a successful, robust eGovernment portfolio.

A few of these technology capabilities are prerequisites (Web Presence, Data Management) to the development of many of the short-term strategic eGovernment opportunities. As a result, these technology capabilities are represented as eGovernment enabling opportunities in the eGovernment Strategic Plan.

Development Architecture

Based on a set of business requirements, the Department and its agencies must be able to design, build and enhance the applications that constitute its eGovernment portfolio. There are

two primary capabilities required in this regard:

Environment and Tools

These capabilities include Integrated Development Environments (IDEs), coding standards, project management tools, and version control tools for use by project teams.

Currently, individual agencies have purchased these capabilities, but few departmental standards or enterprise licensing agreements exist. Some standards exist but have been defined or enforced.

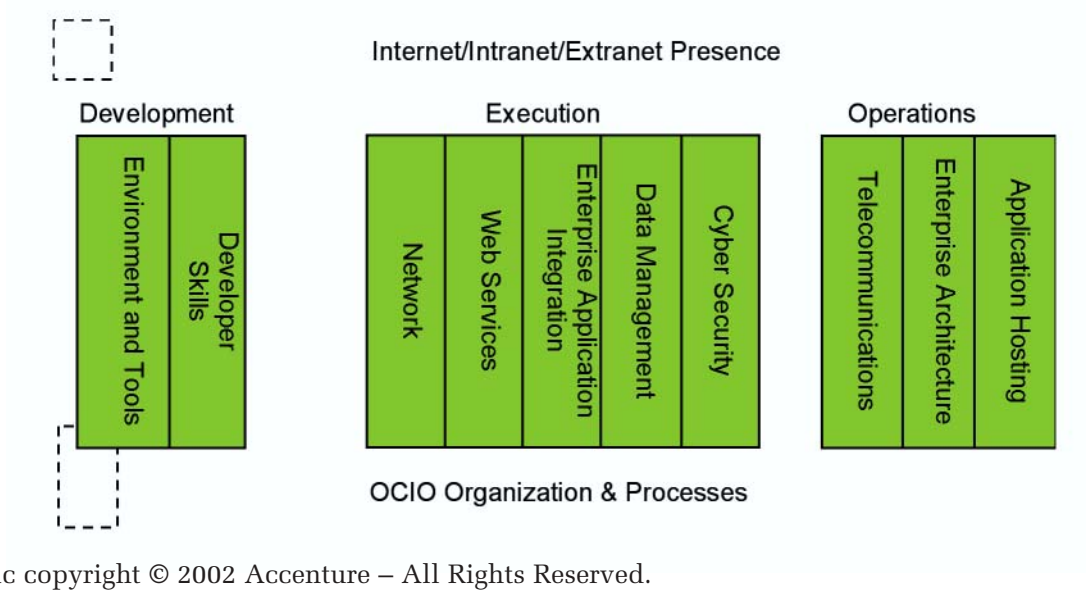
Developing interdepartmental, departmental, and cross-mission area applications will involve:

- Creating standards for all eGovernment application development to ensure consistent and efficient development
- Defining a standard testing strategy to ensure all applications are being released to their stakeholders with the highest possible quality. This includes system testing, stress testing, and security testing.
- Providing application development teams with managed development, testing, and production environments.
- Deploying standard project management tools, including financial tools, workplanning, risk analysis, and status reporting templates.
- Giving application developers a standard version control capability to facilitate their efforts and ensure against productivity loss.

Developer Skills

Many agencies have launched initiatives to bring their IT staff up to speed on current development technologies. To fully achieve our goals, we should look to further these efforts Department-wide and ensure agencies and staff offices alike have the following skill sets:

- Database administration
- Internet development technologies
- System administration
- System training



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- Security
- Technical architecting
- Network architecting and administration
- User interface, graphic design, and usability.

Execution Architecture

Execution capabilities form the infrastructure to run both legacy and eGovernment applications and help deliver services to their intended recipients.

Network

In the context of this plan, *network* refers to the level of access available to headquarters, field offices, and employee homes. Some form of network access is already available across the department; to a lesser extent, employees have access from their homes and through mobile devices.

As eGovernment applications become more mission-critical and require more bandwidth, USDA must take steps to ensure adequate access to operate effectively.

- Provide dedicated broadband access that is available in both headquarters and every field office
- Provide secure remote 56k dial-up access or VPN capabilities for remote users
- Enhance network configuration requirements to allow a USDA employee to "configure once, run anywhere"
- Manage the network intelligently with network monitoring tools and bandwidth throttling
- Plan for future wireless applications in headquarters, field offices, and off-site locations and implement business-focused solutions
- Build partnerships to provide broadband home office capabilities, as 80% of USDA employees would like to telecommute.

Web Services

The USDA needs two types of web services:

- Department-wide services used by IT or business developers to enable strategic eGovernment solutions
- Back-office services used to enhance the delivery of eGovernment applications.

Several web services were deemed significant enough to be included among the 24 eGovernment initiatives. For example, user authentication is an important Department-wide solution to ensure secure transactions. Developing such a capability at the departmental level ensures building the capability *once*, without the redundancy of multiple agencies launching similar efforts.

Enterprise Application Integration

USDA's ability to deploy Enterprise Application Integration (EAI) capabilities will determine how reliably current data and processes can support new eGovernment applications and enhance existing efforts.

The National Information Technology Center (NITC) currently offers system integration services, and the National Finance Center has launched efforts to integrate legacy systems in order to deliver an ePayroll system to the Department.

To capitalize on existing systems and data, USDA needs to develop robust application integration capabilities, including:

- A standard messaging protocol and capability (ORB) for applications to share data
- Department-wide syntactic translation of one data set into another (e.g., translation of date formats)
- Department-wide semantic translation of data based on underlying data definitions or meaning (e.g., conversion from the English system to the metric system)
- Centralized visibility into and control of multi-step technical business processes spanning multiple applications
- Pre-built adapters to technology and application solutions such as EDI solutions, messaging software, specialized technologies (i.e. COM, CORBA, EJB), and database environments
- Connection managed to and from source applications, including security (authentication, authorization, and encryption)

Data Management

Data management is a critical enabler of multiple strategic opportunities. Section 3.2 of this plan outlines the short and long-term capabilities needed.

Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity is a key issue in every eGovernment application that is in production today or planned for the future. Accordingly, USDA has an aggressive security policy and has recently received significant funds to execute that strategy. Besides these short-term goals however, there are enterprise-wide capabilities that can integrate cybersecurity concerns into the fabric of USDA:

- Managed virus server and virus software implementation on all desktops
- Comprehensive security communications plan
- Annual business process evaluation to detect potential security issues
- Policy and breach alert mechanisms
- Host-based intrusion detection services
- Managed web filtering to check for inappropriate use of resources
- Certificate revocation and management services
- Non-repudiation support
- Managed distribution of classified materials
- Managed VPN services; steady state monitoring, and review of configuration change requests
- Security help desk
- Wireless network monitoring and intrusion detection
- Integration of biometrics into security infrastructure.

The importance of cybersecurity, led to the designation of electronic signatures and user authentication as high-priority Smart Choice Candidates.

Operations Architecture

The Operations Architecture defines how USDA will manage eGovernment applications on a day-to-day basis. More specifically, the operations architecture sets standards for the technology supported in the Department, man-

agement of changes to those operation-level standards, system monitoring, and maintenance.

Enterprise Architecture

The USDA Enterprise Architecture should define standards for technologies that are supported in the enterprise. However, our Enterprise Architecture is also a living plan that will continue to grow and mature as projects introduce new technologies and new technologies are developed by Industry.

Our Enterprise Architecture should start by developing technology principles that support our business drivers and goals and quickly evolve in to making specific recommendations on technology platforms that should be utilized by the Department. These recommendations can serve as a guideline for what software solution to utilize for a given business purpose.

USDA already has an Enterprise Architecture effort focused on cataloging all Department applications in production. This effort should expand to include:

- Definition of departmental desktop standards according to business use for:
  - Hardware configurations
  - Operating system
  - Office productivity software
  - Web browser and e-mail package
- Definition of standard Department-wide file formats
- Standard server configurations and limited choice of server environments for desired functions
- Networked file and print serving (Internet printing protocol) capabilities
- Standard desktop and server images used for all new machines in the Department
- Vendor analysis group to define standards and evaluate software and hardware for major business uses
- Dedicated support staff to troubleshoot hardware/software issues on supported platforms
- Enterprise Architecture management system to track and report on all enterprise systems
- Automatic software updates on login to network
- Roaming user capability
- Remote profile storage to enable access to settings and applications from any USDA location.

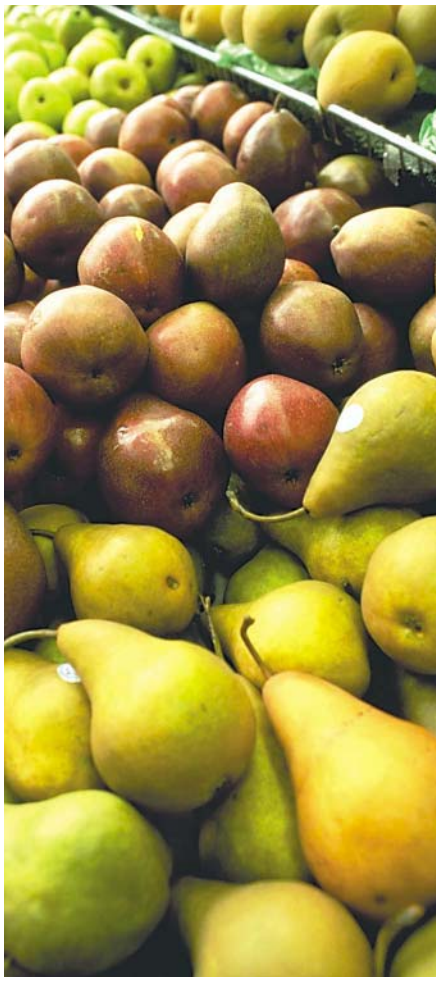
Application Hosting

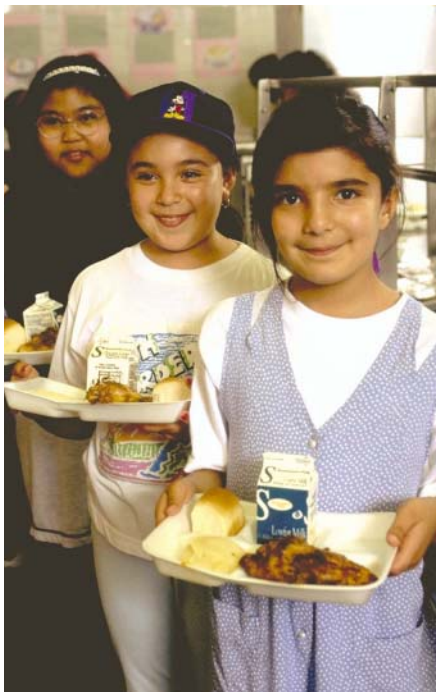
Application hosting is a capability necessary for the operations of all eGovernment applications. Therefore given its large impact, it has been elevated to become a defined eGovernment opportunity area. Please refer to the Application Hosting area in Section 3.2 to read about the short term and long term capabilities we need to develop in application hosting.

Telecommunications

All eGovernment applications require a robust and reliable telecommunications infrastructure to operate effectively. This infrastructure includes voice and data networks that are generally wired, land-based systems, but also include wireless capabilities where applicable.

USDA's existing telecommunications infrastructure must be redesigned and upgraded to meet growing eGovernment demands. Currently the Department is man-





aging a telecommunications project, the Universal Telecommunications Network (UTN), which will address eGovernment requirements and other Departmental/agency telecommunications demands.

