2026 USDA EXPLANATORY NOTES – OFFICE OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

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PREFACE

This publication summarizes the fiscal year (FY) 2026 Budget for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Throughout this publication any reference to the "Budget" is in regard to the 2026 Budget, unless otherwise noted. All references to years refer to the fiscal year, except where specifically noted. The budgetary tables throughout this document show actual amounts for 2023 and 2024, Full-Year Continuing Resolution levels for 2025, and the President's Budget request for 2026. Amounts for 2025 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 2025, as extended by the American Relief Act, 2025 (P.L. 118-158, Division D). Amounts shown in 2025 and 2026 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 2023, 2024, 2025 and 2026.

In tables throughout this document, amounts equal to zero (0) are displayed as dashes (-). Amounts less than 0.5 and greater than zero are rounded and shown as a zero (0). This display treatment is used to prevent the masking of non-zero amounts that do not round up to one (1).

AGENCY-WIDE

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Office of the Chief Information Officer's (OCIO) mission is to serve the information needs of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). OCIO will support the achievement of USDA's diverse mission areas by offering agile, world-class technology solutions to its stakeholders and applying innovative approaches to recruiting and developing a highly skilled workforce. OCIO develops, delivers, and defends the business information technologies that empower every aspect of the USDA mission.

OCIO provides enterprise solutions for end-user support, cloud hosting solutions, geospatial solutions, application development, protection of mission-critical assets and wide-area network telecommunications services to USDA agencies and staff offices that are funded through the Working Capital Fund. These services are delivered by OCIO's Client Experience Center (CEC), Departmental Administration Information Technology Office (DAITO), Digital Infrastructure Services Center (DISC), Enterprise Cybersecurity Services (ECS), Enterprise Data and Analytics Services (EDAS), and the Enterprise Network Services (ENS), with large office locations in Missouri, Colorado, and Washington, D.C.

USDA is implementing a new operating model that will make it one of the best-managed agencies in the federal government. The model will enable the Department to transition to a facts-based, data-driven, and customer-focused organization. There is no choice but to modernize in the current operating and budget environment. OCIO's ability to effectively manage and modernize information technology (IT) systems will be a key factor in the Department achieving this vision.

The Clinger-Cohen Act of 1996 required the establishment of a Chief Information Officer (CIO) for all major Federal agencies. The Act requires USDA to maximize the value of IT acquisitions to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of USDA programs. The Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform (FITARA) Act of 2014 strengthens the role of USDA's CIO by charging the CIO, in a covered agency, to have a significant role in the decision processes for all annual and multi-year planning, programming, budgeting, and execution decisions, related to information technology. This enhanced authority further expands on the Secretary's Memorandum 1030-30, dated August 8, 1996, that established the OCIO. The CIO serves as the primary advisor to the Secretary on management, governance and oversight to IT. OCIO provides leadership for the Department's digital enterprise transformation and cyber security protection of USDA's program delivery and data assets.

To support this new approach, USDA has transitioned IT customer support services to enterprise services managed by the OCIO, providing cost-effective, high-quality Department-wide helpdesk, desktop, voice, and mobile shared services. OCIO will continue standardizing IT customer services by establishing user personas, performing application rationalization, and streamlining IT service delivery to provide the best value and customer experience. USDA will become a data-driven organization to ensure that leadership and employees have access to the data and analytical tools that support rapid and well-informed decisions. When data is not integrated, standardized, or of high quality and reliability, problems and opportunities remain obscured, impacting overall program performance.

USDA has continued building out its enterprise data and analytics platform and maturing management of its geospatial portfolio. USDA has expanded its enterprise business intelligence dashboards and exceeded 3.5 million views. USDA has launched new options for data analysts to conduct advanced analytics in the cloud and is modernizing its geospatial infrastructure to adopt cloud-based solutions. In addition, OCIO continues to lead in many areas, including data analytics, artificial intelligence, consolidation of like systems and software, replacement of legacy IT systems, and the cost savings that come from responsible, well-thought-out plans and initiatives.

USDA has led cybersecurity initiatives with the successful completion of all phases to date of Executive Order 14028, Improving the Nation's Cybersecurity, which contains over 150 requirements intended to modernize Cybersecurity in the federal enterprise. USDA focused on modernizing foundational cybersecurity practices such as the completion of Executive Order 14028, Improving the Nation's Cybersecurity and subsequent Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum 22-09, Moving the U.S. Government Toward Zero Trust (ZT) Cybersecurity Principles requirements.

A customer-focused approach to USDA's digital services requires a streamline of the Department's complex network of online resources that must be navigated to find or access services. Too often, customer data is not shared or integrated among similar programs. To improve these areas, USDA will create common standards and identify best practices in cloud technology that are easy to replicate, support/increase self-service capabilities, and integrate data for common customers. Providing the best possible customer service on a consistent basis also means ensuring that USDA employees can access the network anywhere, anytime, regardless of agency, program, or location, and that employees have the bandwidth necessary to fully utilize the technology. Among notable accomplishments, OCIO oversaw the monumental transition and modernization of 17 networks to one USDA network and the Enterprise Infrastructure Solutions Contract (EIS) award. EIS is a comprehensive solution-based contract vehicle that addresses all federal agency IT telecommunications and infrastructure requirements. It reduces agency costs and acquisition time by leveraging an existing contract and allows agencies to focus on missions.

The OCIO Headquarters is in Washington, D.C. As of September 30, 2024, 1,581 full-time permanent employees were funded by appropriated funds (116) and Working Capital Funds (1,464).

OIG AND GAO REPORTS

Table OCIO-1. Closed, Implemented OIG Reports

ID	Date	Title	Result
50503-0011-12	06/27/2024	Fiscal Year 2023 FISMA Audit	Recommendation 1 – OCIO management should improve internal processes so that internal ATO reviews are completed on time, prior to the existing ATOs expiring. Recommendation 2 – OCIO management should improve oversight over contractors and enforce the timely completion of ATOs, in accordance with USDA policy. Recommendation 3 –

ID	Date	Title	Result
			OCIO management should update existing policy and procedures to define the conditions under which temporary reauthorization decisions may be granted (i.e., systems scheduled for retirement and disposal). Recommendation 5 – OCIO management should design and implement a quality control process to validate that designated management are incorporating and complying with the requirements of DR 3505-003. Recommendation 6 – OCIO management should design and implement a process to ensure access control documentation, such as application user listings with the required data elements (i.e., account creation and recertification dates), is retained to support its system of internal controls and operational needs as required by GAO standards. Recommendation 11 – OCIO management should implement a quality control process to validate whether SSPs adhere to USDA Standard Operating Procedures for the RMF and NIST SPs 800-18, 800-27, and 800-53 and accurately reflect the current system environment. Recommendation 12 – OCIO management should implement a quality control process to validate whether system-level SSPs, such as those tested, accurately reflect implementation statuses of their security controls and/or include all interfaces. Recommendation 16 – OCIO management should implement an effective quality control process to monitor that security controls are tested and documented during the assessments within the established annual timelines. Recommendation 17 – OCIO management should develop and implement an effective review process to ensure the required

