

2024 USDA EXPLANATORY NOTES – OFFICE OF BUDGET AND PROGRAM ANALYSIS

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PREFACE

This publication summarizes the fiscal year (FY) 2024 Budget for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Throughout this publication any reference to the “Budget” is in regard to the 2024 Budget, unless otherwise noted. All references to years refer to fiscal year, except where specifically noted. The budgetary tables throughout this document show actual amounts for 2021 and 2022, enacted levels for 2023, and the President’s Budget request for 2024. Amounts for 2023 estimated levels include: non-enacted amounts such as Full-Time Equivalent levels, fleet levels, information technology investment levels, recovery levels, transfers in and out, balances available end of year, and obligation levels.

Throughout this publication, the “2018 Farm Bill” is used to refer to the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018. Most programs funded by the 2018 Farm Bill are funded through 2023. Amounts shown in 2024 for most Farm Bill programs reflect those confirmed in the baseline.

Pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, sequestration is included in the numbers for mandatory programs in 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024.

AGENCY-WIDE

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Office of Budget and Program Analysis (OBPA) was established in June 1981. Its predecessor was established on July 8, 1922 (Secretary’s Memorandum No. 389), under the provisions of the Budget and Accounting Act of 1921, which designated that a Budget Officer was to have charge of the preparation of estimates and other appropriations for the Department. The Director of OBPA performs the function of Performance Improvement Officer as established under Executive Order 13450; the Chief Risk Officer in support of OMB Circular No. A-123; and the Evaluation Officer in compliance with the Evidence Act of 2018.

The mission of OBPA is to ensure that USDA programs are delivered efficiently, effectively, and with integrity by incorporating performance, evidence, and risk into decision making. OBPA advocates for necessary resources and executes the budget to ensure that the USDA can effectively and efficiently accomplish its mission for the benefit of the American people.

OBPA leads USDA’s strategic planning; enterprise risk management; performance management and reporting; budget analysis, justification, and control; and legislative and regulatory actions. OBPA develops the USDA’s Strategic Plan, Annual Performance Plan and Report, Learning Agenda, Annual Evaluation Plan, and Department Risk Profile. It also leads the USDA annual planning, budgeting, and execution process, as well as USDA’s Enterprise Risk Management operations.

Additionally, OBPA serves as the primary liaison with the Office of Management and Budget and Congressional appropriations subcommittees to defend and promote USDA’s program plans and budget estimates. OBPA’s efforts are directed toward improving programs and increasing operational effectiveness and accountability throughout USDA.

OBPA is located in Washington, D.C. As of September 30, 2022, there were 52 permanent full-time employees.

OIG AND GAO REPORTS

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

AVAILABLE FUNDS AND FTEs

Table OBPA-1. Available Funds and FTEs (thousands of dollars, FTEs)

Item	2021		2022		2023		2024	
	Actual	FTE	Actual	FTE	Estimated	FTE	Estimated	FTE
Salaries and Expenses:								
Discretionary Appropriations	\$9,629	41	\$11,337	48	\$14,967	58	\$21,135	58
Lapsing Balances ^a	-73	-	-71	-	-	-	-	-
Total Obligations, OBPA.....	9,556	41	11,266	48	14,967	58	21,135	58
Total Available, OBPA.....	9,629	41	11,337	48	14,967	58	21,135	58

^a The lapsing balances as shown in the above table do not include the \$95 in reimbursable lapsing balances.

Note: The details associated with Supplemental appropriations provided to the Office of the Secretary, but implemented in OBPA, is found in the USDA Budget Summary and is not reflected above.

PERMANENT POSITIONS BY GRADE AND FTES

Table OBPA-2. Permanent Positions by Grade and FTES

Item	2021			2022			2023			2024		
	D.C.	Field	Actual Total	D.C.	Field	Actual Total	D.C.	Field	Estimated Total	D.C.	Field	Estimated Total
SES.....	4	-	4	4	-	4	4	-	4	4	-	4
GS-15.....	11	-	11	12	-	12	12	-	12	12	-	12
GS-14.....	13	-	13	20	-	20	26	-	26	26	-	26
GS-13.....	7	-	7	8	-	8	8	-	8	8	-	8
GS-12.....	1	-	1	3	-	3	3	-	3	3	-	3
GS-11.....	2	-	2	3	-	3	3	-	3	3	-	3
GS-10.....	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1
GS-8.....	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1
GS-7.....	4	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Permanent.....	44	-	44	52	-	52	58	-	58	58	-	58
Unfilled, EOY.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Perm. FT EOY..	44	-	44	52	-	52	58	-	58	58	-	58
FTE.....	41	0	41	48	0	48	58	0	58	58	0	58