The vision of the UTN is a *robust telecommunications network that provides, scalable, reliable, secure, cost effective services, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, to enable USDA agencies to meet Departmental missions and goals for serving their customers.*

The UTN will be designed, operated and maintained under the direction of the USDA's Chief Information Officer, who will enter into a partnership with world-class partners and Agencies/Staff Offices to implement, operate and manage network services. The network's functional characteristics (breadth of services, capacity, security, and reliability) will be based upon departmental and agency business processes required to meet mandated missions and achieve strategic goals. The architectural design will ensure network stability and employ proven, state of the market technologies, improving security and enhancing telecommunications interoperability for the agencies. Network service features will be scalable, providing the flexibility and agility to accommodate changing requirements and opportunities to continuously improve service to the public.

UTN Project Objectives include:

- Providing continuous network monitoring, stability, and sufficient capacity to ensure quality service and attainment of Departmental and agency mission goals.
- Ensuring business requirements drive telecommunications service requirements. Preparing today for the service and support requirements of tomorrow.
- Providing best value telecommunications service to USDA offices and agencies to ensure best business practices for the Department.
- Implementing a secure enterprise network infrastructure that protects USDA information, safeguards the physical network, and ensures continuity of operations.
- Providing continuous monitoring and proactive network services, support and casualty response.
- Introducing telecommunications network planning and management tools for USDA leaders to use for decision-making and providing strategic direction to the world-class telecommunications service partner.
- Achieving consensus on metrics to define success for the following attributes: robust, reliable, and secure.
- Establishing a telecommunications Service Level Agreement framework for service performance parameters and billing for services used.

Appendices

Appendix A: USDA's Current eGovernment Capabilities

Goal 1: Citizens ***Improve citizens' knowledge of and access to USDA to enhance service delivery.***	
Customer Service	**USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline** Last year over 76 million cases of food poisoning occurred in the U.S. (according to the Centers for Disease Control), most because of improperly handled and prepared food. In 2000 food safety specialists helped 90,000 callers, ranging from consumers and media to health professionals and educators with questions on safe food handling and preventing foodborne illness. This year, bioterrorist threats have put even more emphasis on food safety. Available in both English and Spanish 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, via telephone, TTY, email, and integrated with the Web, the toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline has been a trusted and convenient resource for more than 10 years. www.fsis.usda.gov/oa/programs/missnhl.htm
New Delivery Channels	**Electronic Benefit Transfer** EBT is an electronic system for authorizing transfers of government benefits from a Federal account to a retailer account to pay for products. Currently used to issue over 80% of food stamp benefits, EBT is faster and cheaper than paper-based processes. Its accompanying customer card, which functions like a credit card, also provides dignity to beneficiaries and faster payment for the Food and Nutrition Services's network of over 200,000 retailers. Further, EBT creates an electronic record of each food stamp transaction, making it easier to identify and document food stamp "trafficking," or exchanging for cash, drugs, or other illegal goods–ultimately helping to reduce food stamp waste, fraud, and abuse. This delivery channel has saved USDA, taxpayers, and retailers an estimated $420 million since its inception. FNS is now looking to apply EBT and smart card technologies to another major program, Women Infants and Children.
Bridging the Digital Divide	**CyberSeniors CyberTeens** CyberSeniors CyberTeens helps senior citizens become comfortable with computers and use the Internet while giving young Americans valuable skills and experience at teaching. Operating in a number of locations across the US, both urban and rural, the program pairs young people—some of the most avid and experienced users of the Internet—with older Americans, many of whom have no experience with computers. Teens tutor seniors on computer- and Internet-related topics such as Very, Very Basic Computers and Introduction to the Internet and E-Mail; additional modules help seniors

[20]"From Paper to Electronics: Creating a Benefit Delivery System That Works Better & Costs Less." Federal EBT Task Force, 1994.

	with more specific topics such as using the Internet to find health information or manage finances. A unique public-private partnership, the program's sponsors include CSREES, the National 4-H Organization, and companies including Microsoft and MBNA.
eLearning	**Agriculture in the Classroom** AITC is an education partnership initiative between USDA— including CSREES, ARS, AMS, APHIS, NASS, and the USDA Education Coordinating Council—and other Federal departments that provides electronic linkage of State AITC programs and K-12 teachers. The AITC web site provides agriculture information, downloadable lesson plans, streaming videos, grants information, teacher recognition, exemplary science projects and information on all state AITC programs. A Kid's Corner lets students engage in self-directed activities to support their own learning. The initiative encourages teachers to integrate food, agriculture, and natural resource topics into their classes by providing resources to assist them. While aimed primarily at helping students, AITC also encourages consumers, citizens and voters to support science-based agriculture and resource policies. There is an AITC presence in every state and territory, and the program is expanding internationally. This robust capability involves an array of agencies and reaches approximately 5 million K-12 students through 130,000 teachers nationwide. http://www.agclassroom.org
Interagency One-stop Shop	**Recreation.gov** USDA manages over 190 million acres in 175 national forests and grasslands, providing stewardship for future generations and for the public trust and maintaining these lands for the enjoyment of citizens, who made 200 million recreational visits last year alone[21]. The Forest Service played a key role in creating Recreation.gov, an interagency partnership among Federal land management agencies including the Forest Service, the National Park Service, and the Bureau of Land Management, aimed at providing a single, easy-to-use web site with information about all Federal recreation areas. Users can search for recreation areas by state, recreational activity, agency, or map. Some national parks and forests accept online reservations through the site. www.recreation.gov
Goal 2: Public and Private Organizations ***Enhance collaboration with public and private sector organizations to develop and deliver USDA's mission.***	
Collaborating With Partners	**Unified Export Strategy (UES)** The Foreign Agricultural Service administers several programs, including the Market Access Program and Foreign Market Development Program, that provide over $135 million in funding to over 65 industry partners, both in the U.S. and overseas. The Unified Export Strategy is a Web-based application for FAS's industry partners to streamline the administration of these interrelated programs while focusing on results, improving resource allocation benchmarks, and de-emphasizing bureaucracy.

[21]USDA National Forest Visitor Use Monitoring, 2001.

