

**2022 USDA EXPLANATORY NOTES – EXECUTIVE OPERATIONS
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ECONOMIST**

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AGENCY-WIDE

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Office of the Chief Economist (OCE) was created by the Secretary of Agriculture on October 20, 1994, under the authority of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994, Public Law 103-354. OCE advises the Secretary of Agriculture on the economic implications of changes in Department policies and programs, proposed legislation, and market conditions, by providing unbiased information and data-driven analyses of current and emerging issues impacting agriculture and rural America.

OCE provides economic expertise, analysis, and coordination on a wide range of Departmental activities and initiatives. The office provides economic analysis to inform development of agricultural policy and key U.S. trade initiatives and serves as a focal point for the Nation’s agricultural economic intelligence and the commodity outlook for U.S. and world agriculture. OCE is responsible for coordinating economic analyses and reviewing Department decisions involving policies and programs that have substantial economic implications. The office also coordinates the Department’s analysis of issues and activities involving agricultural labor, renewable energy, bioenergy, biobased products and markets, sustainable development, and food loss and waste.

OCE is responsible for coordinating interagency development of the Department’s agricultural commodity short-term forecasts and long-term projections. OCE’s World Agricultural Outlook Board prepares the monthly *World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates* report, -which is a Principal Federal Economic Indicator and is the most widely used source for domestic and global commodity market estimates and forecasts, as measured by the number of downloads on the OCE website. It underpins management information used across the Department for budgeting, policy development, and program evaluations and is also the anchor for other Departmental and private sector commodity forecasts. OCE also coordinates, reviews, and clears all commodity and aggregate agricultural and food-related data used to develop outlook and situation material within the Department.

OCE reviews and clears all regulatory impact and risk analyses of economically significant major rules in the Department to ensure that they are based on objective, appropriate, and sound economic and risk analyses. OCE also assists agencies in complying with Executive Orders and OMB guidance on regulatory analysis.

OCE also coordinates USDA’s global change research program; conducts policy analysis on climate and environmental conditions; supports the development of technical guidelines that outline science-based methods to measure the environmental service benefits from conservation and land management activities in order to facilitate the participation of farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners in emerging environmental services markets; coordinates activities with other Federal agencies; represents USDA domestically and internationally in discussions of climate risks and vulnerabilities; oversees Department-wide efforts to address risks and build resilience to climate variability and change; and facilitates communication and outreach to producers and agricultural interest groups.

In addition, the Office is responsible for the development and coordination of Department policy and services related to pest management and pesticides. It coordinates research, extension, and education activities regarding the development, availability, and use of economically and environmentally sound pest management tools and practices. The Office assists other agencies of the Department in fulfilling their responsibilities related to pest management or pesticides, as well as ensuring coordination of interagency activities with the Environmental Protection Agency, the Food and Drug Administration, and other Federal and state agencies.

OCE Headquarters is located in Washington, D.C. As of September 30, 2020, there were 59 full time permanent employees, all stationed in Washington, DC.

OIG AND GAO REPORTS

Table OCE-1. In-progress GAO Reports (pending closure)

ID	Title
102595	Date Labels on Packaged Foods: USDA and FDA Could Take Additional Steps to Reduce Consumer Confusion (GAO-19-407)
102502	Food Loss and Waste: Building on Existing Federal Efforts Could Help to Achieve National Reduction Goal (GAO-19-391)

AVAILABLE FUNDS AND FTEs

Table OCE-2. Available Funds and FTEs (thousands of dollars, FTEs)

Item	2019		2020		2021		2022	
	Actual	FTE	Actual	FTE	Enacted	FTE	Budget	FTE
Salaries and Expenses:								
Discretionary Appropriations.....	\$21,286	61	\$24,013	57	\$24,192	62	\$31,050	70
Food Loss and Waste Reduction Liasion			400		500			
Mandatory Appropriations: Multiple Crop and Pesticide Use.....	500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Adjusted Appropriation.....	21,786	61	24,413	57	24,692	62	31,050	70
Balance Available, SOY.....			500		500			
Total Available.....	21,786	61	24,913	57	25,192	62	31,050	70
Lapsing Balances.....	-363	-	-354					
Balance Available, EOY.....	-500	-	-500					
Total Obligations.....	20,923	61	24,059	57	25,192	62	31,050	70
Other Funding:								
Annual Outlook Forum.....	100	-	138	-	155	-	152	-
Joint Data Procurement.....	25	-	25	-	25	-	26	-
National Science Foundation.....	363	-	363	-	363	-	363	-
Environmental Markets.....	600	-	650	-	700	-	700	-
Climate Hubs Coordinator.....	60	-	-	-	95	-	175	-
Payment for Staff Details.....	191	-	206	-	62	-	-	-
Payment for Service Work.....	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
EFF Challenge.....	-	-	100	-	40	-	-	-
WASDE Support.....	-	-	-	-	309	-	313	-
Total Available, Other Funding	1,342	-	1,482	-	1,749	-	1,729	-
Total Obligations, OCE.....	22,265	61	25,541	57	26,941	62	32,779	70