ID	Date	Title	Result
			security controls are assessed in accordance with the information system's security baseline categorization (e.g., High, Moderate, or Low) and designation as a HVA, as applicable. Recommendation 18 – OCIO management should implement an effective quality control process for reviewing security control assessment plans either on a risk-based rotation or as needed basis. Such reviews will ensure the test plans incorporate the required controls for each application's baseline. Recommendation 19 - OCIO management should develop department-wide communication or training to ensure USDA stakeholders and system personnel understand the requirements for performing and overseeing security control assessments. Recommendation 20 – OCIO management should ensure a formal risk waiver is procured when selected security controls cannot be tested during the annual assessment. Recommendation 21 – OCIO management should update the USDA ISC IRP to be aligned with DM 3505-005 and OMB policy. Recommendation 22 – OCIO management should develop and implement quantitative and qualitative performance measures over the timely remediation of critical and high vulnerabilities to hold the Department and mission areas accountable for remediating vulnerabilities.
50801-0006-12	07/09/2024	Security Over USDA Mobile Applications	Recommendation 1 – OCIO needs to implement an effective process to prepare and maintain an inventory of all USDA-developed mobile apps and work with the agencies and staff offices to perform routine reconciliations to ensure the USDA inventory is complete and accurate.

ID	Date	Title	Result
			OCIO needs to define role and responsibilities for USDA-developed mobile apps. OCIO needs to implement a process to verify that USDA-developed mobile apps adhere to Departmental regulations concerning software assets, which include identifying and mitigating vulnerabilities.
50801-0003-12	09/11/2024	Independent Service Auditor's Report on the Office of the Chief Information Officer's Description of Its Application Hosting and Security Systems and on the Suitability of the Design and Operating Effectiveness of Its Controls For the period October 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024.	No Findings

Table OCIO-2. Closed, Implemented GAO Reports

ID	Date	Title	Result
24-106291	01/09/2024	Cybersecurity: OMB Should Improve Information Security Performance Metrics	No Findings

AVAILABLE FUNDS AND FTES

Table OCIO-3. Available Funds and FTEs (thousands of dollars, FTEs)

Item	2023 Actual	FTEs	2024 Actual	FTEs	2025 Estimated	FTEs	2026 Estimated	FTEs
Salaries and Expenses:								
Discretionary Appropriations	$87,534	124	$91,000	116	$91,000	122	$91,000	102
Total Adjusted Appropriation	87,534	124	91,000	116	91,000	122	91,000	102
Balance Available, SOY	6,802	-	1,856	-	-	-	-	-
Balances Interchanges	4,750	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Recoveries, Other	844	-		-	-	-	-	-
Total Available	99,930	124	92,856	116	91,000	122	91,000	102
Lapsing Balances	-6,089	-	-111	-	-	-	-	-
Balance Available, EOY	-2,896	-	-319	-	-	-	-	-
Total Obligations, OCIO	90,945	124	92,436	116	91,000	122	91,000	102

* This table assumes a reduced 2026 FTE baseline due to 2025 voluntary staff separations and administrative cost efficiencies.

PERMANENT POSITIONS BY GRADE AND FTES

Table OCIO-3. Permanent Positions by Grade and FTEs

Item	2023 Actual HQ	2023 Actual Field	2023 Actual Total	2024 Actual HQ	2024 Actual Field	2024 Actual Total	2025 Estimated HQ	2025 Estimated Field	2025 Estimated Total	2026 Estimated HQ	2026 Estimated Field	2026 Estimated Total
SES.....	5	-	5	5	-	5	6	-	6	5	-	5
SL.....	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GS-15.....	14	7	21	11	11	22	11	7	18	7	5	12
GS-14.....	31	22	53	20	28	48	21	35	56	17	34	51
GS-13.....	16	13	29	12	13	25	10	21	31	12	13	25
GS-12.....	5	3	8	1	5	6	-	4	4	-	3	3
GS-11.....	1	-	1	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	-	1
GS-9	4	-	4	-	3	3	1	4	5	1	3	3
GS-5	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1			1
GS-3	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Perm. FT EOY.....	78	46	124	53	63	116	51	71	122	44	58	102
FTE*.....	78	46	124	53	63	116	51	71	122	44	58	102

* This table assumes a reduced 2026 FTE baseline due to 2025 voluntary staff separations and administrative cost efficiencies.

VEHICLE FLEET

Motor Vehicle Fleet

The mission of the Client Experience Center (CEC) within the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) is to support a global customer base and their respective business mission areas as the sole IT service provider of choice. Fleet vehicles are located across the country and Puerto Rico. Mission requirements dictate that IT Specialists drive fleet vehicles to the many offices and services centers providing IT support and equipment deployment. OCIO-CEC participates in the USDA interagency fleet vehicle-sharing program helping to reduce the number of vehicles needed overall and increase the per vehicle average utilization rate. Employees across the country are using the program extensively with expected vehicle-sharing increases to come.

Replacement Criteria

Fleet vehicles are replaced in accordance with established vehicle-class replacement standards. Optimal replacement cycle analyses, vehicle allocation methodology (VAM) and total cost of ownership / leasing and lifecycle model analyses are integral to the sourcing strategy and decision-making process.

Reductions to Fleet

Mission requirements dictate the need for retaining vehicles within the inventory and are only retained through justifiable means as mission-critical and best fit within the overall optimal fleet profile. Vehicle utilization is constantly monitored and weighed in determining whether each fleet asset maintains a place within the inventory. VAM studies, weighting, scoring, optimization, and value analyses are integral to the strategy and decision-making process and are conducted to determine whether a vehicle should be retained, transferred, reassigned, or eliminated from the inventory

Table OCIO-4. Size, Composition, and Annual Costs of Motor Vehicle Fleet

Item	Sedans and Station Wagons	Vans	SUVs	Light Trucks 4X2	Light Trucks 4X4	Medium Duty Vehicles	Buses	Heavy Duty Vehicles	Total Vehicles	Annual Operating Costs
2018 End of Year Operating Inventory	**224**	**-**	**48**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**272**	**$1,098,112**
2023 End of Year Operating Inventory	**119**	**-**	**81**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**200**	**995,288**
2024 Actual Acquisitions	-	-	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2024 Actual Disposals	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2024 End of Year Operating Inventory	**94**	**-**	**106**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**200**	**1,194,346**
2025 Planned Acquisitions	0	-	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2025 Planned Disposals	30	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2025 End of Year Operating Inventory	**64**	**-**	**134**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**198**	**1,433,215**
2026 Planned Acquisitions	0	-	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2026 Planned Disposals	20	-	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2026 End of Year Operating Inventory	**44**	**-**	**154**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**-**	**198**	**1,719,858**

Note: Number of vehicles by type include vehicles owned by the agency and leased from commercial sources or GSA.
Annual Operating Costs exclude acquisition costs and gains from the sale of vehicles as shown in FAST.