	UES, which receives over 11,000 submissions annually, improves customer service by combining applications to reduce paperwork burdens. UES has also cut reimbursement time from 3 weeks to 3 days and significantly decreased redundant information requests. Overall, industry burdens have been reduced by 30 staff years.
Electronic Delivery of Products	**Import Authorization System** IAS, a Government Technology Leadership award winner for innovation, enables the Animal Plants and Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to manage permits for both fruit and vegetable and live animal imports electronically. 25% of all APHIS permit applications use this Lotus Notes-based Web system to submit and revise permit applications and check their status. Applicants can have permits sent via multiple channels, including postal mail, fax, or e-mail. IAS has generated significant cost savings for APHIS by reducing paperwork, data entry, and errors and improving processing/delivery time. https://web01.aphis.usda.gov/IAS.nsf/Mainform?OpenForm
Supply Chain Management	**Electronic Bid Entry System** EBES automates, via the Internet, the bid entry portion of USDA's procurement of commodities exported under various foreign donation programs. FSA has built a similar system to handle procurements for domestic distribution of food assistance (Domestic Electronic Bid Entry System) and is building the Freight Entry Bid Entry/Evaluation System to handle freight bids for the foreign donation programs. To make procurement truly end-to-end, the agency is building a web-based application system to streamline program operations and improve customer service by linking the agencies requesting procurement (USDA/FAS, USAID, and the UN) with the procurement and freight systems.
eWorkspaces	**ERS Extranet** The Economic Research Service Extranet is a private, secure virtual meeting space where ERS research partners access timely, relevant information to help them conduct business, work collaboratively with peers, create knowledge, and participate in professional networks. Five extranets are currently available to ERS partners, and extranets for additional partner groups are planned.
Goal 3:Employees and the Enterprise ***Improve USDA's internal efficiency by promoting Enterprise-wide solutions.***	
Knowledge Management	**National Agriculture Library Digital Desktop Library** This library offers 24-hour access to key databases, journals, news services, statistics, and other significant electronic information resources. Important agricultural books, journals, reference materials, and databases are increasingly available in digital form, and the NAL provides access by obtaining USDA-wide licenses at lower rates and offering participating USDA agencies a single interface to the Digital Desktop Library. All USDA staff worldwide have access to the first two fee-based products licensed through this initiative. http://www.nal.usda.gov/usda/digitop.htm

Web-based Human Resources	**Employee Personal Page** The Employee Personal Page provides self-service functionality to Federal employees of agencies served by the National Finance Center. Employees can view their statements of earnings and leave (i.e., pay stubs), W2 statements, personal benefits statements, travel vouchers, and other information. In 2002 the page will incorporate update capability so employees can change personal address information, Federal and state tax info (e.g., W4), DD/EFT, and other information. Since its inception in 1998, over 214,000 Federal employees have signed up, with a current active user base of over 168,000. In 1999, the Employee Personal Page received the USDA Secretary's Group Honor Award for Excellence.
Electronic Authentication	**Web-based Centralized Authentication and Authorization Facility** WebCAAF is a combination of applications and business processes that lets web-based applications know that their users – USDA customers and partners – are who they say they are. WebCAAF combines off-the-shelf software, a customized registration application, and interactions with web-based applications. USDA employees help customers start the registration process, including collecting current information and verifying customer identification, and then turn management of the account over to the customer. Although the technical architecture behind WebCAAF is fairly complex, the facility is practically invisible to both USDA employees and partners and customers. Once registration is complete, login is quick, which has won employee acceptance and customer satisfaction.
Data Tools for the Field	**Laboratory Electronic Application for Results Notification** LEARN is a web-based application used by the Food Safety and Inspection Service's field inspection force of 9,000 to obtain laboratory test results from multiple plants. This extensive reporting tool enables quick isolation of potential and presumptive positive microbiological test results, which often trigger a product recall. Increased reporting and analysis means faster decisions, which translate into public safety and potentially lives saved. Used by inspectors in 7,000+ meat and poultry plants, FSIS district office and headquarters management, LEARN also provides results to any establishment that provides the agency with an e-mail address.
Electronic Human Resources	**Combined Administrative Management System** Currently serving more than 60,000 employees nationwide, CAMS provides Web-based access to HR information. Its self-service capabilities include Spot and Time Off nominations, self profiles with education level, emergency contacts, personal data, personnel actions, position descriptions, training history, performance plan/appraisals, and course catalogs and requests for training. http://cams.usda.gov/

Appendix B: USDA Mission, Vision, Goals, and Objectives

USDA's Mission				
To enhance the quality of life for the American people by supporting production agriculture; ensuring a safe, affordable, nutritious, and accessible food supply; caring for public lands and helping people care for private lands; supporting sound sustainable development of rural communities; providing economic opportunities for farm and rural residents; expanding global markets for agricultural and forest products and services; and working to reduce hunger in America and throughout the world.				
USDA's Vision				
A healthy and productive nation in harmony with the land.				
Strategic Goal 1	**Strategic Goal 2**	**Strategic Goal 3**	**Strategic Goal 4**	**Strategic Goal 5**
Expand economic and trade opportunities for US agricultural producers.	Promote health by providing access to safe, affordable, and nutritious food.	Maintain and enhance the nation's natural resources and environment.	Enhance the capacity of all rural residents, communities, and businesses to prosper.	Operate an efficient, effective, and discrimination-free organization.
Strategic Objectives	**Strategic Objectives**	**Strategic Objectives**	**Strategic Objectives**	**Strategic Objectives**
1.1 Provide an effective safety net and promote a strong, sustainable US farm economy.	**2.1** Reduce hunger and improve nutrition among children and low-income people in the United States.	**3.1** Maintain the productive capacity of the natural resource base for future generations	**4.1** Expand job opportunities and improve the standard of living in rural communities.	**5.1** Ensure that USDA provides fair and equitable service to all customers and upholds the civil rights of its employees.
1.2 Expand market opportunities for US agriculture.	**2.2** Reduce hunger and malnutrition around the world.	**3.2** Protect the quality of the environment.	**4.2** Ensure the neediest rural residents and communities have equal access to the USDA programs that will help them succeed.	**5.2** Improve organizational productivity, accountability, and performance.
	2.3 Protect the public health by significantly reducing the prevalence of foodborrne hazards.	**3.3** Provide multiple benefits to people from the nation's natural resources.		
	2.4 Improve public health through nutrition education, promotion, and research.			

