

2021 USDA EXPLANATORY NOTES – 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 Department policies, programs and proposed legislation. OCE serves as a focal point for the Nation's agricultural economic intelligence and projections; risk analysis; climate change issues; and cost-benefit analysis related to domestic and international food and agriculture. OCE also supports the development of technical guidelines that outline science-based methods to measure the environmental services benefits from conservation and land management activities; provides analysis for the Department's renewable energy, bioenergy, and biobased product programs; is responsible for coordination, review and clearance of all commodity and aggregate agricultural and food-related data used to develop outlook and situation material within the Department. OCE also serves as the Department's lead on pesticides, pest management, and agricultural biotechnology. Activities include: policy and program analysis; regulatory reviews; information dissemination; market surveillance; coordination of assessments of international and domestic agricultural developments; improvement of forecasting techniques; coordination of weather, climate and remote sensing activities; coordination of sustainable development activities; coordination of global climate research and issues; support for the development of environmental services markets; energy policy analysis and coordination of energy research and issues; and analysis of issues and developments affecting agricultural labor. OCE produces, on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis, regularly scheduled information releases to advise the Secretary and the public on developments affecting agricultural markets and the rural economy. The office coordinates interagency development of forecasts and projections by drawing together a variety of experts to assure objective and sound analysis. The office uses memos and briefings to advise the Secretary of the consequences of market developments, program changes, and legislative proposals. The office provides economic analysis of Department policy positions to the public and Congress.

The office participates in the development of reviews, clears all regulatory impact and risk analyses of Departmental significant, economically significant, and major rules to ensure they are based on objective, appropriate, and sound economic and risk analyses.

The office provides economic and policy analysis and helps to coordinate Departmental research in the areas of renewable energy, bioenergy, and biobased products and markets.

The office 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 services 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.

The office is responsible for the development and coordination of Department policy on pest management and pesticides. It coordinates the activities and services of the Department, including 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 EPA and FDA and other Federal and state agencies. The office also consults with agricultural producers that may be affected by pest management or pesticide-related activities or actions of the Department or other agencies.

OCE Headquarters is located in Washington, D.C. As of September 30, 2019, there were 63 full-time permanent employees, all stationed in Washington, DC.

OCE did not have any Office of Inspector General or Government Accountability Office evaluation reports during the past year.

AVAILABLE FUNDS AND STAFF YEARS

Table OCE-1. Available Funds and Staff Years (thousands of dollars, staff years (SY))

Item	2018		2019		2020		2021	
	Actual	SY	Actual	SY	Enacted	SY	Budget	SY
Salaries and Expenses:								
Discretionary Appropriations	\$19,786	54	\$21,286	61	\$24,013	62	\$20,857	62
General Provision:								
Food Loss & Waste Reduction Liaison					400			
Mandatory Appropriations:								
Multiple Crop and Pesticide Use								
Survey	-	-	500	-	-	-	-	-
Biodiesel Fuel Education Program	1,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sequestration	-66	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Adjusted Appropriation	20,720	54	21,786	61	24,413	62	20,857	62
Balance Available, SOY	1,950	-	-	-	500	-	-	-
Total Available	22,670	54	21,786	61	24,913	62	20,857	62
Lapsing Balances	-183	-	-363	-	-	-	-	-
Balance Available, EOY	-	-	-500	-	-	-	-	-
Obligations, OCE	22,487	54	20,923	61	24,913	62	20,857	62
Ob. Under Other USDA Appr.:								
Annual Outlook Forum	122	-	100	-	200	-	200	-
Joint Data Procurement	24	-	25	-	25	-	26	-
National Science Foundation	363	-	363	-	363	-	363	-
Environmental Markets	600	-	600	-	600	-	600	-
Climate Hubs Coordinator	125	-	60	-	120	-	120	-
Payment for Staff Details	-	-	191	-	116	-	-	-
Payment for Service Work	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-
Total, Other USDA	1,234	-	1,342	-	1,424	-	1,309	-
Total, OCE	23,721	54	22,265	61	26,337	62	22,166	62