Table OCIO-5. Statement of Proposed Acquisition of Passenger Motor Vehicles

Fiscal Year	Net Active Fleet, SOY	Disposals	Replacements	Additions	Total Acquisitions	Net Active Fleet, EOY
2023	200	20	20	0	20	200
2024	200	25	25	0	25	200
2025	200	31	29	0	29	198
2026	198	20	20	0	20	198

SHARED FUNDING PROJECTS

Table OCIO-7. Shared Funding Projects (thousands of dollars)

Item	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Estimated	2026 Estimated
Working Capital Fund:				
Administrative Services:				
AskUSDA Contact Center	$35	$109	$139	$139
General Counsel Legal Compliance	-	-	111	1,376
Material Management Service	2,882	2,546	2,941	2,943
Mail and Reproduction Services	86	86	113	115
Integrated Procurement Systems	356	380	309	311
Personnel and Document Security Program	78	90	92	92
Procurement Operations Services	5,945	6,810	6,859	7,005
Human Resources Enterprise Management Systems	20	45	120	121
Subtotal	9,402	10,066	10,684	12,102
Communications:				
Creative Media & Broadcast Center	26	24	17	8
Finance and Management:				
National Finance Center	431	490	466	468
Financial Management Systems	1,234	1,563	1,064	1,072
Internal Control Support Services	204	210	190	190
Financial Management Support Services	468	518	99	100
Subtotal	2,337	2,781	1,819	1,830
Information Technology:				
Client Experience Center	8,567	15,560	9,052	9,680
Department Administration Information Technology Office	769	765	938	943
Digital Infrastructure Services Center	33,382	27,354	25,727	25,592
Enterprise Cybersecurity Services	786	2,405	2,004	2,004
Enterprise Data and Analytics Services	1,176	1,206	1,180	1,172
Enterprise Network Services	23,207	40,656	4,213	5,063
Subtotal	67,887	87,946	43,114	44,454
Correspondence Management Services:				
Office of the Executive Secretariat	39	41	21	24
Total, Working Capital Fund	79,691	100,858	55,655	58,418
Department-Wide Shared Cost Programs:				
Agency Partnership Outreach	118	115	125	125
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility**	32	41	9	-
Medical Services	64	65	64	64
NCR Interpreting Services	23	31	24	24
Office of Customer Experience	51	47	50	50
Physical Security	72	74	96	96
Security Detail	81	84	132	132
Security Operations Program	112	117	123	123
Talent Group	58	52	55	55
TARGET Center	27	25	26	26
Total, Department-Wide Reimbursable Programs	693	709	751	742
E-Gov:				
Budget Formulation and Execution LoB	1	1	1	1
Financial Management LoB	1	1	1	1
Geospatial LoB	13	13	13	13
Human Resources Management LoB	5	5	5	5
Total, E-Gov	20	20	20	20
Agency Total	80,404	101,587	56,426	59,180

*This table is based on a preliminary 2026 estimate, which will be adjusted at a later date to reflect the Department's updated posture and footprint.
**In alignment with the current Administration's priorities, the 2025 amounts reflect expenses incurred prior to January 20, 2025.

ACCOUNT 1: OFFICE OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

APPROPRIATIONS LANGUAGE

The appropriations language follows (new language underscored):

Office of the Chief Information Officer

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Chief Information Officer, $91,000,000, of which no less than $77,428,000 is for cybersecurity requirements of the Department.

LEAD-OFF TABULAR STATEMENT

Table OCIO-8. Lead-Off Tabular Statement (In dollars)

Item	Amount
Enacted, 2025	$91,000,000
Change in Appropriation	-
Budget Estimate, 2026	91,000,000

PROJECT STATEMENTS

Table OCIO-9. Project Statement on Basis of Appropriations (thousands of dollars, FTEs)

Item	2023 Actual	FTEs	2024 Actual	FTEs	2025 Estimated	FTEs	2026 Estimated	FTEs	Inc. or Dec.	FTE Inc. or Dec.	Chg Key
Discretionary Appropriations:											
OCIO	$87.534	124	$91,000	133	$91,000	122	$91,000	102	-	-20	(1)
Subtotal	87,534	124	91,000	133	91,000	122	91,000	102	-	-20	
Total Adjusted Approp	87,534	124	91,000	133	91,000	122	91,000	102	-	-20	
Add back:											
Transfers In and Out, Rescissions	-4,750	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Transfers Out:											
Working Capital Funds	4,750	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Transfers Out	4,750	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Balances Interchange	4,750	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Recoveries, Other	844	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Bal. Available, SOY	6,802	-	1,856	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Available	99,930	124	92,856	133	91,000	122	91,000	102	-	-20	
Lapsing Balances	-6,089	-	-111	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Bal. Available, EOY	-2,896	-	-319	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Obligations	90,945	124	92,426	133	91,000	122	91,000	102	-	-20	

Table OCIO-10. Project Statement on Basis of Obligations (thousands of dollars, FTEs)

Item	2023 Actual	FTEs	2024 Actual	FTEs	2025 Estimated	FTEs	2026 Estimated	FTEs	Inc. or Dec.	FTE Inc. or Dec.
Discretionary Obligations:										
OCIO.....	$90,945	124	$92,426	116	$26,000	122	$31,091	102	+$5,091	-20
Subtotal Disc Obligations...	90,945	124	92,426	116	79,281	122	78,991	102	-290	-20
Total Obligations	90.945	124	92,426	116	88,447	122	88,081	102	-366	-20
Add back:										
Lapsing Balances ..	6,089	-	111	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Balances Available, EOY:										
OCIO.....	2,896	-	319	-	393	-	200	-	-193	-
Total Bal. Available, EOY....	2,896	-	319	-	3,833	-	412	-	-3,421	-
Total Available ...	99,930	124	92,856	116	92,280	122	88,493	102	-3,787	-20
Less:										
Total Transfers Out	-4,750	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Recoveries, Other .	-844	-	-	-	-55	-	-49	-	+6	-
Balances Interchange.....	-4,750	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bal. Available, SOY	-6,802	-	-1,856	-	-3,731	-	-3,833	-	-102	-
Total Appropriation ..	82,784	124	91,000	116	88,900	122	87,141	102	-1,759	-20

JUSTIFICATION OF CHANGES

Office of the Chief Information Officer

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

1. A reprioritization with the base request of which $4,871,000 for funding Artificial Intelligence (AI), IT Governance Suite and USDA Digital Service and a decrease of 20 FTEs ($91,000,000 and 122 FTEs available in 2025).