SHARED FUNDING PROJECTS

Table OBPA-3. Shared Funding Projects (thousands of dollars)

Item	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Estimated	2024 Estimated
Working Capital Fund:				
Administrative Services:				
AskUSDA Contact Center.....	-	-	-	\$1
Material Management Service.....	\$15	\$15	\$13	14
Mail and Reproduction Services.....	53	38	24	24
Integrated Procurement Systems.....	-	2	5	5
Procurement Operations Services.....	-	1	6	10
Human Resources Enterprise Management Systems.....	1	1	-	1
Subtotal.....	69	57	48	54
Communications:				
Creative Media & Broadcast Center.....	-	13	2	14
Finance and Management:.....	-	-	-	-
National Finance Center.....	12	11	13	13
Financial Management Systems.....	11	12	99	105
Personnel Document Security.....	-	-	4	4
Enterprise Data and Analytics Services.....	-	-	17	18
Internal Control Support Services.....	-	-	7	7
Enterprise Cybersecurity Services.....	-	-	14	14
Subtotal.....	23	23	154	161
Information Technology:				
Client Experience Center.....	265	370	266	285
Department Administration Information Technology Office.....	10	45	39	40
Digital Infrastructure Services Center.....	60	93	7	7
Enterprise Network Services.....	9	12	13	14
Subtotal.....	344	520	325	346
AskUSDA Contact Center.....	-	-	1	2
Office of the Executive Secretariat.....	1	1	48	50
Total, Working Capital Fund.....	437	614	578	627
Department-Wide Shared Cost Programs:				
Agency Partnership Outreach.....	3	3	3	3

Item	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Estimated	2024 Estimated
Talent Group.....	-	-	2	2
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility.....	-	-	1	1
Human Resources Priority Goals Program	-	-	2	2
Medical Services.....	11	10	12	12
Office of Customer Experience	4	4	1	1
Personnel and Document Security Program	1	1	-	-
Physical Security	2	2	2	2
Security Detail	2	2	2	2
Security Operations Program.....	3	3	3	3
TARGET Center.....	1	1	1	1
TARGET Center NCR Interpreting Services.....	-	2	7	7
USDA Enterprise Data Analytics Services.....	2	2	-	-
Total, Department-Wide Reimbursable Programs	29	30	36	36
Agency Total	466	644	614	663

ACCOUNT 1: SALARIES AND EXPENSES

APPROPRIATIONS LANGUAGE

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

Salaries and Expenses

For necessary expenses of the Office of Budget and Program Analysis, [~~\$14,967,000~~]\$21,135,000.

LEAD-OFF TABULAR STATEMENT

Table OBPA-4. Lead-Off Tabular Statement (In dollars)

Item	Amount
Estimate, 2023	\$14,967,000
Change in Appropriation	+ 6,168,000
Net 2024 Request	21,135,000

PROJECT STATEMENTS

Table OBPA-5. Project Statement on Basis of Appropriations (thousands of dollars, FTEs)

Item	2021 Actual	2021 FTE	2022 Actual	2022 FTE	2023 Estimated	2023 FTE	2024 Estimated	2024 FTE	Inc. or Dec.	FTE Inc. or Dec.	Chg Key
Discretionary Appropriations:											
Office of Budget and Program Analysis	\$9,629	41	\$11,337	48	\$14,967	58	\$21,135	58	+\$6,168	-	(1)
Total Available	9,629	41	11,337	48	14,967	58	21,135	58	+6,168	-	
Lapsing Balances ^a	-73	-	-71	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Obligations	9,556	41	11,266	48	14,967	58	21,135	58	+6,168	-	

^a The lapsing balances as shown in the above table do not include the \$95 in reimbursable lapsing balances.

Note: The details associated with Supplemental appropriations provided to the Office of the Secretary, but implemented in this account, is found in the USDA Budget Summary and is not reflected above.