Appendix C: Methodology and Project Approach

To develop the Department-wide eGovernment Strategic Plan, the Deputy Secretary directed the Office of the Chief Information Officer to facilitate a structured process that would ensure the involvement of a broad cross-section of business and technology, management and non-management, field and headquarters personnel. In less than three and a half months, over 200 people representing every agency and staff office contributed to the development of this plan. Additionally, 4,800 USDA employees participated in the eGovernment employee survey.

The eGovernment Working Group, Executive Council and eGovernment team—OCIO staff and full-time representatives from each mission area—took the following steps to develop this strategic plan:

1. **Captured high-level USDA vision and priorities**. The program conducted primary and secondary research to evaluate the key business and technology priorities for the Department:
   - Research and reviews of USDA strategic and business planning documents, including the USDA Strategic Plan, Annual Performance Plan, Business and Operating Plan, and Agency Strategic Plans
   - Interviews with each mission area under secretary, 11 agency administrators, senior agency executives, leadership from nearly every staff office, and nine agency CIOs
   - Three focus groups with farmers, international trade organizations and service center employees, in order to gain additional input directly from stakeholders.

2. **Conducted an eGovernment Readiness Assessment**. This comprehensive analysis compared USDA's current eGovernment capabilities with industry best practices in order to:
   - Identify current capabilities of high-impact business processes
   - Examine stakeholder readiness for eGovernment, particularly issues of access
   - Evaluate the eGovernment sophistication of departmental support functions
   - Highlight gaps in technology infrastructure and deployment that are required for eGovernment
   - List all existing eGovernment initiatives and programs, including AMS Market News, CAMS, LINC, and Inventory of Automated Systems.

3. **Established USDA's eGovernment Strategic Direction**. The mission, vision, strategic goals and objectives were developed through weekly meetings with the eGovernment Working Group and Executive Council. Interview notes, key issues and business priorities were all used as factors to decide USDA's eGovernment strategic direction.

4. **Identified eGovernment opportunities and Smart Choice Candidates.**
   - Identified internal and external eGovernment best practices
   - Synthesized information from visioning sessions, submissions of ideas to the eGovernment Mailbox, and the eGovernment employee survey
     - 7 mission area visioning sessions
     - 1 for the Staff Offices and Departmental Administration
     - 1 Department-wide visioning session with eGovernment Working Group
   - Prioritized and categorized opportunities by goal, level of initiative, and strategic or enabling focus
   - Defined short and long-term activities for each opportunity
   - Referred opportunities to the Executive Council for final designation of Smart Choice Candidates
   - Received commitment from Deputy Secretary and Undersecretaries to advance the Smart Choice Candidates in particular and the broader strategic plan in general.

5. **Began education and awareness-building to support the eGovernment strategic planning process:**
   - **Communications**
     - eGovernment Web site – **www.egov.usda.gov**
     - eGovernment mailbox – **eGov@usda.gov**
     - eGovernment Employee Survey
   - **Marketing Materials:**
     - eGovernment pamphlet
     - 3 eGovernment billboards

Appendix D: Relevant Legislation and Guidance

Executive Directives and Oversight:

1. The **President's Management Agenda** provides a foundation and strategy for streamlining the management and performance of the Federal government via strategic planning, linkages with budgeting, government-wide solutions, and citizen-centered design. The agenda articulates five government-wide initiatives, including Expanded Electronic Government, which calls for the government to deliver "greater services at lower cost through electronic government… and meet high public demand for eGovernment services." The President's Management Agenda establishes a foundation and framework for eGovernment initiatives across the Federal Government, stressing strategic planning, linkages with budgeting, government-wide solutions, and citizen-centered solutions.

   The agenda states four goals for eGovernment:
   - Create easy-to-find single points of access to government services for individuals;
   - Reduce the reporting burden on businesses—businesses should not have to file the same information over and over because government fails to reuse the data appropriately or fails to take advantage of commercial electronic transaction protocols;
   - Share information more quickly and conveniently between the Federal and state, local, and tribal governments; and
   - Automate internal processes to reduce costs internally, within the Federal Government, by disseminating best practices across agencies.

   eGovernment initiatives should:
   - Provide high quality customer service regardless of whether the citizen contacts the agency by phone, in person, or on the Web;
   - Reduce the expense and difficulty of doing business with the government;
   - Cut government operating costs;
   - Provide citizens with readier access to government services;
   - Increase access for people with disabilities to agency Web sites and Goverment applications; and
   - Make government more transparent and accountable.

   The President's Management Agenda establishes an eGovernment task force to identify major government-wide eGovernment applications and initiatives, under the oversight of the President's Management Council.

2. **Presidential eGovernment Initiatives** - Based on the President's Management Agenda, the eGovernment Task Force has developed 24 Presidential eGovernment initiatives (formerly referred to as 'Quicksilver Initiatives'); these cross-agency initiatives aim to bring eGovernment to a wide range of areas and processes including loan administration, grants management, employee training, and rulemaking. These initiatives will be implemented across the Federal government, with all appropriate agencies participating in the design and administration of new processes and systems. By coordinating the initiatives across agencies, the task force and the President's Management Council intend to ensure efficiency while creating integrated solutions that satisfy citizen needs without regard to organizational structure. (A full listing of these initiatives can be found in Appendix E.)
3. The Office of Management and Budget has consolidated planning and oversight for information technology investment and eGovernment into one office under the **Associate Director for Information Technology and Electronic Government**. This division will review information technology investments to ensure efficient use of resources and maximize coordination of initiatives across the Federal government.
4. The Office of Management and Budget has issued guidelines for the development of GPEA implementation plans and will provide continued oversight. Several departments and agencies will provide guidance on specific areas of expertise:
   - The Department of Commerce will follow public Federal Information Processing Standards, as appropriate, to further GPEA goals and will develop guidance on authentication technologies.
   - The Department of Justice will develop guidance on legal considerations in agency use of electronic filing and record keeping.
   - The Department of the Treasury will set policies for using electronic transactions and authentication techniques in Federal payments and collections and ensure that these policies meet GPEA goals.
   - The National Archives and Records Administration will develop policies and guidance on the management, preservation, and disposal of Federal records associated with Government transactions, especially records associated with the use of electronic signature technologies.
   - The General Services Administration will support agencies' implementation of digital signature technology and related electronic service delivery.