PERMANENT POSITIONS BY GRADE AND FTEs

Table OCE-3. Permanent Positions by Grade and FTEs

Item	2019			2020			2021			2022		
	D.C.	Field	Actual Total	D.C.	Field	Actual Total	D.C.	Field	Enacted Total	D.C.	Field	Budget Total
SES.....	6	-	6	6	-	6	6	-	6	6	-	6
SL.....	1	-	1	2	-	2	2	-	2	2	-	2
GS-15.....	31	-	31	26	-	26	28	-	28	32	-	32
GS-14.....	11	-	11	16	-	16	16	-	16	18	-	18
GS-13.....	4	-	4	-	-	-	2	-	2	4	-	4
GS-12.....	1	-	1	2	-	2	2	-	2	2	-	2
GS-11.....	2	-	2	3	-	3	4	-	4	4	-	4
GS-10.....	3	-	3	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
GS-9.....	2	-	2	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1
GS-7.....	1	-	1	2	-	2	1	-	1	1	-	1
GS-6.....	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Permanent.....	63	-	63	59	-	59	62	-	62	70	-	70
Total Perm. FT EOY.....	63	-	63	59	-	59	62	-	62	70	-	70
FTE.....	61	0	61	57	0	57	62	0	62	70	0	70

SHARED FUNDING PROJECTS

Table OCE-4. Shared Funding Projects (dollars in thousands)

Item	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Enacted	2022 Budget
Working Capital Fund:				
Administrative Services:				
Material Management Service.....	\$9	\$12	\$15	\$3
Mail and Reproduction Services.....	157	166	181	98
Integrated Procurement Systems.....	12	18	10	10
Procurement Operations Services.....	24	23	24	21
Human Resources Enterprise Management Systems.....	1	1	1	1
Subtotal.....	203	220	231	133
Communications:				
Creative Media & Broadcast Center.....	43	29	180	161
Finance and Management:				
National Finance Center.....	16	18	27	27
Financial Management Systems.....	32	27	20	20
Subtotal.....	48	45	47	47
Information Technology:				
Client Experience Center.....	107	323	332	356
Department Administration Information Technology Office.....	-	177	392	451
Digital Infrastructure Services Center.....	129	79	129	133
Enterprise Network Services.....	20	33	23	24
Subtotal.....	256	612	876	964
Office of the Executive Secretariat.....	3	3	33	33
Total, Working Capital Fund.....	553	909	1,367	1,338
Department-Wide Shared Cost Programs:				
Agency Partnership Outreach.....	5	5	4	-
Medical Services.....	3	2	15	15
Office of Customer Experience.....	2	4	6	6
Personnel and Document Security Program.....	2	1	2	-
Physical Security.....	-	4	3	-
Security Operations Program.....	6	4	4	-
E-Gov:				
Enterprise Human Resources Integration.....	1	-	-	-
Geospatial Line of Business.....	13	13	13	13
Integrated Acquisition Environment.....	-	1	-	-
Total, E-Gov.....	14	14	13	13
Agency Total.....	589	952	1,421	1,375

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ECONOMIST: SALARIES AND EXPENSES

APPROPRIATIONS LANGUAGE

The appropriations language follows (new language underscored; deleted matter enclosed in brackets):

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Chief Economist, [~~\$24,192,000~~] \$31,050,000, of which no more than [~~\$5,000,000~~] \$8,000,000 shall be for grants or cooperative agreements for policy research under 7 U.S.C. 3155.; of which \$6,500,000 shall remain available until expended for activities relating to climate change, including coordinating such activities across the Department.

LEAD-OFF TABULAR STATEMENT

Table OCE-5. Lead-Off Tabular Statement

Item	Amount
2021 Enacted.....	\$24,192,000
Change in Appropriation.....	+ 6,858,000
Budget Estimate, 2022.....	<u>31,050,000</u>

PROJECT STATEMENTS

Table OCE-6. Project Statement (thousands of dollars, FTEs)

Item	2019		2020		2021		Inc. or Dec.	Chg Key	2022		
	Actual	FTE	Actual	FTE	Enacted	FTE			FTE	Budget	FTE
Discretionary Appropriations:											
Office of the Chief Economist	\$21,286	61	\$24,013	57	\$24,192	62	+\$6,858	+8	\$31,050	70	
Food Loss and Waste Reduction Liaison*.....	-	-	400	-	500	-	-500	-	-	-	
Subtotal.....	21,286	61	24,413	57	24,692	62	+6,358	(1)	+8	31,050 70	
Mandatory Appropriations:											
Multiple Crop and Pesticide Use Survey.....	500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Adjusted Approp.....	21,786	61	24,413	57	24,692	62	6,358	8	31,050	70	
Bal. Available, SOY.....	-	-	500	-	500	-	-500	-	-	-	
Total Available.....	21,786	61	24,913	57	25,192	62	5,858	8	31,050	70	
Lapsing Balances.....	-363	-	-354	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Bal. Available, EOY.....	-500	-	-500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Obligations.....	20,923	61	24,059	57	25,192	62	+5,858	+8	31,050	70	

*Note that funding was provided for this program in FY2020 and FY2021 through General Provisions. It is provided in base funding in FY2022.