PERMANENT POSITIONS BY GRADE AND STAFF YEARS

Table OCE-2. Permanent Positions by Grade and Staff Years

Item	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Enacted	2021
	Wash. DC	Wash. DC	Wash. DC	Budget Wash. DC
SES	6	6	6	6
SL	1	1	2	2
GS-15	28	31	32	32
GS-14	12	11	11	11
GS-13	5	4	2	2
GS-12	1	1	1	1
GS-11	2	2	2	2
GS-10	3	3	3	3
GS-9	2	2	1	1
GS-7	1	1	2	2
GS-6	-	1	-	-
Total Permanent	61	63	62	62
Unfilled, EOY	-	-	-	-
Total Perm. FT EOY	61	63	62	62
Staff Year Est	54	61	62	62

SHARED FUNDING PROJECTS*Table OCE-3. Shared Funding Projects (dollars in thousands)*

Item	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Enacted	2021 Budget
Working Capital Fund:				
Administration:				
Material Management Service Center	\$16	\$9	\$12	\$12
Mail and Reproduction Services	155	157	168	174
Integrated Procurement Systems	13	12	17	17
Procurement Operations Services	25	24	24	18
Human Resources Enterprise Management Systems	-	1	1	1
Subtotal.....	209	203	222	222
Communications:				
Creative Media & Broadcast Center	45	43	45	221
Finance and Management:				
National Finance Center.....	15	16	18	17
Financial Management Systems	33	32	26	36
Subtotal.....	48	48	44	53
Information Technology:				
Departmental Administration Technology Center	-	-	170	201
Client Experience Center.....	91	107	115	106
Digital Infrastructure Services Center	33	129	55	53
Enterprise Network Services	17	20	59	60
Subtotal.....	141	256	399	420
Correspondence Management.....	16	3	3	3
Total, Working Capital Fund.....	459	553	713	919
Department-Wide Shared Cost Programs:				
Agency Partnership Outreach	4	5	5	5
Medical Services	3	3	2	-
Office of Customer Experience.....	1	2	2	2
Personnel and Document Security.....	1	2	2	2
Physical Security	-	-	4	3
Security Detail	3	3	3	3
Security Operations	6	6	4	4
TARGET Center	1	1	1	1
USDA Enterprise Data Analytics Services.....	-	-	3	3
Virtual University	1	-	-	-
Total, Department-Wide Reimbursable Programs	20	22	26	23
E-Gov:				
Enterprise Human Resources Integration.....	1	1	-	-
Geospatial Line of Business	13	13	13	13
Total, E-Gov	14	14	13	13
Agency Total.....	493	589	752	955

ACCOUNT 1: SALARIES AND EXPENSES

LEAD-OFF TABULAR STATEMENT

Table OCE-4. Lead-Off Tabular Statement

Item	Amount
2020 Appropriation.....	\$24,013,000
Change in Appropriation.....	-3,156,000
Budget Estimate, 2021.....	<u>20,857,000</u>

APPROPRIATIONS LANGUAGE

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

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Chief Economist, [~~\$24,013,000~~] \$20,857,000, of which [~~\$8,000,000~~] \$5,000,000 shall be for grants or cooperative agreements for policy research under 7 U.S.C. 3155.

PROJECT STATEMENT

Table OCE-5. Project Statement (thousands of dollars, staff years (SY))

Item	2018		2019		2020		Inc. or Dec.	Chg Key	2021 Budget	2021 SY	
	Actual	SY	Actual	SY	Enacted	SY					
Discretionary Appropriations:											
OCE	\$19,786	54	\$21,286	61	\$24,013	62	-\$3,156	(1)	-	\$20,857	62
General Provision											
Food Loss and Waste											
Reduction Liaison.....	-	-	-	-	400	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mandatory Appropriations:											
Multiple Crop and Pesticide											
Use Survey.....	-	-	500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Biodiesel Fuel Education....	1,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Appropriation.....	20,786	54	21,786	61	24,413	62	-3,155	-	20,857	62	
Sequestration.....	-66	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bal. Available, SOY.....	1,950	-	-	-	500	-	-500	-	-	-	-
Total Available.....	20,670	54	22,670	61	24,913	62	-3,655	-	20,857	62	
Lapsing Balances.....	-183	-	-363	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bal. Available, EOY.....	-	-	-500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Obligations.....	<u>22,487</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>20,923</u>	<u>61</u>	<u>24,913</u>	<u>62</u>	<u>-3,655</u>	-	<u>20,857</u>	<u>62</u>	

JUSTIFICATION OF INCREASES AND DECREASES

(1) A decrease of \$3,156,000, from the FY 2020 Appropriations

The funding change is requested for the following items:

A) An increase of \$130,495 for pay costs (\$59,755 for annualization of the 2020 pay increase and \$70,740 for the 2021 pay increase).