Legislation and Guidance

1. The **Freedom to E-File Act** of 2000 requires USDA's Risk Management Agency to allow electronic access to and submission of program applications and other forms by December 2001, It also requires the Department's Service Center Agencies (Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Rural Development) to make forms available for electronic download by December 2000.
2. The **Electronic Signatures in Global and National Commerce Act** of 2000 gives electronic signatures the same legal standing as written signatures, enabling electronic signing of contracts, entirely electronic collection and storage of documents, and electronic transmission and receipt of notices and disclosures.
3. The **Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act** of 1999 requires agencies and departments to improve the effectiveness and performance of Federal financial assistance programs, simplify program application and reporting requirements, improve the delivery of services to the public, and enhance coordination among those responsible for delivering such services.
4. The **Government Paperwork Elimination Act** of 1998 requires that, by October 2003, most Federal agencies give the public the option to submit information, forms, program applications, and other transactions electronically; to maintain or disclose information to the public electronically; and to use electronic authentication methods to verify the identity of the sender and the integrity of electronic content. The law directs agencies to engage in the "acquisition and use of information technology, including alternative information technologies that provide for electronic submission, maintenance, or disclosure of information as a substitute for paper,

and for the use and acceptance of electronic signatures."

5. The **Electronic Freedom of Information Act Amendment** of 1998 creates a specific procedure so all Americans can exercise their right to request and obtain access to particular Federal agency records and data. Commonly called "eFOIA," the act has increased demand for agency publications and reports, leading many agencies to allow electronic downloading from their web sites.
6. The **Information Technology Management Reform Act of 1996** (also known as the **Clinger-Cohen Act**) facilitates and encourages use of modern information technology by executive agencies. The act seeks to increase deprtmental responsibility and accountability for using IT to substantially improve service delivery to the public and other program activities.
   The act mandates that agencies and departments:
   - Establish a Chief Information Officers (CIO) with defined duties and responsibilities
   - Design and implement capital planning and investment controls
   - Use IT as a strategic enabler of their missions and business objectives, implementing IT-related actions to enhance performance and results-based management.
6. The **Debt Collection Improvement Act** of 1996 requires greater use of electronic commerce to improve cash and debt collection management.
7. The **Paperwork Reduction Act** of 1995 significantly changed many aspects of information resources management in the Federal Government. The Act requires agencies to seek approval from the Office of Management and Budget for all collections of information from the public. In planning for the development of new collections of information and the extension of ongoing collections, the PRA directs agencies to ensure that the minimum burden is placed on the public. The PRA also governs agency dissemination of and public access to information; statistical activities; records management activities; privacy; confidentiality; security; disclosure; and sharing of information; and the acquisition and use of information technology and telecommunications.
8. The **Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act** of 1994 established the Federal Acquisition Computer Network and increased agency flexibility in procurement. This act, and subsequent amendments and directives in the Federal Acquisitions Regulations (FAR), provides the legislative impetus for electronic procurement. OMB's Office of Federal Procurement Policy, which governs acquisitions, will continue to advance the evolution of agency acquisition processes from paper to electronic media to save taxpayer dollars, expedite processes, and ease the burden on businesses.
9. **The Government Performance and Results Act** of 1993 (GPRA) requires government agencies to link performance to results and fosters short-term business planning and long-term strategic planning. The law also requires agencies to develop performance plans that articulate their target performance goals and progress towards meeting these goals. Electronic government is a means of fulfilling these performance goals. The act also encourages units within agencies, such as CIO and IT organizations, to improve service delivery and focus on results and customer satisfaction.
10. The **Computer Security Act** of 1987 provides for the security of Federal information systems. The Act requires any agency with a Federal computer system to craft a security plan to protect the security and privacy of sensitive information. The act also establishes a Computer System Security and Privacy Advisory Board within the Department of Commerce and directs the National Bureau of Standards to develop a computer standards program for Federal computer systems. Moreover, the act requires agencies to offer periodic training for employees on managing, using, and operating computer systems.
11. The **Privacy Act** of 1974 provides specific guidance to Federal agencies on the control and release of appropriate records, as well as the collection and storage of citizens' personal information.
12. As amended, **Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act** of 1973 requires Federal agencies to ensure that their electronic and information technologies give people with disabilities access to information and data comparable to that of people without disabilities. This requirement applies to Federal employees as well as members of the public who transact business with the agency. The interagency CIO

Council and the Department of Justice have issued additional guidance on this act and its implications for electronic government. Many Federal Web sites are now compliant, using various certification standards and tools (e.g., "Bobby-approved" by the nonprofit Center for Applied Special Technology).

13. Numerous **other security and records management regulations and directives** affect Federal agencies:
    - The Federal Information Processing Standard Publications are the official publications on standards and guidelines adopted under Section 111(d) of the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949 and, amended by the Computer Security Act of 1987, Public Law 100-235. These publications provide the standards for designing and implementing cryptographic-based security systems to protect sensitive or valuable data. These standards address basic design and documentation, module interfaces, authorized roles and services, physical security, software security, operating system security, key management, cryptographic algorithms, electromagnetic interference/electromagnetic compatibility, and self-testing. The standards specify four levels of security to cover a wide range of potential applications and environments.
    - The Minimum Interoperability Specifications for PKI Components (MISPC), produced in cooperation with 10 industry partners under cooperative research and development agreements, facilitates interooperability of PKI components from different vendors, providing security services to users in large communities. The MISPC specifies a minimal set of features, transactions, and data formats for the various certificate management components that make up a PKI. The MISPC also addresses certificate generation, renewal, and revocation; certificate validation; signature generation and verification; and related issues.
    - The Circular on Management of Information Resources (OMB Circular A-130) establishes policies for managing Federal information resources and includes, as appendices, procedural and analytic guidelines for implementing specific aspects of these policies.
    - The Federal Records Act (36 CFR 1220) defines Federal records and requires establishing of agency programs to ensure adequate and proper documentation of organization, function, policies, decisions, procedures, and essential transactions.
    - The Critical Infrastructure Protection Plan (PDD 63) specifies how to minimize vulnerabilities that might diminish USDA's ability to achieve its mission. The plan identifies what functions USDA must be able to perform in an emergency and how to maintain these functions. The plan also provides for the continuous monitoring of and responsiveness to changes in threats, technology innovation, and risk reduction measures.