Table OCE-7. Project Statement (thousands of dollars, FTEs)

Item	2019		2020		2021		Inc. or Dec.	FTE	2022		
	Actual	FTE	Actual	FTE	Enacted	FTE			FTE	Budget	FTE
Discretionary Obligations:											
Office of the Chief Economist.....	\$20,423	61	\$23,659	57	\$24,192	62	+\$6,858	+8	\$31,050	70	
Food Loss and Waste Reduction.....	-	-	400	-	500	-	-500	-	-	-	
Subtotal, Discretionary Obligations.....	20,423	61	24,059	57	24,692	62	+6,358	+8	31,050	70	
Mandatory Obligations:											
Multiple Crop and Pesticide Use Survey.....	500	-	-	-	500	-	-500	-	-	-	
Total, Obligations.....	20,923	61	24,059	57	25,192	62	5,858	8	31,050	70	
Lapsing Balances.....	363	-	354	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Multiple Crop and Pesticide Use Survey.....	500	-	500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Available.....	21,786	61	24,913	57	25,192	62	5,858	8	31,050	70	
Less:											
Bal. Available, SOY.....	-	-	-500	-	-500	-	500	-	-	-	
Total Appropriation.....	21,786	61	24,413	57	24,692	62	6,358	8	31,050	70	

*Received mandatory no year funding for Multiple Crop and Pesticide Use Survey in FY 2019, funding is expected to be obligated in FY 2021.

JUSTIFICATION OF INCREASES AND DECREASES

Base funds will allow OCE to continue providing economic expertise, analysis, and coordination on a wide range of Departmental activities and initiatives, as well as advising the Secretary of Agriculture on the economic implications of Department policies, programs, and proposed legislations through data-driven analyses of current and emerging issues impacting agriculture and rural America.

1) A net increase of \$6,858,000 and 8 additional FTEs for the OCE (\$25,192,000 and 62 FTEs available in 2021).

The funding change is requested for the following items:

- a. An increase of \$307,000, which includes \$209,000 for pay inflation and \$98,000 for FERS.

This increase will support a 2.7 percent cost of living pay increases for civilian employees, and a 1.1 percent increase to cover the expenses for the mandated increase of USDA's contribution to FERS.

- b. An increase of \$6,551,000 and 8 FTEs for Climate Research and Analysis.

The increase will provide technical support for the implementation of incentives for climate smart agriculture and forestry practices and oversee the production of the Department's resilience and climate change adaptation plan. OCE will support the infrastructure necessary to quantify, track, and analyze impacts from adoption of climate smart agriculture and forestry practices and technologies. These investments will ensure that the many facets of the Department's climate change program are coordinated and meet Departmental and Administration priorities. New funds will be used for the following priorities:

- Greenhouse Gas (GHS) Quantification Systems. OCE will develop detailed reference values for the GHG benefits of practices and technologies for the agriculture and forest sectors. This will include program-ready tools and tables for the range of climate-smart measures. These products will be used by the Department to encourage the voluntary adoption of climate-smart agricultural and forestry practices through programs, partnerships, funding and financing capacities, and other authorities.
- Updated Agriculture and Forestry GHG Inventory. New funding would allow OCE to generate estimates of greenhouse gases from the agriculture and forest sectors on an annual basis. EPA currently updates these estimates every other year. Funding would be used to incorporate the data that will be collected by NASS, make critical improvements to methods, and ensure that the latest climate-smart agriculture and forestry practices are included in inventory estimates.
- Analysis, projections, and reporting. OCE will invest in new capabilities to analyze, forecast, and report on current and potential policies and measures. The decision to re-join the Paris Agreement will require the U.S. to establish a Nationally Determined Contribution and submit biennial reports on policies and measures to the United Nations. OCE will lead USDA's technical responses to these new requirements.
- Adaptation and resilience planning. The new Executive Order on combating the climate crisis requires USDA to prepare an adaptation and resilience plan. USDA also has a Departmental Regulation with similar requirements. Under DR 1070-001, OCE is the lead for USDA in preparing the Department's climate adaptation plan.
- Food loss and waste. Of the increase, \$500,000 and one permanent FTE will enable OCE to continue implement the Department's strategy to reduce food loss and waste, a major contributor to US methane emissions. The Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018 instructs USDA to establish a Food Loss and Waste Reduction Liaison to coordinate Federal, State, local, and nongovernmental programs, and other efforts, to measure and reduce the incidence of food loss and waste. The allocation of funding would provide stability in achieving the Department's goals. In the last two years, OCE has funded one FTE through funds provided to USDA in the General Provisions. However, OCE is unable to hire a permanent coordinator unless the necessary funds are added to OCE's base. Ensuring consistency and excellence in the program over the long term requires permanent appropriated funding for the program.

GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF OBLIGATIONS AND FTEs

Table OCE-8. Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and FTEs (thousands of dollars, FTEs)

State/Territory/Country	2019		2020		2021		2022	
	Actual	FTE	Actual	FTE	Enacted	FTE	Budget	FTE
District of Columbia.....	\$20,923	61	\$24,059	57	\$25,192	62	\$31,050	70
Lapsing Balances.....	363	-	354	-	-	-	-	-
Bal. Available, EOY.....	500	-	500	-	-	-	-	-
Total, Available.....	21,786	61	24,913	57	25,192	62	31,050	70

CLASSIFICATION BY OBJECTS

Table OCE-9. Classification by Objects (thousands of dollars)

Item No.	Item	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Enacted	2022 Budget
Personnel Compensation:					
	Washington D.C.....	\$8,654	\$7,979	\$9,209	\$10,795
11	Total personnel compensation.....	8,654	7,979	9,209	10,795
12	Personal benefits.....	2,814	2,742	3,159	3,541
13.0	Benefits for former personnel.....			2	-
	Total, personnel comp. and benefits.....	11,468	10,721	12,370	14,336
Other Objects:					
21.0	Travel and transportation of persons.....	224	74	64	94
22.0	Transportation of things.....	-	-	1	1
23.1	Rental payments to GSA.....	3	3	3	3
23.3	Communications, utilities, and misc. charges.....	190	190	190	190
24.0	Printing and reproduction.....	76	80	81	101
25	Other contractual services.....	133	291	302	323
25.1	Advisory and assistance services.....	1,961	2,561	1,784	2,361
25.2	Other services from non-Federal sources.....	24	28	9	14
25.4	Operation and maintenance of facilities.....	376	597	1,235	3,717
25.5	Research and development contracts.....	6,222	8,780	8,922	9,650
26.0	Supplies and materials.....	206	723	191	207
31.0	Equipment.....	40	11	40	53
	Total, Other Objects.....	9,455	13,338	12,822	16,714
99.9	Total, new obligations.....	20,923	24,059	25,192	31,050
	DHS Building Security Payments (included in 25.3).....	\$26	\$21	\$13	\$13
Information Technology Investments:					
	Name of Major Investment.....	SO-OCE-Local Area Network			
25.4	External Labor (Contractors).....		\$34	\$22	\$22
25.2	Mission Area Standard Investment Totals.....		70	39	40
25.3	Mission Area WCF Transfers.....		909	914	911
Position Data:					
	Average Salary (dollars), ES Position.....	\$178,275	\$180,200	\$183,300	\$191,937
	Average Salary (dollars), GS Position.....	\$133,059	\$125,415	\$144,807	\$150,678
	Average Grade, GS Position.....	14.3	14.2	14.6	14.7

STATUS OF PROGRAMS:

The Office of the Chief Economist (OCE) is the focal point for economic and policy-related research and analysis for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. OCE aims to inform public and private decision makers by providing unbiased information and data-driven analyses of current and emerging issues impacting agriculture. OCE provides economic expertise and coordination on a wide range of Departmental activities and initiatives.

Current Activities

OCE's Immediate Office (IO) staff provide policy and program analyses and advice to the Secretary on major issues affecting agriculture and rural America. The IO staff focus on: agricultural policy, including analyses of alternative farm program, conservation and crop insurance options; trade initiatives and disputes; developments in agricultural commodity markets, such as the effects of global weather and changes in production and trade patterns; economic issues related to plant and animal diseases; sustainable agriculture; and agricultural labor issues.

The World Agricultural Outlook Board's (WAOB) primary mission is to provide reliable and objective economic forecasts for farmers and other participants in the food and fiber system. Key WAOB activities are coordinating USDA forecasts of domestic and international agriculture; providing economic analysis related to global commodity markets; monitoring markets and agricultural weather; and disseminating relevant information.

OCE clears all USDA significant, economically significant and major regulations for their regulatory impact analyses and risk analyses. OCE's Office of Risk Assessment and Cost-Benefit Analysis (ORACBA) reviews and approves statutorily required risk assessments for all major USDA regulations. ORACBA is a focal point for Departmental activities related to risk analysis, including inter-Departmental activities; regulatory reviews to ensure science-based regulations; and the integration of economic analysis and risk assessment.

The Office of Energy and Environmental Policy (OEEP) serves as a focal point for the Department's energy, environmental markets, and climate change activities. OEEP aims to improve understanding of the complex interactions between agriculture systems and the environment, and to transfer the resulting knowledge to producers and land managers through information, tools, and decision support. In the energy area, OEEP analyzes and evaluates existing and proposed policies and strategies. In the climate variability and change area, OEEP coordinates analysis, long range planning, research, and response strategies to climate change. In the environmental markets area, OEEP establishes uniform guidelines for the development of science-based methods to measure the ecosystem services benefits from conservation and land management activities. OEEP carries out USDA responsibilities under the Global Climate Change Prevention Act of 1990, and coordinates USDA's contributions to the quadrennial U.S. National Climate Assessments, as required under the 1990 Global Change Research Act.