Table OBPA-6. Project Statement on Basis of Obligations (thousands of dollars, FTEs)

Item	2021		2022		2023		2024		Inc. or Dec.	FTE Inc. or Dec.
	Actual	FTE	Actual	FTE	Estimated	FTE	Estimated	FTE		
Discretionary Obligations:										
Office of Budget and Program Analysis	\$9,556	41	\$11,266	48	\$14,967	58	\$21,135	58	+\$6,168	-
Total Obligations	9,556	41	11,266	48	14,967	58	21,135	58	+6,168	-
Lapsing Balances ^a	73	-	71	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Appropriations	9,629	41	11,337	48	14,967	58	21,135	58	+6,168	-

^a The lapsing balances as shown in the above table do not include the \$95 in reimbursable lapsing balances.

Note: The details associated with Supplemental appropriations provided to the Office of the Secretary, but implemented in this account, is found in the USDA Budget Summary and is not reflected above.

Office of Budget and Program Analysis

The numbers and letters of the following listing relates to values in the Change (Chg) Key column of the Project Statement:

- (1) An increase of \$6,168,000 (\$14,967,000 and 58 FTEs available in 2023).

The funding change is requested for the following items:

- A) An increase of \$418,000 for 2024 Pay.

This increase will support the annualization of the 2023 4.6 percent Cost of Living pay increase and the 2024 5.2 percent Cost of Living pay increase. If this funding is not provided, OBPA would need to significantly cut the necessary support and would be unable to support mandated federal pay increases. OBPA would also have to make cuts to its contracts and agreements portfolio to cover increased payroll costs and prevent a Reduction in Force. OBPA would be unable to maintain support for USDA’s budget formulation and execution processes, along with support for other programmatic and regulatory analyses performed by the Office. This critical increase is needed to support and maintain current staffing levels to meet the program demands and statutory requirements imposed on OBPA. Elimination of the pay cost increase would mean that OBPA would not be able to fund approximately 2 FTEs and/or would otherwise need to reduce mission support activities. Approximately 85 percent of OBPA’s budget supports personnel compensation and benefits. Failure to receive this increase would prevent us from fully performing our mission, which is necessary to ensure continued 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 \$5,750,000 for Evidence Act Deliverables.

USDA delivers its mission through hundreds of programs that are critical to the nation’s infrastructure; food and nutrition security; and rural and market development. To ensure that these programs are efficiently and effectively delivered and that they produce results for the American taxpayers, the budget requests an increase for OBPA to expand its program evaluation and analysis capabilities. As a result of this proposed increase, OBPA will conduct with existing staff and through engagement with external partners and vendors, evaluations and assessments of Departmental programs and activities. These engagements will be focused on increasing the Department’s knowledge of factors that influence program results and will support USDA’s growth as a data-driven, learning organization. The evaluations will enable not only OBPA, but the broader Departmental leadership team, to better understand the outcomes of Departmental activities and to inform efforts to improve program delivery that will yield better results. The requested resources will enable USDA to identify and leverage efficiencies between programs to avoid duplication or redundancies and to leverage best practices from across the Department. These improvements will support targeted investments with a focus on measuring the impact and effectiveness of our investments and enhancing resources that will improve the equity and inclusiveness of activities across the Department. This effort supports strengthening the USDA implementation of Government Performance and Results Modernization Act and the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act across the entire Department and full mission scope. OBPA will use the funding provided to conduct data-driven reviews of programs and activities from across the Department with a focus on those programs

where programmatic outcomes are undefined and those activities where there is a particular focus from leadership and stakeholders.

If this additional funding is not provided, the Department’s evidence-building capabilities will remain limited and focused primarily on those programs administered by agencies that already have existing evaluation resources. As a result, Departmental leadership, and other interested parties, such as OMB and Congress, will have limited data and information to assist in decision-making and the allocation of resources across the Department.

GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF OBLIGATIONS AND FTEs

Table OBPA-7. Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and FTEs (thousands of dollars, FTEs)

State/Territory/Country	2021		2022		2023		2024	
	Actual	FTE	Actual	FTE	Estimated	FTE	Estimated	FTE
District of Columbia	\$9,556	41	\$11,266	48	\$14,967	58	\$21,135	58
Obligations	9,556	41	11,266	48	14,967	58	21,135	58
Lapsing Balances	73	-	71	-	-	-	-	-
Total, Available	9,629	41	11,337	48	14,967	58	21,135	58

CLASSIFICATION BY OBJECTS

Table OBPA-8 Classification by Objects (thousands of dollars)