This increase will support the pay increase for civilian employees. This increase will allow the OCE to continue to provide the Nation's agricultural economic intelligence and projections. This critical increase is needed to support and maintain current staffing levels to meet the program demands and statutory requirements imposed on OCE. Elimination of the pay cost increase means the OCE would not be able to fund approximately 1 FTE and/or would need to significantly cut travel, training, and mission support. Approximately 59 percent of our budget supports personnel compensation and benefits. Failure to receive this increase would prevent us from fully performing our mission, which is necessary to ensure OCE can continue support for all areas of the Department as well as meeting the needs of the Executive Office of the President and members of Congress.

B) An increase of \$94,320 for performance awards.

This increase will support a 1 percentage point increase in awards spending, consistent with objectives outlined in the President's Management Agenda, to enhance workforce development. Without this additional funding, OCE will be unable to absorb these costs in FY 2021, resulting in reductions to planned hiring levels, eroding USDA's ability to meet key Administration priorities contained in this Budget.

C) An increase of \$107,585 for the Department's increased contribution to the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS).

This increase will cover the expenses for the mandated increase of USDA's contribution to FERS. These increases were effective January 1, 2020, and impact approximately 60 employees' retirement packages.

D) A decrease of \$2,988,400 for cooperative research agreements for Policy Research Centers

A reduction of \$2,988,400 in funding for Policy Research Centers (PRC), comprised of \$2,500,000 in support for the National Drought Mitigation Center (NDMC) and \$488,400 in farm and trade policy research and analysis.

E) A decrease of \$500,000 for a multiple crop and pesticide use survey.

The reduction of \$500,000 is due to the expenditure in FY 2020 of the one-time No Year FY 2019 funds for OCE to conduct a multiple crop and pesticide use survey of farmers to collect data for risk assessment modeling and mitigation for an active ingredient.

GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF OBLIGATIONS AND STAFF YEARS*Table OCE-6. Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and Staff Years (thousands of dollars, staff years (SY))*

State/Territory/Country	2018		2019		2020		2021	
	Actual	SY	Actual	SY	Enacted	SY	Budget	SY
District of Columbia.....	\$22,487	54	\$20,923	61	\$24,413	62	\$20,857	62
Lapsing Balances	183	-	363	-	-	-	-	-
Bal. Available, EOY.....	-	-	500	-	-	-	-	-
Total, Available	22,670	54	21,786	61	24,413	62	20,857	62

CLASSIFICATION BY OBJECTS*Table OCE-7. Classification by Objects (thousands of dollars)*

Item No.	Item	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Estimate	2021 Budget
	Personnel Compensation:				
	Washington D.C.	\$8,471	\$8,654	\$9,410	\$9,291
11	Total personnel compensation	8,471	8,654	9,410	9,291
12	Personal benefits	2,674	2,814	2,959	2,939
	Total, personnel comp. and benefits.....	11,145	11,468	12,369	12,230
	Other Objects:				
21.0	Travel and transportation of persons	244	224	224	224
23.1	Rental payments to GSA	2	3	4	4
23.3	Communications, utilities, and misc. charges.....	248	190	190	190
24.0	Printing and reproduction	77	76	77	77
25.0	Other contractual services.....	339	133	130	130
25.1	Advisory and assistance services.....	2,988	1,961	2,000	2,000
25.2	Other services from non-Federal sources.....	9	24	24	24
25.3	Other goods and services from Federal sources	25	-	-	-
25.4	Operation and maintenance of facilities.....	742	376	376	376
25.5	Research and development contracts	6,432	6,222	8,769	5,347
26.0	Supplies and materials	177	206	210	215
31.0	Equipment.....	59	40	40	40
	Total, Other Objects	11,342	9,455	12,044	8,628
99.9	Total, new obligations.....	22,487	20,923	24,413	20,857
	DHS Building Security Payments (included in 25.3)....	\$25	\$26	\$27	\$28
	Position Data:				
	Average Salary (dollars), ES Position	\$188,800	\$182,766	\$187,000	\$187,000
	Average Salary (dollars), GS Position.....	\$133,000	\$137,000	\$139,000	\$140,020
	Average Grade, GS Position	15.1	13.7	13.5	13.5