The Office of Pest Management Policy (OPMP) leads the development and coordination of Departmental policy on pest management and pesticides, provides Departmental coordination on agricultural biotechnology, and ensures coordination of interagency activities with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and other Federal and State agencies. OPMP collects data to on individual growers' pest management practices to improve the information available to EPA on the potential benefits of specific pesticides.

Selected Examples of Recent Progress

Immediate Office of the Chief Economist

Provided economic and policy analysis in support of key initiatives, including:

Agricultural Policy

- Led development of the payment approaches for the \$16 billion and \$14 billion Coronavirus Food Assistance Programs 1 and 2, enabling USDA to quickly provide support to stabilize farm sector income during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Provided input on implementation changes to the Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus (WHIP+) following the additional eligible causes for WHIP+ indemnity payments added in the *Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020*.
- Contributed economic analyses to aid in development of regulations implementing commodity and conservation provisions of the 2018 Farm Bill.

- Reviewed and collaborated on development of cost benefit analyses for significant USDA regulations, such as the rule Establishment of a Domestic Hemp Production Program.
- Provided critical economic analyses of the impacts on agriculture from hurricanes, droughts, and other disasters. OCE also served on USDA’s Multi-Agency Coordination group. These efforts ensured USDA decision-makers had timely, accurate economic information for decision making during disaster response and the potential provision of financial assistance.
- Provided the public with analysis aiding the understanding of farm financial stress resulting from sustained low commodity prices.
- Led research and fostered high priority research conducted by others on the economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on the agricultural economy, increasing the knowledge base to inform the design and ensure impactful outcomes of future assistance programs.
- Developed a report to Congress on the effects of absent landlords (landlords who live outside the local area and rent farmland to others) on indicators of the long-term health of the agricultural economy, land values, use practices that could improve soil health and indicators of local economic activity (with the Economic Research Service).
- Represented the United States at the G20’s Agricultural Market Information System meetings, at the Commission for the Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA), and at Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) meetings. Coordinated the U.S. submission at the CGRFA, which launched the State of the World’s Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture. Represented the United States at OECD meetings, including the Conference on Challenges and Opportunities for Latin American Agriculture, the OECD Committee for Agriculture, and at the Working Party on Agricultural Policies and Markets, in order to improve multilateral partner understanding of U.S. views on the agricultural economy and policy.
- Participated in interagency analysis of impacts on producers of increasing concentration in ownership of grain elevators.

Agricultural Labor Activities

- Provided analysis of the occupational distribution of the hired agricultural workforce, as well as legislative and regulatory actions that would impact agricultural labor including:
 - Analysis of H-2A Bill (HR 5038) Farm Workforce Modernization Act of 2019.
 - U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) policy on H-2A and open range H-2A employers.
 - Assist USCIS on regulatory activities on a rulemaking that will allow for a two-week non-emergency automatic extension for E-Verify H-2A Employers.
- Served as a communication link between H-2A employers regarding the COVID-19 related H-2A worker shortage and administrative actions to process visas and reclassify workers as essential employees.
- Collaborated with the Office of the Secretary to justify an alternate wage for the H-2A program in a Department of Labor H-2A final rulemaking.

World Trade Organization (WTO) and Trade Policy Support

- Developed trade damage estimates and contributed to development of USDA’s trade mitigation programs, including the Market Facilitation Program, the Food Purchase and Distribution Program, and the 2020 Seafood Trade Relief Program.
- Supported trade negotiations with China, UK, and Kenya.
- Provided further assistance for ongoing economic analysis related to WTO enforcement actions on China’s domestic support programs and tariff-rate quotas for grains.
- Prepared USDA’s responses to Antidumping and Countervailing Duty (AD/CVD) investigations of U.S. agricultural exports.
- Served on the economic sub-committees, including Section 301 actions such as Vietnam’s import and use of illegally harvested timber and currency undervaluation.
- Prepared and briefed Congress on U.S. domestic support notifications to the WTO and prepared updates on domestic agricultural programs for the U.S. WTO Subsidies and Countervailing Measures (SCM) notification.
- Reviewed and provided input on agricultural support sections of WTO’s U.S. Trade Policy Review, responded to member questions on U.S. domestic support measures in the WTO Committee on Agriculture and the WTO SCM Committee, and drafted questions on other WTO Members’ domestic support programs.
- Prepared the US data and policy developments contribution to the OECD annual agricultural policy and monitoring report. Participated in OECD-FAO Aglink-Cosimo modelling work related to agricultural trade.
- Contributed to U.S. review and response for United Nations (UN), G7, Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and G20 proposals on sustainable agriculture and global food security.

Analytical Assistance to Congress and Other Federal Agencies

- Conducted Congressional briefings and meetings on farmer support (Coronavirus Farm Assistance Program 2, and the Seafood Trade Relief Program, trade aid, and on the January *World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE)* and Crop Production reports.
- Conducted briefings before the House Agriculture Committee on Programs authorized under the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act.
- Conducted briefings and analyses for Congress on issues such as climate adaptation, WTO disputes, WTO domestic support notifications, weather and market situation and outlook, the outlook for farm income, and biofuels.
- Continued to assist Congressional staff on Farm Bill implementation on numerous topics, including dairy policy, cotton policy, Agriculture Risk Coverage/Price Loss Coverage yield data, crop insurance, and international trade issues.