Item No.	Item	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Estimated	2024 Estimated
	Personnel Compensation:				
	Washington D.C.	\$5,284	\$5,776	\$7,988	\$8,403
11	Total personnel compensation	5,284	5,776	7,988	8,403
12	Personal benefits.....	1,851	2,130	2,877	3,027
13.0	Benefits for former personnel.....	2	2	-	-
	Total, personnel comp., and benefits	7,137	7,908	10,865	11,430
	Other Objects:				
21.0	Travel and transportation of persons	-	36	50	50
22.0	Transportation of things	1	1	1	1
23.1	Rental payments to GSA	1	-	-	-
23.3	Communications, utilities, and misc. charges.....	83	109	109	109
24.0	Printing and reproduction	64	47	88	88
25	Other contractual services	355	555	555	555
25.2	Other services from non-Federal sources	1,009	1,134	1,523	6,802
25.3	Other goods and services from Federal sources.....	551	751	1,051	1,375
25.4	Operation and maintenance of facilities	113	230	230	230
25.5	Research and development contracts.....	205	405	405	405
26.0	Supplies and materials.....	17	18	18	18
31.0	Equipment	20	72	72	72
	Total, Other Objects	2,419	3,358	4,102	9,705
99.9	Total, new obligations	9,556	11,266	14,967	21,135
	DHS Building Security Payments (included in 25.3)	\$10	\$24	\$24	\$24
	Information Technology Investments:				
	Outside Services (Consulting).....	-	2,230	1,051	1,077
	Total Major Investment 1	-	2,230	1,051	1,077
25.3	Mission Area WCF Transfers.....	-	1,638	2,230	2,275
	Total Non-Major Investment	-	1,638	2,230	2,275
	Total IT Investments	-	3,868	3,281	3,352
	Position Data:				
	Average Salary (dollars), ES Position	\$199,300	\$199,300	\$204,283	\$210,411
	Average Salary (dollars), GS Position	\$127,855	\$128,903	\$132,126	\$136,089
	Average Grade, GS Position.....	13.8	13.8	13.8	13.8

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STATUS OF PROGRAMS

The Office of Budget and Program Analysis (OBPA) coordinates the preparation of Departmental budget estimates, strategic planning, regulations, and legislative reports; administers systems for the allotment and apportionment of funds; provides analysis of U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) program issues, draft regulations, and budget proposals; and provides assistance to USDA policy makers in the development and execution of desired policies and programs. The Director serves as the Department's Budget Officer, Performance Improvement Officer, Chief Risk Officer, and Evaluation Officer. OBPA supports the USDA mission by contributing guidance, sound analysis, and objective information regarding the Department's budget, programs, performance, and legislative and regulatory actions.

Current Activities

OBPA ensures agency-developed material requiring action by the Office of the Secretary is analytically-sound, consistent with Administration policy, program, and budget requirements, and is consistent with statutory authorities. The office develops alternatives and supporting data for use by policy officials in making budget decisions, including reprogramming, supplemental funding requests, and reallocation of funding. OBPA ensures agencies are accountable for results and improving program delivery and effectiveness.

OBPA conducts reviews of current programs, proposed programs, agency shutdown contingency plans, and reorganization proposals, including reviews of problem areas perceived to affect management efficiency, program outcomes, and implementation of statutory requirements and Administration policy.

Under its legislative and regulatory duties, OBPA manages the preparation, review, and clearance of legislative reports and the annual legislative program and ensures consistency in agency development of legislative information. This also includes responding to inquiries, providing documentation to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to support proposals, maintaining transmittal and clearance records, and notifying agencies of policy decisions and OMB action. Additionally, the office coordinates a comprehensive analysis of the potential costs, benefits, and programmatic implications of proposed legislation to assist in the formulation of the Department's views. OBPA also serves as the focal point for implementation of major legislation such as the Farm Bill, ensuring that all provisions are assigned to the appropriate agency or office, and tracking and reporting on implementation progress such as developing regulations and spend plans, as appropriate.

In addition, OBPA manages the preparation, review, and clearance of regulatory actions and departmental directives to ensure consistency with Departmental standards, as well as Congressional and Administration requirements. The office reviews regulatory actions for consistency with regulatory requirements, Executive Orders, and authorizing statutes and prepares analytical and explanatory information for policy officials. The office plays a key role in coordinating the development of USDA's semiannual regulatory agenda and its clearance within the Department and by OMB. OBPA prepares rules and notices for publication in the Federal Register for topics that span multiple agencies, such as adjustments to civil monetary penalties and calls for regulatory reform suggestions from the public.