STATUS OF PROGRAMS

The Office of the Chief Economist (OCE) advises the Secretary of Agriculture on the economic implications of Department policies, programs, and proposed legislation. OCE serves as the focal point for the Nation's agricultural economic intelligence and projections related to agricultural commodity markets; risk analysis and cost-benefit analysis related to international food and agriculture; energy issues related to the agricultural economy; sustainable development; agricultural labor; global climate adaptation; environmental markets; and pesticide and pest management issues. OCE is also responsible for the coordination, review and clearance of all commodity and aggregate agricultural and food-related data used to develop Departmental outlook and situation material.

Current Activities

OCE provides policy and program analyses and advice for the Secretary on major issues affecting agriculture and rural America. The Immediate Office (IO) focuses on: trade agreements 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; farm programs; crop insurance improvements; sustainable agriculture; climate adaptation and agriculture; conservation programs; ecosystem services markets; and agricultural labor.

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 cost-effective, less burdensome regulations; and the integration of economic analysis and risk assessment.

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.

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. 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. In the climate adaptation area, OEEP coordinates the Department's activities and represents the Department with other Federal agencies on issues related to climate adaptation, ensuring Departmental views are represented. 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

Office of the Chief Economist

Agricultural Policy

- Assisted USDA agencies implementing commodity, conservation, renewable energy and other programs by reviewing and providing analysis of proposed program regulations, participating in inter-agency working groups, and helping to ensure effective and efficient program development.
- Participated in the development and analysis of Departmental budget proposals; regulations implementing commodity and conservation provisions of the 2018 Farm Bill; and farm financial stress resulting from sustained low commodity prices.
- Contributed to development of the 2018 and 2019 Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program and USDA's 2018 and 2019 trade mitigation programs, including the Market Facilitation Program and the Food Purchase and Distribution Program.
- Performed analysis of impacts on agriculture from hurricanes, prevented plantings, and other disasters; and represented OCE on the Multi-Agency Coordination group, ensuring USDA decision-makers had timely, accurate information for decision making.
- Reviewed and developed cost benefit analyses for significant USDA regulations, such as for industrial hemp and bioengineered food disclosure. In addition, assisted the Department by reviewing and negotiating language for important rulemakings and actions by other agencies that affect U.S. agricultural and food production, such as responding to EPA on the Advanced Biofuel Volume in the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS).
- Represented the United States at the G20's Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) 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. In addition, 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.

Agricultural Labor Activities

- Provided analyses and information focused on the diversity in the demand for labor across agriculture, the seasonal demand for labor, the labor shortages faced by agricultural producers, and the role of temporary (H-2A) guest workers in the agricultural sector.
- Monitored proposed regulations for impacts on the agricultural labor force.
- Collaborated with the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and Office of the Secretary to determine an alternate wage rate structure to be proposed in a Department of Labor H-2A proposed rulemaking.

World Trade Organization (WTO) and Trade Policy Support

- Provided economic and policy analysis in support of key U.S. trade initiatives, including:
 - Development of trade damage estimates for 2019 USDA trade mitigation programs
 - Support for trade negotiations with China and Japan
 - WTO enforcement actions regarding China's domestic support programs and tariff-rate quotas for grains,
 - Calculation of WTO trade damages for Indonesia's import licensing measures, and
 - USDA's responses to Peru's Antidumping and Countervailing Duty (AD/CVD) investigation of U.S. exports of ethanol and corn and Colombia's AD/CVD investigation of U.S. exports of ethanol.
- Prepared U.S. domestic support notifications to the WTO and briefed Congress on the notifications.
- 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 Organization for OECD annual agricultural policy and monitoring report.
- Contributed to U.S. reviews of reports produced on agricultural policies and markets, agricultural trade, and agri-environmental policy.

- Contributed to US review and response for United Nations (UN), G7, Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and G20 proposals related to sustainable agriculture and global food security issues.