Crop Insurance

- The Chief Economist, as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC), presided over four public board meetings during FY 2020.
 - The FCIC Board of Directors approved several products to improve the risk management safety net on a wide variety of farms in 2020.
 - Hurricane Insurance Protection – Wind Index and Nursery Value Select were approved in early FY 2020.

Sustainable Development Activities

- Led USDA and USG preparations for the 2021 UN Food System Summit, including developing U.S. objectives, core position points and strategy.
- Co-led the negotiations on the UN Committee for World Food Security’s Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition, including compiling and harmonizing USG comments on numerous drafts of the document. The Voluntary Guidelines are intended to be a reference document providing guidance on policies, investments, and institutional arrangements needed to address the key causes of malnutrition. The Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition will serve as a foundational document for the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit.
- Coordinated the Department’s contributions to the interagency process on the UN’s post-2015 Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring that any definition of “sustainability” includes a focus on productivity, efficient use of resources and profitability, and ensuring that biotech seeds and crops as well as conventional fertilizers and other inputs were not excluded from the applied definition of sustainable agriculture. Finalized Sustainable Development Goal 2.4.1 on sustainable agricultural production.
- Served as the U.S. representative on the Sustainable Food Systems Program of the UN 10-Year Framework of Programs, playing an instrumental role in developing the program for the science track at the 3rd Annual Conference on Sustainable Food Systems (November 2020).
- At the request of the U.S. Office of the Chief Statistician, represented the U.S. at a meeting of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on the Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) of the Statistical Commission of the U.N, in October 2020 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Co-led the USDA Blockchain Technology Taskforce. Blockchain technology (BCT) is an emerging issue for USDA with respect to food safety, procurement and product authentication, including authentication of sustainability characteristics.
- Led coordination of the joint USDA, EPA, and FDA Winning on Reducing Food Waste Initiative and compilation of the first annual progress report for the initiative.
- Led the USDA Interagency Food Loss and Waste Working Group and coordinated USDA initiatives related to food loss and waste (e.g., developed Directory of USDA food loss and waste contacts).
- Reviewed Proposed Voluntary Code of Conduct for Food Loss and Waste Reduction presented at FAO Committee on Agriculture (COAG) and developed U.S. objectives and core position points.

World Agricultural Outlook Board (WAOB)

Agricultural Supply and Demand Monitoring and Reporting

- Published the monthly *World Agricultural Supply and Demand (WASDE)* reports, a Principal Federal Economic Indicator report, providing USDA’s official world and U.S. supply and utilization estimates and forecasts for grains, oilseeds, and cotton; and official estimates and forecasts for U.S. sugar, red meat, poultry, eggs, and milk. The WASDE report was downloaded an average of 2.5 million times per month from the OCE website, with a larger number served by our distributed file system to ensure fair and equitable access to all WAOB releases.

- Post-WASDE lockup briefings were presented monthly to the Secretary and made available to the public online. Monthly downloads of this package averaged 330 during FY 2020.
- Produced numerous analyses on the impacts of COVID-19 related economic shocks for the Secretary and other Senior Executives to keep them apprised of rapidly changing macro-economic and other conditions affecting agriculture and the rural economy.
- Issued weekly dashboards and summaries to the White House and the Secretary of Agriculture, as well as daily summaries to top USDA officials on current conditions in U.S. agricultural markets.
- Cleared all USDA agricultural commodity outlook reports released in FY2020.

USDA Baseline Projections

- Managed the development of the inter-agency 10-year baseline economic projections and cleared the estimates for publication and release. The projections provide timely insight and strategic planning information for the President’s Budget, agricultural producers, other agribusinesses, and policy officials.
- Provided economic analysis in support of Farm Production and Conservation farm program budget estimates for the Office of Management and Budget and to update empirical models of producer behavior.

USDA Agricultural Outlook Forum

- Planned, coordinated, and chaired the program committee for USDA’s 2020 Agricultural Outlook Forum: *The Innovation Imperative—Shaping the Future of Agriculture*. Forum attendees reached 1,837, an increase of 18 percent over the prior 2-year average. The Chief Economist provided a keynote speech on the state of the U.S. agricultural economy. The two-day program included 30 sessions on issues affecting rural America and agriculture, including the food price and farm income outlook, U.S. trade and the global marketplace, new frontiers in agriculture, managing risk and ensuring sustainability, the rural economy, and commodity outlooks.