   A) Reprioritization of $3,000,000 million to establish an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Program within the Office of the Chief Information Officer. This reprogramming would enable OCIO to lead the implementation of OMB M-25-21 including developing AI policy, establishing AI governance, maintaining an AI inventory, coordinating AI adoption, delivering AI training, AI security, assessing risks for high impact AI use cases, and support adoption of geospatial AI (GeoAI). This would establish a reliable base funding level for AI tools and infrastructure and maintain an AI Lab for evaluations and prototyping, removing a key barrier to adoption as required by OMB M-25-21. This program would also address the data aspects of AI, including inventorying, privacy, and data management of data used for AI. Finally, this funding would support offensive and defensive use of AI in cybersecurity to ensure that AI is adopted in a trustworthy manner while protecting USDA. This aligns with the White House executive order on "Removing Barriers to American Leadership in Artificial Intelligence", OMB M-25-21 "Accelerating Federal Use of AI through Innovation, Governance, and Public Trust", OMB M-25-22 "Driving Efficient Acquisition of Artificial Intelligence in Government", and the OCIO 2025 Interim Strategic Plan. Additionally, in pursuit of streamlining workforce efforts, facilities, and other government efficiencies, OCIO has also reduced staffing by twenty (20) full-time equivalent employees and OCIO will also not renew multiple contracts in 2026, to pivot resources to mission priorities, such as AI Program.

   B) Reallocation of $1,471,000 for modernization of governance management and oversight process and systems. USDA has begun the process of modernizing its IT Governance Tool Suite with a new capital planning and investment system (AgMax2.0) in 2024. As part of this process, USDA will need to modernize the enterprise architecture system (EAVE), the audit management system, and the Section 508 tracking system. The current set of tools cannot be sustained to maintain required financial reporting requirements or to be compliant with current executive orders relating to audit management and Section 508 Compliance. Currently USDA is running at high risk in its ability to capture and maintain financial information, and without the completion of this second phase funding the current systems will fail. USDA depends on these systems to execute all IT contracts in USDA, putting mission critical work at risk. If these systems are not stabilized, USDA will not be able to plan and execute its IT portfolio.

   C) Reallocation of $470,000 for modernization for the USDA Digital Service. Funding in the amount of $400,000 for the USDA Digital Service would enable the office to fund and provide additional key support to the Department in the effective cross-mission-area execution and implementation of key priorities under the 21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act (21st Century IDEA Act), which includes the supplementary OMB Memorandum M-23-22, "Delivering a Digital First Public Experience.", the Executive Order on Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Rebuild Trust in Government, and tech talent requirements of the Executive Order on the Safe, Secure, and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence. Specifically, this increase would enable key investment in service support to integrate human-centered design approaches into all aspects of IT design and solutioning across the Department that would not otherwise be possible. This is a key goal under the USDA IT Strategic Plan

GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF OBLIGATIONS AND FTES

Table OCIO-11. Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and FTEs for Office of the Chief Information Officer (thousands of dollars, FTEs)

State/Territory/Country	2023 Actual	FTEs	2024 Actual	FTEs	2025 Estimated	FTEs	2026 Estimated	FTEs
Alabama	-	-	-	-	$1,059	1	$1,059	1
Arizona	-	-	-	-	1,059	1	1,059	1
Arkansas	$2,021	2	$2,128	2	-	-	-	-
California	2,021	2	2,128	2	-	-	-	-
Colorado	8,104	8	8,534	8	2,238	3	2,238	3
District of Columbia	54,372	75	53,911	67	36,549	49	36,440	39
Georgia	1,058	1	1,114	1	-	-	2,238	3
Indiana	-	-	-	-	1,059	1	-	-
Kansas	1,078	1	1,114	1	2,238	3	2,238	3
Louisiana	5,987	6	6,305	6	1,059	1	1,059	1
Maryland	4,026	4	4,240	4	18,715	22	17,445	19
Mississippi	-	-	-	-	1,059	1	1,059	1
Missouri	3,963	17	4,173	17	4,005	15	10,456	13
Nebraska	1,058	1	1,114	1	1,165	1	1,165	1
New Mexico	3,045	3	3,207	3	-	-	-	-
North Carolina	-	-	-	-	2,108	2	2,108	2
North Dakota	1,058	1	1,114	1	1,165	1	-	-
Ohio	-	-	-	-	1,059	1	1.059	1
Oregon	1,058	1	1,114	1	-	-	-	-
Pennsylvania	1,058	1	1,114	1	2,238	3	2,238	3
Tennessee	1,058	1	1,114	1	-	-	-	-
Texas	-	-	-	-	2,108	2	2,108	2
Virginia	-	-	-	-	6,712	9	5,972	8
West Virginia	-	-	-	-	1,059	1	1,059	1
Obligations	90,945	124	92,425	116	91,000	122	91,000	102
Lapsing Balances	-6,089	-	-111	-	-	-	-	-
Bal. Available, EOY	-	-	-319	-	-	-	-	-
Total, Available	84,856	124	91,996	116	91,000	122	91,000	102

CLASSIFICATION BY OBJECTS

Table OCIO-12. Classification by Objects (thousands of dollars)