Analytical Assistance to Congress and Other Federal Agencies

- Testified before the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry on trade aide and served as a witness before the committee hearing on Certainty in Global Markets for the U.S. Ag Outlook Sector.
- Conducted several Congressional briefings and meetings on farmer support, the Economic Research Service (ERS) realignment, trade aide, disaster process, USDA's Climate Change Program Office, and on the March *World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE)* report.
- Conducted a briefing at the White House on the RFS.
- 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.
- Assisted the Department and 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.
- Provided input on several rulemakings from EPA such as the RFS and Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) actions and other federal agencies through the EO 12866 interagency process.

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 2019.
 - The FCIC Board of Directors approved several products to improve the risk management safety net on a wide variety of farms in 2019.
 - Hurricane Insurance Protection – Wind Index and Nursery Value Select were approved for expert review in FY 2019 and ultimately approved in early FY 2020.
- FCIC took over maintenance of four insurance products – white/waxy and high amylose corn as well as hybrid rice seed and sprinkler irrigated rice.

Sustainable Development Activities

- Coordinated the Department's contributions to the interagency process on the UN's post-2015 Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring that "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.

- 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 core initiatives and a glossary of terms for the program.
- Led and coordinated USDA initiatives related to food loss and waste. These efforts were reinforced by the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018, and in early 2019, the Department delegated responsibility for the activities of the Food Loss and Waste Liaison to OCE.
- Led coordination of the joint USDA, EPA, and FDA Winning on Reducing Food Waste Initiative and the development of its strategic plan, led USDA interaction with EPA and FDA on implementation of the strategic plan, and coordinated input from USDA's Office of the General Counsel to develop responses to questions about the Good Samaritan Act in order to help reduce confusion about the legal protection of the law for food donors.
- Created and led the USDA working group on food loss and waste and took responsibility for developing the Department's plan of action on reducing food loss and waste.
- Assisted the Deputy Secretary establish the USDA Blockchain Technology Taskforce and serves as the co-lead. Blockchain technology (BCT) is an emerging issue for USDA with respect to food safety, procurement and product authentication, including authentication of sustainability characteristics.

World Agricultural Outlook Board's (WAOB)

Supply and Demand Monitoring and Reporting

- Published the monthly *World Agricultural Supply and Demand (WASDE)* report, 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.
- Cleared all USDA economic outlook reports released in 2019 for agencies across USDA.
- Issued 11 monthly *WASDE* reports, 47 weekly *White House Briefings* on the current situation in U.S. agricultural markets, and a daily market summary for top staff including the Secretary and Deputy Secretary.
 - The *WASDE* report was downloaded an average of 130,000 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-lockup briefings were presented monthly to the Secretary and made available to the public on-line. Monthly downloads of this package exceeded 200,000 during FY 2019.

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.
- Developed empirical procedures to check ERS’ stochastic baseline, which Farm Production and Conservation uses to develop budget estimates for the Office of Management and Budget and to update empirical models of producer behavior.

Weather Analysis

- Collaborated with the National Weather Service to prepare and publish 52 *Weekly Weather and Crop Bulletins (WWCB)*, and issued 250 *Daily U.S. Agricultural Weather Highlights* and contributed to 52 weekly *U.S. Drought Monitors (USDM)*.
 - During 2019, the WWCB was downloaded an average of 70,671 times per week, while Daily Agricultural Highlights was downloaded an average of 288 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 flooding in the nation’s mid-section; International areas receiving additional attention in 2019 included Australia, the EU and Former Soviet Union, and South America.

Monitoring Drought

- Partnered with the National Drought Mitigation Center to improve drought services to the American public. Deliverables in FY 2019 included the inclusion of the U.S Virgin Islands and Affiliated Pacific Islands in operational products rendering them eligible for USDA programs triggered by the USDM; drought depictions specific to tribal areas; and 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.

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.
- Served on the ten-member WMO CAgM Management Group, which formulates commission policy, develops strategic plans, and evaluates program area progress.

The Office of Energy and Environmental Policy (OEEP)

USDA Agricultural Outlook Forum

- Planned, coordinated, and chaired the program committee for USDA’s 2019 Agricultural Outlook Forum: *Growing Locally, Selling Globally*. Forum attendees reached 1,480.
 - The Chief Economist provided a keynote speech on the state of the U.S. agricultural economy.