Appendix E: Presidential eGovernment Initiatives

Summaries of these initiatives are taken from the *eGovernment Strategy* published by the Office of Management and Budget. A full version of this document is available on the Web at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/inforeg/egovstrategy.pdf.

Government-to-Citizen

Recreation One-Stop
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: DOI

This initiative will build upon "Recreation.gov" and will provide a one-stop, searchable database of recreation areas nationwide, featuring online mapping and integrated transactions, including online campground reservations and the purchase of recreational passes, maps and other products. The project will include links to recreational opportunities provided by all levels of government.

Eligibility Assistance Online
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: Labor

Through a common Internet portal, citizens (with a focus on high-need demographic groups) will have an online tool for identifying government benefit programs from which they may be eligible to receive assistance.

Online Access for Loans
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: Education

The Online Access for Loans initiative allows citizens and businesses to find the loan programs that meet their needs.

USA Services
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: GSA

The USA Service initiative will use best practices in customer relationship management to enable citizens to quickly obtain service online, while improving responsiveness and consistency across government agencies. This initiative would enable citizens to personalize the combination of services they obtain across multiple programs and agencies in a privacy-protected environment.

EZ Tax Filing
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: Treasury/IRS

The initiative would make it easier for citizens to files taxes in a Web-enabled environment.

Government-to-Business

Online Rulemaking Management
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: DOT

This initiative would provide access to the rulemaking process for citizens anytime, anywhere. An existing "e-Docket" system would be expanded and enhanced to serve as a government-wide system for agency dockets. Other agency systems would use the system by creating "storefronts" consistent with statutory requirements for each agency under the Administrative Procedures Act. Comments would be organized

using knowledge management tools to improve the quality of rules.

Expanding Electronic Tax Products for Businesses
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: Treasury /IRS
This initiative's goals include decreasing the number of tax-related forms that an employer must file, providing timely and accurate tax information to employers, increasing the availability of electronic tax filing and modeling simplified Federal and state tax employment laws.

Federal Asset Sales
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: GSA
Prospective customers will be able to find assets that they are interested in, regardless of the agency that holds those assets. Customers will be able to bid and/or make purchases electronically for financial, real and disposable assets.

International Trade Process Streamlining
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: DOC
The initiative would create a single customer-focused site where new or existing exporters could be assisted electronically through the entire export process. The 20 current Web sites would be organized and accessed through a single entry point.

One-Stop Business Compliance Information
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: SBA
This initiative would provide information on laws and regulations that can help users understand compliance information. It would also offer wizards and tutorials to help users determine if rules apply to them and how to proceed. To the maximum extent possible, permits would be completed, submitted and approved online.

Consolidated Health Informatics (business case)
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: HHS
The initiative would provide the basis for a simplified and unified system for sharing and reusing medical record information among government agencies and their private healthcare providers and insurers. It would enable a single mechanism for making those records accessible.

Government-to-Government

Geospatial Information One-Stop
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: DOI
The Geospatial Information One-Stop will provide access to the Federal government's spatial data assets in a single location and help make state and local spatial data assets more accessible. Federal agencies will also make their planned and future spatial data activities available to state and local governments to promote collaboration and reduce duplicative efforts. Data standards developed through an intergovernmental process will result in data that can be used multiple times for multiple purposes, saving taxpayer money. It will also help empower the private sector by communicating the characteristics of a desired standardized data product.

eGrants
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: HHS
This initiative will create an electronic grants portal for grant recipients and the grant- making agencies that will streamline, simplify and provide an electronic option for grants management across the government. This effort will include the work of the 26 Federal grant-making agencies to implement P.L.106-107.

Disaster Assistance and Crisis Response
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: FEMA
This initiative involves a public, one-stop portal containing information from applicable public and private organizations involved in disaster preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation. This portal will also serve as a single point of application for all disaster assistance programs.

Wireless Public SAFEty Interoperable COMmunications (Project SAFECOM)
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: Treasury
For public safety officials to be effective in their daily responsibilities, as well as before, during and after an emergency event, public safety agencies throughout all levels of government, i.e. Federal, state and local, must be able to communicate with each other. This initiative would address the Nation's critical shortcomings in efforts by public safety agencies to achieve interoperability and eliminate redundant wireless communications infrastructures. At the same time, it would assist state and local interoperability and interoperability between Federal public safety networks.

eVital
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: SSA
This initiative would expand the existing vital records online data

exchange efforts between Federal agencies and state governments. Value to Citizen: Elimination of burden imposed on citizens to obtain and deliver vital record information from local government to the Federal government. Enables more efficient and effective benefit qualification. Value to the Government: Save millions of dollars annually through fraud detection from computer matching programs as well as from reductions in erroneous payments.

Internal Efficiency and Effectiveness

eTraining
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: OPM

The vision is to provide a repository of government-owned courseware to be made available to all governments (Federal, state and local), to provide high interest and government-required training to government employees at economies of scale pricing. In addition, this would foster development of communities of practice. This initiative supports achievement of the President's Human Capital initiative.

Recruitment One-Stop
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: OPM

This initiative would improve the Federal hiring process by improving the functionality of the Federal automated employment information system. It would provide job seekers with streamlined resume submission, online feedback about their status in the employment process and integration with automated assessment tools. The initiative will provide Federal employers with a searchable resume database.