Item No.	Item	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Estimated	2026 Estimated
	Personnel Compensation:				
	Headquarters	$8,668	$7,722	$7,502	$7,282
	Personnel Compensation, Field	6,720	7,847	9,047	6,597
11	Total personnel compensation	15,388	15,569	16,549	13,879
12	Personal benefits	5,822	5,704	5,894	4,565
13.0	Benefits for former personnel	12	3	3	2
	Total, personnel comp. and benefits	21,222	21,276	22,446	18,446
	Other Objects:				
21.0	Travel and transportation of persons	232	86	86	86
22.0	Transportation of things	1	12	12	12
23.1	Rental payments to GSA	210	-	-	-
23.3	Communications, utilities, and misc. charges	1,789	140	140	140
24.0	Printing and reproduction	36	282	282	282
25.1	Advisory and assistance services	40,735	7,631	7,631	7,631
25.2	Other services from non-Federal sources	6	6,815	6,815	11,158
25.3	Other goods and services from Federal sources	2,215	46,424	46,424	43,485
25.4	Operation and maintenance of facilities	21,457	8,978	8,978	8,978
25.5	Research and development contracts	101	552	552	553
25.7	Operation and maintenance of equipment	-	11	11	11
26.0	Supplies and materials	1,145	14	14	14
31.0	Equipment	1,796	168	168	168
42.0	Insurance Claims and Indemnities	-	37	37	37
	Total, Other Objects	69,723	71,150	68,554	72,554
99.9	Total, new obligations	90,945	92,426	91,000	91,000
	DHS Building Security Payments (included in 25.3)	$11	$9	-	-
	Information Technology Investments:				
	Major Investment 1				
11	Internal Labor	$2	$6	$0	-
	Total Major Investment 1	2	6	0	-
	Mission Area Standard Investment Totals	24	17	13	$19
	Total Non-Major Investment	24	17	13	19
	Total IT Investments	26	23	14	19
	Cybersecurity				
	Human Capital	$2,465	$693	$668	$672
	Sector Risk Management	-	353	376	380
	Identify	82,029	85,303	82,379	82,503
	Protect	57,461	65,106	69,666	69,868
	Detect	4,386	20,623	24,108	25,889
	Respond	4,190	5,593	6,040	6,074
	Recover	3,526	5,139	5,485	5,528
	Total Cybersecurity	154,057	182,810	188,722	190,914
	Position Data:				
	Average Salary (dollars), ES Position	$184,842	$108,000	$113,616	$115,888
	Average Salary (dollars), GS Position	$128,000	$33,187	$34,913	$35,611
	Average Grade, GS Position	10.2	9.9	10.2	10.0

* This table assumes a reduced 2026 FTE baseline due to 2025 voluntary staff separations and administrative cost efficiencies.

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STATUS OF PROGRAMS

Office of the Chief Information Officer

Current Activities

Cybersecurity (USDA Chief Information Security Officer (CISO))

As the USDA enterprise cybersecurity, the Cybersecurity and Privacy Operations Center (CPOC), oversees enterprise-wide cybersecurity functions, privacy, risk management, threat protection, and compliance to ensure the safety of USDA's food and agriculture mission. These functions are intended to defend the organization against unauthorized activity by detecting, monitoring, and analyzing suspicious activity. The CPOC leads the oversight of cybersecurity: infrastructure, workforce, training, and privacy programs; ensuring the confidentiality, privacy, integrity and availability of the Department's information and information resources. In addition, the CPOC serves as the authority on all matters concerning the Federal Information Security Modernization Act of 2014 (FISMA) and other laws and policies that cover trusted internet connection(s), internet of things (IOT), end points, mobile computing devices, cloud environments, applications, High Value Assets (HVAs), Industrial Control Systems (ICS) and IT and operational technology (OT) assets. CPOC's 2024 accomplishments are numerous, the following are just a few of them.

The Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs established skilled security teams as a high impact cybersecurity modernization requirement for Federal Civilian Branch agencies and required Agencies to reach and maintain a minimum of 90 percent staffing of cyber positions by December 31, 2023. CPOC developed effective strategies for identifying a qualified pool of applicants, quickly filled positions and started closing skills gaps. USDA's cybersecurity workforce has roughly 350 cybersecurity specialists at a 90 percent fill rate. CPOC has 46 percent of the department's cybersecurity specialists, and those specialists are assessed regularly regarding job required proficiencies according to the National Initiative for Cybersecurity Education (NICE) framework. CPOC invested in building cybersecurity specific leadership competence and experience through leadership programs designed to promote developmental opportunities such as coaching, mentoring, 360 feedback assessments, and rotational assignments.

CPOC established the USDA ZT Strategy and Implementation Plan for 2024 to 2028 to offer a comprehensive strategic approach for deploying ZT concepts and capabilities. The strategy aligns seamlessly with Executive Order 14028 Improving the Nation's Cybersecurity, the National Institute of Standards and Technology's (NIST) Special Publication (SP) 800-207 ZT Architecture, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency's ZT Model 2.0, and the Department's own Enterprise Zero Trust Architecture (ZTA) regulation. Additionally, this strategy guides USDA in the development, implementation, maintenance, and documentation of Federally compliant ZTA allowing Mission Areas, Agencies, and Staff Offices to develop and implement their own tailored ZTA procedures.

The ZT Strategy and Implementation Plan outlines a clear and comprehensive roadmap for implementing key measures to enhance cyber resiliency. This includes detailed guidance on how to apply ZT principles to all aspects of the Department's operations. The strategy marks a pivotal moment in USDA's commitment to protecting sensitive information and maintaining operational resilience in the face of evolving cyber threats. The strategy recognizes that cybersecurity is an ongoing process and emphasizes the importance of continuous improvement.

USDA released a Departmental Regulation (DR) that establishes the Information Technology Security Baselines (ITSB) for the Agency to protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information. The security controls outlined in this DR are derived from the NIST SP 800-53B and apply to all USDA Mission Areas, agencies, staff offices, and personnel. The policies, procedures, and technical configurations are implemented on the Agency's information systems for all records management, generated, collected, provided, transmitted, stored, maintained, or accessed on behalf of USDA. This document supports USDA's Mission Areas, agencies, and staff offices to develop, implement, maintain, and document security for the protection of information systems or services (including Cloud-based services) against risks. As part of this policy, 700 detailed cybersecurity control

parameters were documented and are currently being used to effectively manage and measure cyber risks.

The USDA's Privacy Continuous Monitoring (PCM) Strategic Plan has been updated to ensure full compliance with privacy laws and policies, focusing on enhancing and optimizing the Privacy Program through an improved PCM strategy. The updated plan ensures that USDA's privacy policies and practices are consistently implemented and maintained over time. This includes ongoing monitoring and assessment of privacy controls, processes, and data handling practices to identify and mitigate potential risks or noncompliance with privacy requirements. Through continuous monitoring of privacy-related activities, USDA can quickly detect and respond to breaches, safeguard sensitive information, and maintain the trust of its customers and stakeholders.

CPOC implemented an Information System Continuous Monitoring process that is being utilized to enhance FISMA improvement across the Department. This new program has enhanced the overall governance and compliance of USDA information system boundaries and ensures that assessed controls are being performed within USDA standards. The integration of these new process improvements has been vital to the identity and the remediation of information system boundary risks and are addressing the Department's FISMA compliance gaps. This effort completed 491 Information System Boundary evaluations, performed over 40,000 boundary evaluation checks, identified over 5,000 FISMA reportable risks, developed 13 Mission Area Risk Profiles, completed 13 Mission Area Risk Reports, and developed a comprehensive Risk Portal which is used as the mechanism for which all this data is tracked, re-mediated and reported. This risk portal provides Mission Areas with easy access to identify information system boundary risks and to see status of their boundaries.

In the beginning of 2024, the USDA Cybersecurity Expo virtual event took place during Cybersecurity Awareness Month, with 692 participants in attendance over the two-day event. Attendees heard the latest cybersecurity issues, visited dozens of vendors in the virtual Exhibit Hall, connected with experts and colleagues in the Networking Center, and had great fun testing their knowledge in the cybersecurity escape rooms. Cybersecurity professionals from the Federal Government, academia, and the private sector provided insight and practical information on a range of program topics, including threat intelligence, ransomware, federal cyber workforce management, ZT, improving information security, cybersecurity culture, and password psychology. In addition, there was an expanded effort to introduce cybersecurity students to USDA. As part of this effort, over 190 HBCUs and HACUs with cybersecurity programs were invited to the 2024 USDA Cybersecurity Expo.

Enterprise Data and Analytics

The Enterprise Data Management Center (EDMC) is led by the USDA's Chief Data Officer (CDO) and represents the hub of USDA's data program. The CDO's vision is to realize the full potential of USDA's data and workforce to make better decisions, maximize the impact of citizen-facing programs, and provide the public with easier access to data that can solve national problems and spark innovation. The role of the CDO was established by the Foundations for Evidence Based Policy-Making Act and requires the CDO to manage data as a strategic asset. The CDO holds a dual role as the Chief Artificial Intelligence Officer and is responsible for the USDA's nascent AI program. A branch of EDMC, the Enterprise Geospatial Management Office (EGMO), leads USDA's large geospatial program. EGMO's role is to coordinate geospatial activities through governance, geospatial data management, policy development, training, and enterprise solutions. The EGMO office is led by USDA's Geospatial Information Officer (GIO).

EDMC refreshed the USDA Data Strategy for 2024 – 2026. The new data strategy will provide strategic direction for USDA on topics such as the data workforce, data governance and leadership, data infrastructure, open data, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) governance. The data strategy was drafted with input from multiple stakeholders across USDA and aligned to the IT Strategic Plan and USDA Strategic Plan.

EDMC developed initial guidance for Generative AI governance at USDA. The guidance balanced risk with innovation on a promising yet potentially risky emerging technology. They set up a process for reporting requirements for USDA-wide Artificial Intelligence use case inventory, collected, and

reported to the OMB and the public, ensuring compliance with relevant Executive Orders and OMB guidance while still promoting innovation across USDA.

EDMC has led several AI initiatives including developing USDA's AI Strategy, pursuing low-cost rapid-development AI hack-a-thons, delivering training on AI to the workforce, and maturing internal capabilities through detail assignments and fellowships.

EDMC built federal data analytics capabilities using non-traditional and scalable methods, such as Presidential Management Fellows rotations and appointments, US Digital Corps Fellows programs, Operation Warfighter, Pathways interns, and detail opportunities. Those hiring activities brought top talent to EDMC, and in some cases, at no cost to USDA. They launched the first annual data cohort of 10 student interns through the Virtual Student Federal Service program, embedding data analytics student interns across USDA to work on open data projects.

EDMC focused on the career and skill development of the data workforce by expanding the USDA Data Science Training Program (DSTP) to its largest annual cohort to date, soliciting facilitator volunteers from within USDA and across the federal government, and adding additional artificial intelligence training in the advanced track of the program. Sponsored several data analytics competitions and engagements to upskill the workforce and promote awareness of USDA's data assets, such as the annual Ag Data Viz Day, USDA Geospatial Day, data visualization competitions both internal to USDA and through partnerships with organizations.

EDMC made technological and business enhancements to USDA's enterprise analytics platform: Enterprise Data Analytics Platform and Tool Set (EDAPT). EDMC expanded interactive data visualizations to be accessible to anyone in USDA, enabling greater ease of data sharing. These business intelligence products deliver operational efficiency by increasing the access to timely information across all levels of the organization. Use of the platform continues to increase with 18 percent growth compared to the prior year while keeping costs constant. EDMC continued efforts to catalog data assets across USDA in the USDA Data Catalog, providing visibility of data assets and promoting reuse across the Department, ultimately reducing data duplication and storage. EDMC launched the first EDAPT office hours and expanded other topic-specific office hours to provide information on the platform. Conducted the annual Pulse Survey and identified areas of success and opportunities for improvement. They expanded the use of EDAPT's Open Data Platform, providing more agencies with the ability to share data visualizations with the public.

EDMC expanded partnerships across USDA to strengthen the data program. Partnered with USDA Chief Technology Officer and Executive Director of USDA Digital Service on several initiatives, such as stronger vendor management and direction in alignment with the USDA IT and Data Strategy, coordination with the USDA Cloud Working Group, prioritizing a joint Innovation Lab for artificial intelligence and emerging technologies, and data and IT workforce hiring initiatives. These hiring initiatives included participation in IT and data workforce hiring fairs and cross-government hiring activities for data and IT positions. Partnered with the Deputy Performance Improvement Officer (DPIO) to find ways to bring the data and performance work closer together in the spirit of Evidence Act coordination, resulting in data leadership representation and data preparation for revamped Quarterly Strategic Reviews with the USDA Deputy Secretary.

EDMC EGMO executed a new five-year $110M Enterprise Agreement to provide Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data, services, training, and software. USDA Mission Areas, agencies, and staff offices use geospatial data to ensure evidence-based procedures, ensure continuity of operations, make decisions, and inform policies. Geospatial applications support the delivery of all key USDA programs including trade, emergency response, farm loans, conservation, research, forestry, fire, and pandemic response.

EDMC EGMO published DR 3465-001 Enterprise Geospatial Data Management. This DR establishes policy and provides guidance for the management of USDA's geospatial portfolio for Enterprise Geospatial Data Management at USDA. This DR defines the strategic direction necessary to optimize the management of USDA geospatial data and geospatial infrastructure. It establishes the policy framework to implement the Geospatial Data Act (GDA) and National Spatial Data Infrastructure

(NSDI) guidance. Many policy elements also reflect Mission Area, agency, staff office, executive, and geospatial program management requirements, and demonstrate an enterprise-wide public service enhancement.