- The two-day program included 30 sessions on major issues affecting rural America and agriculture, including the food price and farm income outlook, international markets and trade, innovation in agriculture, rural prosperity, food safety, and commodity outlooks

Conservation Trends

- Released *Agricultural Conservation on Working Lands: Trends From 2004 to Present*. The report compiles the latest survey data to track U.S. adoption of selected agricultural conservation practices that both reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and provide additional environmental benefits.
 - This is the first USDA report to establish a baseline of current adoption rates by crop, region, year, and practice.

USDA Regional Climate Hubs

- Provides oversight and guidance to the Climate Hubs program.
- Expanding efforts on communication and extension including: hundreds of workshops, trainings, consultation meetings, as well as webinars and other outreach events. About 3,270 twitter followers have made 543.3k tweet impression.
- Upgraded the Climate Hubs website, which has been visited by 41,995 users with 137,768 web views.

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 the discussions.
 - This involvement included two detailed submissions on US actions related to adaptation, adaptation co-benefits and resilience, improved soil carbon, soil health, water management, improved nutrient use, and manure management for sustainable and resilient agricultural systems.

Environmental Markets Tools

- Conducted outreach and communications efforts on the value of the Nutrient Tracking Tool (NTT). NTT is an online tool that allows users to estimate nitrogen and sediment losses from crop and pasture lands. NTT can simulate multiple management scenarios on a single parcel so that users can compare environmental and yield impacts of various management practices and structural best management practices. NTT is a valuable tool

for environmental markets as well as other performance-based activities because it provides quantitative estimates of nutrient and sediment losses.

- Cooperated with EPA's Office of Water to identify and communicate ways to finance on-farm nutrient management strategies, including creating a series of workshops and webinars.

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.
- Represented USDA in the release of the bio-economy action framework, a guiding document for BR&D Board member agencies to increase government accountability and efficiency, maximize interagency coordination on bio-economy research, and accelerate innovative and sustainable technologies that harness America's biomass resources.

Energy and Bioenergy Analysis

- Provided strategic energy and bioenergy analysis in support of the the Department.
- Tracked regulatory decisions and market changes that pertain to renewable fuels and assessed the implications for commodity markets.
- Reviewed rule-makings under the RFS and Clean Air Act that had major implications for agriculture and the renewable fuels sector, including reset and 2020 RVO.
- Coordinated a review of a recent Government Accountability Office report on the greenhouse gas benefits of biofuels and prepared USDA's written response which was published along with the study.
- Continued to be at the forefront of efforts within the Department to evaluate the technical and economic potential for biomass energy.
- Updated a major assessment of the carbon benefits of corn-based ethanol.

Office of Pest Management Policy (OPMP)

Improving Federal Pesticide Registration Decisions

- Reviewed over 100 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), providing a declaration in Center for Biological Diversity, Center for Food Safety, and Defenders of Wildlife v. United States EPA and Bayer Crop Sciences, et al
- Assisted DOJ on EPA's chlorpyrifos decision in League of United Latin American Citizens, et al. v. Andrew Wheeler, et al.

Biotechnology

- Represented USDA on the White House Bioeconomy sub-Policy and Biotechnology Policy Coordinating Committees. Assisted in drafting Executive Order (EO) 13874 and coordinating USDA-wide implementation.
- Provides support for the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's (APHIS) biotech regulation, CFR340.
- Led a delegation to the APEC High Level Policy Dialogue on Agricultural Biotech, in support of biotech trade objectives.

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, weighed in on EPA's proposed Interim Methods for Biological Evaluations.

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. OPMP also defends the quarantine use of alternatives to methyl bromide.

Codex Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance Consultation

- Coordinated efforts with the Office of the Chief Scientist providing scientific support on the US government position to the Ad hoc Codex Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) in cooperation with the FDA, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, United States Trade Representative, university scientists, industry, and commodity associations. OPMP reviewed and delivered scientific comments on the role of crops for foodborne exposure to antimicrobial-resistant bacteria, which resulted in the revision of two international documents.
- Promoted development of science/risk-based guidelines on managing foodborne AMR along the food chain.