Enterprise HR Integrations
Integrated Human Resources and e-Clearance
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: OPM

This initiative will eliminate the need for paper employee records, enable strategic decisions regarding the use of human capital and financial resources to improve agency performance and address emerging needs. It will also allow for the electronic transfer of HR data throughout the Federal sector, better protect the rights and benefits of the Federal workforce and streamline and improve government-wide reporting and data analyses. It will reduce the time required to seek and access employee and contractor security clearance information.

ePayroll/HR (Payroll Processing Consolidation)
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: OPM

The vision is to simplify and unify elements of the Payroll/HR process in order to consolidate and integrate HR and payroll systems across government. This effort will provide several hundred million dollars of savings to organizations and significantly reduce future information technology (IT) investments and could foster direct privatization. This initiative supports achievement of the five dimensions of the President's Management Agenda.

eTravel
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: GSA

Agencies will use a common travel management system throughout the Federal government. Existing travel management resources will be consolidated and processes will be simplified for cheaper, more efficient operation.

Integrated Acquisition Environment
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: GSA

Agencies will begin sharing common data elements to enable other agencies to make more informed procurement, logistical, payment and performance assessment decisions. It will also allow agencies to make maximum use of eMarket approaches.

Electronic Records Management
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: NARA

This initiative will provide the tools that agencies will need to manage their records in electronic form, addressing specific areas of electronic records management where agencies are having major difficulties. This project will provide guidance on electronic records management applicable government-wide and will provide tools for agencies to transfer electronic records to NARA in a variety of data types and formats so that they may be preserved in for future use by the government and citizens. Value to Citizen: Easier process for creating information, with more reliable storage, that is also in compliance with the Federal Records Act Value to the Government: More efficient operations that meet the statutory requirements of the Federal Records Act.

Initiatives That Address Barriers to E-Government Success

eAuthentication
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: GSA (Infrastructure)

eAuthentication will build and enable the mutual trust needed to

support wide spread use of electronic interactions between the public and government and across governments. This will establish a method for satisfactorily establishing 'identity,' without which the promise of E-Government will never reach its full potential. The project will establish common interoperable authentication solutions for all of the E-Government initiatives. Value to Citizen: Secure, consistent method of proving identity to the Federal government. Value to the Government: Eliminate redundancy in electronic signature technology and policy operations, thereby reducing costs and employee time required.

Federal Architecture
Proposed Agency Managing Partner: OMB

This activity, which supports all of the initiatives, will map government processes by line of business. It will develop information, data and application interface standards to eliminate redundancies and yield improved operating efficiency and effectiveness. Value to Citizen: Citizens are best served by an efficient and effective government. Value to the Government: A well architected Federal information system will provide a more efficient and effective government by eliminating redundancies.

Appendix F: Glossary of Terms

General Terms

Agency-Specific	Applications and initiatives that deal exclusively with one USDA agency.
API	**Application Programming Interface.** A method or set of procedures used by an operating system (such as Windows) or other software to allow communication or integration with other software.
CRM	**Customer Relationship Management.** A set of methodologies, software, and Internet capabilities that help an enterprise manage customer relationships in an organized way.
Cross-Mission Area	An eGovernment initiative that relates to more than one USDA mission area.
Cybersecurity	The security of electronic data, computers, and information systems.
EA	**Enterprise Architecture.** A plan to streamline and standardize computer systems within an organization by defining and implementing common hardware and software specifications.
EBT	**Electronic Benefits Transfer.** A debit card-like system that replaces paper-based benefits with an electronic solution.
EITIRB	**Enterprise Information Technology Investment Review Board.** A departmental council that makes decisions on IT capital investments.
EC	USDA eGovernment Executive Council.
eCommerce	The exchange of value, including services, programs, and information, through an electronic medium.
E-FILE	The Freedom to E-File Act of 2000 (see Appendix D).
EGWG	USDA eGovernment Working Group.
Enterprise-wide	An eGovernment initiative that applies throughout USDA.
GIS	**Geographic Information Systems.** Electronic storage of maps and other geospatial data, enabling better graphical and geographic analysis of data.
GPEA	The Government Paper Elimination Act of 1998 (see Appendix D).
Interdepartmental	An eGovernment initiative that applies across federal departments and/or independent agencies.
OMB	Office of Management and Budget.
PRA	Paperwork Reduction Act (see Appendix D).
Quicksilver	A set of 24 interdepartmental eGovernment initiatives coordinated by the Office of Management and Budget, also called Presidential eGovernment initiatives (see Appendix E).

RF-ID	Identification tags that use radio frequencies for authentication.
SAN	**Storage Area Network.** High-speed special-purpose network that interconnects different data storage devices with associated data servers on behalf of a larger network of users.
SLA	**Service-Level Agreement.** Contract between a service provider and a customer that specifies, in measurable terms, what services the provider will furnish, including measures of quality.
USAID	The United States Agency for International Development
VPN	**Virtual Private Network.** A secure, private network that uses the infrastructure of a public network (such as the Internet) to communicate. Special security and encryption systems ensure secure transmission of private data over the public network.
WIC Program	**Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children.** A program providing supplementary food aid to pregnant and nursing mothers and young children.

USDA Agencies and Staff Offices

AMS	Agricultural Marketing Service
APHIS	Animal and Plant Health Inspection Servic
ARS	Agricultural Research Service
CNPP	Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion
CSREES	Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service
DA	Departmental Administration
ERS	Economic Research Service
FAS	Foreign Agricultural Service
FNS	Food and Nutrition Service
FS	USDA Forest Service
FSA	Farm Service Agency
FSIS	Food Safety and Inspection Service
GIPSA	Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration
NAD	National Appeals Division
NASS	National Agricultural Statistics Service
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
OC	Office of Communications
OCE	Office of the Chief Economist
OCFO	Office of the Chief Financial Officer
OCIO	Office of the Chief Information Officer
OCR	Office of Congressional Relations
OES	Office of the Executive Secretariat
OGC	Office of the General Counsel
OIG	Office of the Inspector General
OPBA	Office of Budget and Program Analysis
RBS	Rural Business-Cooperative Service
RHS	Rural Housing Service
RMA	Risk Management Agency
RUS	Rural Utilities Service