EDMC EGMO commenced a Tribal Outreach program with the Office of Tribal Relations (OTR). Together, they are developing a geospatial application to track all USDA engagements with Tribal communities and colleges. Additionally, OTR, the Forest Service, EGMO, and Mission Area Tribal Liaisons are working on outreach to students at Tribal colleges to introduce them to USDA Geospatial and to Geographic Information Systems.

USDA Digital Service (DS)

The USDA Digital Service (DS) Fellows Program will have four fellows working with mission areas across the Department to help accelerate and drive improved digital service delivery during their two-year tours of duty. Key IT Workforce Strategic Plan activities will continue to recruit, retain, upskill and reskill the USDA IT and Data Workforce to be ready to meet modern IT mission delivery needs of our stakeholders, including the creation of key performance metrics dashboards and implementing best practices across IT workforce plans across the Department. Digital Transformation efforts to help mission areas increase digitization of forms and meet other key targets of the 21st Century Integrated Digital Experience Act (IDEA Act) are also prioritized for 2025 and 2026.

IT Portfolio Management Division (ITPMD)

Information Technology Portfolio Management Division (ITPMD) governs and provides oversight of 203 total IT investments, managing USDA's $3 billion IT investment portfolio in alignment with Clinger Cohen Act, FITARA and several other laws.

ITPMD is responsible for ensuring that the Department's IT investments deliver products that result in business value to the agencies, while providing a positive return on the IT investments for taxpayers. The ITPMD assists with the implementation of IT Governance through strategic initiatives, sound structure, oversight, regulatory compliance, accountability, transparency, and the fiscal responsibility of IT decisions.

One of the focuses of the program is to reinforce the requirements from the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, the CIO and the OMB to the mission areas ensuring transparency, accountability, and the alignment of Agency IT portfolio of investments and USDA strategic priorities throughout the investment life cycle. Verification and validation of these requirements are done through monthly, quarterly, and annual investment reviews and reporting to the USDA and OMB, which includes CIO investment evaluations, acquisition approval requests (AAR) reviews and decisions along with externally reporting on a quarterly basis the OMB integrated data collections. Additionally, there are monthly and/or quarterly Governance Board Reviews held at the Mission Areas and the Department levels as well as ad-hoc Program Reviews and Tech-Stat Reviews conducted with the USDA Senior Leaders.

IT Portfolio Management aids USDA in addressing transparency and accountability through the Department-wide implementation of industry best practices, and the OMB adopted taxonomy known as Technology Business Management (TBM), which is the sharing of information at the lowest level that reduces silos, enables cost transparency, improves customer experiences and accountability, and supports data-driven decisions across lines of businesses (IT, Finance, Budget, Acquisition and HR). In partnership with the Office of Budget and Program Analysis and the Office of the Chief Financial Officer, OCIO Portfolio Management manages the IT budget formulation and execution processes. OCIO Portfolio Management partnered with the Office of Procurement and Contracting to automate acquisition approval requests and IT contracts data exchange to strengthen and streamline the IT acquisition process. The integration of data between the two systems, Agriculture Maximum (AgMAX) and Integrated Acquisition System (IAS), expedited and streamlined the acquisition and contract processes, validated the appropriate AAR usage, enabled IT contract transparency and ensured AAR and IT contract alignment.

USDA will begin implementation of a modernized system in 2025 to replace the legacy AgMAX system, which will enable increased transparency of agency IT investments.

Additionally, ITPMD worked with the OCIO Chief Data Office to create an IT Portfolio dashboard providing an application programming interface (API) to ensure the most up-to-date data between the Enterprise Data Analytics Platform and Tool (EDAPT) and AgMAX, the IT portfolio management tool regarding IT spend, performance metrics, projectsAARs, TBM, and IT portfolio health of investments. The IT Portfolio dashboard helps facilitate communication, increase transparency, improve data quality, and increase data access.

Portfolio Management also worked with the Enterprise Architecture Division (EAD) to integrate AgMAX and Enterprise Architecture Vision Environment (EAVE) as part of data integration effort in support of the Department's Application Rationalization initiative. The integration of the two systems along with identifying the related IT assets' business capabilities (lines of businesses) to cost information at the application level by Mission Area applications/assets aligned to the TBM taxonomy will continue into 2026. The two groups are also implementing the next phase of our TBM framework implementation by aligning the TBM solutions layer to the EAD services hierarchy, this will allow for the addition of EAD visibility into actual IT spend data categorization provided by TBM.

As the TBM program continues to mature, the next level of implementation will enable analysis around application Total Cost of Ownership (TCO), portfolio optimization, unit cost for benchmarking, consumption metrics by mission area, department-wide show back reporting and other key metrics that support USDA strategic goals. Greater support and collaboration will be needed to expand the level of data, complexity, and partnership to complete implementation of the TBM framework.

As part of Enterprise IT Governance, ITPMD collaborated with the Office of Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) to establish a process to review IT Working Capital Fund (WCF) project proposals for IT modernization efforts, which includes cybersecurity enhancements and cloud migration projects. This three-phase approach covers the initial review of proposals to the final signed decisions by the USDA CIO. As this process continues to mature, it will help identify and select projects that will potentially generate savings and reimagine how IT modernization projects are funded and executed by the Department.

The Enterprise IT Governance continues to provide oversight and management of the Technology Modernization Fund (TMF) where multiple Mission Areas submit TMF modernization proposals through USDA governance for opportunities to obtain approval from the General Services Administration (GSA) TMF. To date, USDA TMF has the following:

- 18 TMF projects reviewed using Enterprise IT Governance process and Departmental Boards.
- 4 TMF projects approved by GSA.

In addition to the management of the USDA IT-WCF and TMF, the Enterprise IT Governance program are the Executive Secretariat and coordinators of all Departmental Governance Boards. The Department's Integrated Advisory Board (IAB) and Executive IT Investment Review Board (E-Board) serves as the USDA senior authoritative body charged with the oversight of IT investments with consideration to government "best practices", the OMB's Circulars, Federal Acquisition Regulation, and any USDA official IT guidance and policies. ITPMD and IT Governance are the core for ensuring the proper oversight of IT, transparency of spend, reducing and eliminating duplication while maximizing shared opportunities, and making effective and informed strategic decisions that align to USDA goals.

Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act (FITARA)

FITARA is focused on improving the management of IT across the Department and improving the scores on the Biannual House of Representative's Committee on Oversight and Reform's (COR) FITARA Scorecard. The 18th iteration of the FITARA Scorecard, released September 2024, continued to grade the agency's implementation of:

- FITARA provisions.
- Modernizing Government Technology (MGT) Act.

- FISMA of 2014.
- EIS transition.

USDA maintained its overall grade of a B on Scorecard 18.0; and projects that the grade may remain unchanged on Scorecard 19.0 as the following conditions are continuously improved:

- Focusing investments to provide more realized Cost Savings and Avoidance.
- Satisfying key cloud procurement requirements.
- Improving the FISMA grade.
- Meeting the General Services Administration (GSA) target of 100 percent transition of Networx (disconnects).

Enterprise Architecture

The EAD provides a set of planning and modeling methodologies and associated governance, guidance and tools to help translate IT strategies into mission results. EAD leverages data as a strategic asset so that architecture becomes a tool to make data-driven decisions that optimize resources and identify duplication and cost saving opportunities. The EAD team supports the creation of an integrated, tiered Enterprise Architecture that helps improve planning and risk management at both the agency and Department levels. Additionally, the team supports standardization on common computing platforms to enhance interoperability and reduce cost of ownership as well as improve the USDA's planning and decision-making by more closely aligning Enterprise Architecture activities to the IT Capital Planning and Governance processes.

A key component to the EAD planning and modeling methodology is working with Mission Areas to establish business capabilities as the foundation of USDA's enterprise architecture. These business capabilities provide a comprehensive view of USDA's business from a holistic perspective. They were established using the business architecture guild's government reference model. Specifically, the USDA business capability model is stratified across three tiers of organizational perspective: strategic, mission facing, and enterprise support. EAD will provide consultation and technical guidance to Mission Areas, while the ownership of the mission-focused tier will rest with the Mission Areas.

Governance is a key enabler to successfully plan and deliver IT solutions to meet mission needs in the most optimal manner. The EAD team worked with our OCIO counterparts to develop an enterprise technology and architecture governance framework. A critical component of that framework is the IT Executive Steering Committee, chartered to help provide oversight of the IT investment portfolio, promote innovation and new technologies and provide strategic direction for the USDA Enterprise Architecture program. The IT ESC will be implemented in 2025.

Providing accurate data supported by a robust analytical and modeling tool is critical to enabling our planning and governance activities. The EAVE tool ensures that an accurate inventory of applications, business capabilities, and services are available and effectively used in the planning and investment decision making process.

The EAD Team deployed an application on the OCIO Web Portal, Application Finder, to allow users to quickly and easily find any Enterprise system used anywhere in USDA. This tool can find a system based on the name, description, or business functions. This application has been deployed on the OCIO home page and is available to anyone in USDA. EAD will continue to develop and deploy simple, useful tools that provide instant value to the department that introduce them to the benefits of Enterprise Architecture.

Integrating Enterprise Architecture with both strategic planning and portfolio management processes and tools is paramount to our success. The EAD team worked with the Capital Planning team to integrate AgMAX and EAVE. Data Integration efforts in support of the Department's portfolio optimization initiatives will continue in 2026 to provide cost information at the application level, for enterprise-wide applications/assets. Human resource applications are a candidate pilot for this effort.

The EAD team engaged in a collaborative effort with the CPOC to develop a Security Architecture and initiated discussions to integrate the security architecture into EAVE. CPOC has begun the process of

entering the security architecture in EAVE. In 2025, EAD will continue to work with CPOC to update and mature the security architecture and framework into EAVE.

Strategic Sourcing Category Management Office (CM)

Category Management (CM) implements strategic, collaborative, and innovative purchasing methods to help the USDA function as a single enterprise. It increases efficiency, reduces costs, and minimizes redundancies through the increased use of Federal and USDA-wide contracts combined with agency and local solutions. CM analyzes USDA's spending to make data-driven business decisions. This process helps USDA optimize performance, minimize price, increase acquisition goals, evaluate total life cycle management costs, improve vendor access to business opportunities, and otherwise increase the value of each dollar spent. These methods increase the value of taxpayer dollars spent supporting the USDA's mission.

CM chairs the CM Interest Group, which serves as the USDA's caretaker for strategic IT sourcing and agreements. The group comprises stakeholders from USDA Mission Areas, agencies, and staff offices to discuss new opportunities, management of current enterprise agreements, ending enterprise agreements, updates to the OCIO Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) Catalog, and review suggestions for contract consolidations.

A highlight achievement from 2024 is the work to award OP Emergency Notification System with 18 agencies and mission areas for $157,000 for the next four years. With this award the USDA will realize cost savings of approximately $850,000.

Selected Examples of Recent Progress

CPOC established an Information System Continuous Monitoring program to enable USDA to move from compliance-driven risk management to data-driven risk management by providing Mission Areas and Staff Offices with information necessary to support risk response decisions, security status information, and ongoing insight into security control effectiveness.

The EDMC/EGMO collaborated with USDA's Office of Safety, Security and Protection (OSSP) on a geospatial application to optimize the location of identification credentialing offices. The application is being leveraged by OSSP leadership to ensure that USDA customers, employees, and contractors have the best experience possible when visiting a credentialing site.

The USDA DS partnered with the Office of Human Resources Management to designate additional Direct Hire Authority (DHA) for term and temporary positions within all job categories of the 2210 IT Specialist occupational series (except for categories that already have government-wide DHA) across the Department. This will be a key tool for the Department to recruit and fill key IT positions across the Department in a very competitive market for top IT talent. The USDA DS brought in the first group of USDA DS Fellows in 2024, and the Fellows began their two-year tours of duty in 2025. These Fellows are partnering with USDA mission areas across the Department on key efforts to accelerate the design, development, and delivery of customer-centric services. As the OCIO leads on IT Workforce, The USDA DS also piloted a skills development program where employees used online courses in AgLearn to help increase their skillsets across key IT and interpersonal skills gaps identified through a workforce assessment. 94 percent of participants who completed the initial assessment, training, and retook the benchmark assessment increased their proficiency levels in skill areas such as data analysis and visualization, systems design, emotional intelligence, problem solving, and project management.

ITPMD governs and provides policy oversight of 203 total IT investments, managing USDA's $3 billion IT investment portfolio in alignment with Clinger Cohen Act, FITARA and several other laws is ITPMD's primary mission.

USDA has maintained a B on the Congressional FITARA Scorecard and received the FITARA Award for 'Most Improved' in both the Cyber and Cloud categories. The FITARA Team continues to collaborate with the IT Stakeholders and works closely with the GAO to improve USDA's grade on the Scorecard.

The EAD Team deployed an application on the OCIO Web Portal, Application Finder, to allow users to quickly and easily find any Enterprise system used anywhere in USDA. This tool can find a system based on the name, description, or business functions.

CM was instrumental in realizing Cost Avoidance of $1.03 million by consolidating the OP ENS. CM analyzed requirements and used to realize an 85 percent cost reduction to $157,000. CM participated in the USDA Application Rationalization Project and have started development of the governance for the project.