Weather Analysis

- Collaborated with the National Weather Service to prepare and publish 52 *Weekly Weather and Crop Bulletins (WWCB)*, issue 250 *Daily U.S. Agricultural Weather Highlights* and contribute to 52 weekly *U.S. Drought Monitors (USDM)*. During 2020, the *WWCB* was downloaded an average of 41,000 times per week and *Daily Agricultural Highlights* an average of 225 times per day.
- In support of the *WASDE* report, WAOB meteorologists prepared early warnings and assessments of weather events that affected U.S. agriculture, notably the historic Atlantic hurricane season and the impact of the storms on crops such as cotton and rice in the Deep South; the Iowa derecho, a wind storm that damaged portions of the state’s corn crop; untimely freezes that impacted vulnerable crops in northern farming areas; and drought impacts of agriculture in the West, Midwest, and Northeast. International areas receiving additional attention in 2020 included France, Russia, Ukraine, Australia, Canada, and Argentina.

Monitoring Drought

- Partnered with the National Drought Mitigation Center (NDMC) to improve drought services to the American public. Deliverables in FY 2020 included virtual regional workshops carried out through the USDA Climate Hubs designed to improve the capacity of regional experts to analyze and respond to drought at the regional level, and infrastructure sufficient to provide a continuous flow of information both to drought decision makers and the public.
- Developed cooperative Agreements with NDMC in 2020 to provide metrics to determine economic impacts of drought on various agricultural sectors.
- Worked with counterparts in National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and other organizations to move forward with recommended improvements to the U.S. Drought Monitor, in accordance with Section 12512 of the 2018 Farm Bill.

World Meteorological Organization Support

- Actively supported the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Commission for Agricultural Meteorology (CAgM), which promotes the use of weather and climate information to improve sustainable food production worldwide.
- Conferred with, and made recommendations to, NOAA leadership regarding ongoing organizational changes to the WMO, to help ensure continued support for the agricultural community.

The Office of Risk Assessment and Cost-Benefit Analysis (ORACBA)

Risk Analysis Leadership and Consultation

- Provided guidance to USDA agencies developing risk assessments and economic analyses related to environmental health and safety, including extensive assistance to the Office of Pest Management Policy in review of several pesticide risk assessments. Participated in the 18-agency Interagency Risk Assessment Consortium to enhance communication and coordination among agencies with food safety responsibilities. And, provided guidance and consultation to USDA and other Federal agencies on risk assessments for dietary contaminants, pesticides, foodborne pathogens, endangered species, plant and animal pests, and environmental contaminants.

Risk Communication and Outreach

- Improved communication among USDA, Federal and private sector analysts concerning developments in risk assessment and economic analysis through dissemination of the ORACBA Risk Calendar to over 600 subscribers.

Risk Assessment Education and Training

- Continued to work closely with the Joint Institute for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (JIFSAN), the University of Maryland and the FDA to promote basic and advanced courses in risk assessment methods and build capacity to conduct risk analysis. OCE staff also coordinated four Science, Policy and Risk Forum seminars on emerging risk assessment topics.

The Office of Energy and Environmental Policy (OEEP)

USDA Agriculture Innovation Agenda (AIA)

- Coordinated efforts and proposed a three-pronged strategy anchored in innovation in research, an emphasis on adopting the latest technologies in USDA programs, and quantitative goals to track performance; Secretary Perdue announced the AIA at the 2020 Agriculture Outlook Forum.
- Established and led the AIA Metrics Working Group that assesses USDA's ability to track and report on progress towards meeting AIA goals over time; prepped recommendations to improve data, statistics, and reporting of key metrics; coordinated input from agencies to develop recommendations on productivity, food loss and waste, renewable energy, water quality, and greenhouse gasses as part of the AIA.

Biofuel Markets and the Pandemic

- Monitored gasoline production and ethanol inputs, prices, co-products, margins, and trends to evaluate COVID-19 impacts on the biofuel sector and related industries and provided regular briefings to Department officials.

Disruption to Carbon Dioxide Markets

- Collected Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) information and implemented procedures to monitor production slowdowns and the impacts of CO₂ shortages on the food industry and water treatment plants to brief Department officials and representatives of multiple industries, including ethanol producers, gas companies, and food processors.

Enhanced Efficiency Fertilizer Challenge

- Worked with EPA to launch the Enhanced Efficiency Fertilizer (EEF) Challenge in August 2020. The goal of the EEF Challenge is to identify potential next generation concepts for novel fertilizer technologies that reduce the environmental effects from modern agriculture while maintaining or increasing yields. The EEF Challenge fosters innovation aimed at improving productivity, improving water quality, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture.

USDA Regional Climate Hubs

- Provides oversight and guidance to the Climate Hubs program.
- Expanding efforts on science communication and extension including hundreds of workshops, adaptation management trainings, demonstration projects, consultations, webinars and other outreach events. During 2020, these efforts reached thousands of land managers and increased its number of Twitter followers from 3,270 to 4,250 and Hub website users from 41,995 to 67,607.

Global Change Task Force

- Chairs the USDA Global Change Task Force and ensures that all 13 USDA agencies with a responsibility for climate adaptation are kept informed of Departmental and Administration priorities and are included in reviews, assessments, analyses, and communication efforts.

International Climate Negotiations

- Continued to represent the Department in international climate negotiations, ensuring that the views and interests of U.S. agriculture and natural resource management are reflected in discussions. OCE reviewed options proposed by other countries and helped to shape the dialogue related to agriculture and climate change to highlight efforts being taken in the US to promote innovation as a mechanism to address carbon sequestration, productivity, and food security.