Each year, OBPA is responsible for preparing budget materials, including the USDA Budget Summary, Annual Performance Plan and Report, and Explanatory Notes, which are delivered to Congress and available to the public via the internet. OBPA prepares the guidance for each of these deliverables and coordinates the review process. Additionally, OBPA coordinates and provides appropriate assistance in the preparation of the USDA portion of the Administration's Regulatory Plan and the Semi-Annual Regulatory Agenda.

As needed, OBPA coordinates Departmental responses to Congressional questions for the record regarding Secretarial and Agency Appropriations hearings. OBPA also serves as the liaison with OMB, the Appropriations Committees, and the Congressional Budget Office.

Selected Examples of Recent Progress

During 2022, OBPA spearheaded several initiatives including: 1) developing and implementing an automated solution for more efficient workflow of apportionment analysis and approval and 2) designed and implemented the USDA 2022-2026 strategic plan and data-drive review process; and 3) coordinated the Department's implementation of supplemental funding, including activities supported by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act

Budget Formulation

Last year, OBPA worked closely with the Performance and Strategic Planning staff to integrate their process into the budget formulation exercises to assist Mission Areas and Agencies in correlating budget formulation with performance and strategic planning. In addition, OBPA worked to streamline the mandatory legislative proposals, narrowing the scope in order to facilitate focus on the issues.

Budget Execution Data Visualization

OBPA continues to leverage resources by collaborating with the Department of Education’s Budget Line of Business to improve the MAX Jira Apportionment Workflow Database, a Department-wide automated apportionment workflow system. The MAX Jira system replaced a manual, paper-based clearance process creating more efficient apportionment review and analysis and electronically notifies the next-level reviewer as the request transitions through the clearance process. MAX Jira also provides real-time status reports for better tracking, analyses, and accountability. In 2022, OBPA worked with the Department of Education’s Budget Line of Business to make internal updates to the system to make it more efficient and user friendly.

OBPA also continues its efforts to improve automated data collection for budget and financial obligations reporting by expanding and enhancing existing tools to track COVID-19 spending against appropriated amounts. During 2022, OBPA supported the dashboard that pulls financial data directly from the financial system of record Status of Funds via an ingest to a Tableau Data Lake. The dashboard refreshes weekly to provide weekly obligations of COVID-19 spending for timely reporting to external stakeholders. OBPA continues to cooperate with the Office of the Chief Financial Officer to automate and validate data input on which these visualizations are built to ensure accurate reporting and tracking of USDA obligations.

In 2022, OBPA processed 1,160 budget execution documents which included 336 apportionments (SF-132s), 41 internal apportionments 257 non-expenditure transfers (SF 1151s), 441 Advice of Allotments, 82 warrant requests, and 3 Treasury Account Fund Symbol (TAFS) Request.

Strategic Planning

In 2022, OBPA successfully brought together planning and performance as well as evidence and risk in the budget formulation cycle as well as Mission Area and agency accountability for progress toward USDA goals and objectives. In this capacity, in 2022 OBPA led the development of the USDA 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. OBPA used a hybrid top-down-bottom-up approach to developing the new Strategic Plan, designing, and implementing a process that engaged a diverse group of USDA senior executives and subject matter experts in the development of USDA goals and objectives as well as key performance indicators. Also, OBPA led the design and implementation of the Quarterly Strategic Review process, a data-driven discussion of organizational performance.

Evidence and Evaluation

The Director of OBPA is also the Department’s Evaluation Officer. During this fiscal year, USDA published its first Learning Agenda, with the USDA Strategic Plan and its second Annual Evaluation Plan. In addition, OBPA identified areas for increasing capacity for implementing the *Foundations for Evidence Based Policymaking Act of 2018*.

Legislative and Regulatory Coordination

During 2022, OBPA coordinated the review and clearance of 67 regulatory workplans, 367 funding documents, 43 rules exempt from OMB review, 40 rules deemed not significant by OMB, and 27 significant and economically significant rules requiring OMB review. OBPA also reviewed and approved 168 Federal Register notices and 69 policy or guidance documents that required OMB review. Finally, OBPA coordinated the review and clearance of 305 OMB interagency regulatory reviews.