Climate Indicators for Agriculture

- Published the *Climate Change Indicators for Agriculture*, providing national, regional, and local information to support effective decision making by U.S. agricultural producers, resource managers, and other stakeholders.

Environmental Markets Tools

- Integrated the Farm Economic Model into the Nutrient Tracking Tool to allow users to estimate costs, revenues and profitability of various management scenarios. The economic module is being tested and is scheduled for release in early 2021.
- Provided technical assistance to the Senate Agriculture Committee in drafting the Growing Climate Solutions Act. The draft legislation creates new roles for USDA in setting standards for technical assistance and project verification.
- Delivered a series of briefings on carbon market basics for commodity groups and farm organizations. The briefings helped these groups understand the proposals and the potential implications for the farm sector.

Biobased Products

- Provided leadership, as a member of the Biomass Research and Development (BR&D) Board–Operations Committee, on the assessment of the bioeconomy, including biofuels, heat and power, renewable chemicals, and biobased products.

Energy and Bioenergy Analysis

- Reviewed a series of rulemakings under the RFS and Clean Air Act that had major implications for agriculture and the renewable fuels sector. These rulemakings included: the EPA Fuels Streamlining Rule; the Final 2020 Renewable Fuel Volumes; the Biogenic Carbon Rule; and the Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient (SAFE) Vehicles rule.
- Provided analytical support on USDA and EPA’s agreement on the future of the RFS that ensures that more than 15 billion gallons of conventional ethanol be blended into the nation’s fuel supply beginning in 2020. The agreement streamlined labeling and removed barriers to the sale of E15. It also required that EPA account for small refinery waivers to ensure that they did not reduce overall annual renewable fuel volumes.
- Assisted in the development and implementation phases of the Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentives Program; providing draft options, research on past programs and infrastructure costs, supporting high level roundtables, drafting provisions, coordinating with program agencies, and drafting communication materials. The Department announced a new \$100 million program in January 2020 that ensures cost effective investments in biofuels infrastructure.

Office of Pest Management Policy (OPMP)

Improving Federal Pesticide Registration Decisions

- Reviewed over 140 actions put forth by EPA’s Office of Pesticide Program to assist EPA in making informed decisions for pesticides critical to agriculture.

Pest Management Litigation Support and Consultation

- Assisted the Department of Justice (DOJ) on EPA’s dicamba registration decision in *Center for Biological Diversity, et al. v. Andrew Wheeler, et al.*

Biotechnology

- Represented USDA on the White House Bioeconomy Sub-Policy and Biotechnology Policy Coordinating Committees. Assisted in coordinating and implementing Executive Order (EO) 13874.
- Provided technical leadership for USDA on the negotiation between USDA and FDA on which agency is best fit to provide oversight for animal biotechnology which culminated in a summer meeting, hosted by the National Economic Council (NEC), between Secretary Perdue, Commission Hahn, and Secretary Azar. While there was agreement to work together on a Memorandum of Understanding, the pandemic replaced all animal biotechnology efforts in order to focus on issues resulting from Covid-19. While still a priority, the effort is currently on hold.

- The Agricultural Biotechnology Advisor represented USDA, along with OHS, because the bioeconomy impacts a broad set of USDA equities. The National Security Council (NSC) and Office of Science and Technology Policy jointly initiated an effort to coordinate and consolidate across federal agencies on the topic of the American Bioeconomy. Following multiple interagency drafting sessions, a draft EO was developed and last shared by NSC for review at the Departmental level in April 2020. The pandemic has placed the release of the EO on hold.
- Coordinated the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) review of the EPA rule, Exemptions of Certain Plant-Incorporated Protectants Derived from New Technology. As a result of numerous discussions, in person meetings and in response to USDA's comments, EPA modified the proposal to mandatory notification with self-determination letter with the option of seeking EPA confirmation. Stakeholders strongly supported this provision.
- Led the formulation of USDA's strategic approach to policy negotiations pertaining to the regulatory framework of biotech animals in order to enhance the role of biotechnology in all aspects of U.S. agricultural production. This included working with APHIS to develop the operational framework, working with the Office of General Counsel on the legal justification, and serving as the technical lead in USDA's negotiation with the NEC and others. As referenced above, this is on hold due to other priorities for USDA and FDA related to the pandemic.

Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Pesticide Consultations

- Participated in ESA and pesticide consultations conducted by the EPA, National Marine Fisheries Service, and Fish and Wildlife Service. Represented USDA in the writing of the ESA report for Congress as required by the 2018 Farm Bill.

International Ozone Treaty Negotiations

- Together with APHIS, represented USDA in meetings of the Montreal Protocol (MP) on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. Quarantine uses of methyl bromide are exempt under the MP and under the Clean Air Act. OCE also defended the quarantine use of alternatives to methyl bromide.

Codex Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance Consultation

With the Office of the Chief Scientist, coordinated efforts to provide scientific support on the U.S. government position to the Ad hoc Codex Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR).