

## PRESIDENTIAL E-GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES AND LINES OF BUSINESS

### Benefits of USDA's Participation in Presidential E-Government Initiatives and Lines of Business:

#### Budget Formulation and Execution LoB (BFELoB):

- The BFELoB provides benefits to partner agencies by encouraging best practices crossing all aspects of Federal budgeting -- from budget formulation and execution to collaboration, human capital needs, and providing tools and resources.
- To benefit all agencies, including the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the BFELoB continues to work with the Department of Treasury, as the system owner, in the advancement of the Budget Formulation and Execution Manager (BFEM), the first shared service budget formulation system.
- USDA currently has over 4,000 registered users of the MAX Federal Community. The Community site is commonly used for sharing information, collaboratively drafting documents (including the direct-editing of documents posted on the site), supporting workgroups, submitting central reports, and much more.
- MAX Collect has capabilities to collect, store, process and publish information from multiple sources. As information is collected it is automatically compiled and published real-time using MAX Publication Services, with structured numeric data dynamically displayed using MAX Analytics.
- The Budgeting Capabilities Self-Assessment Tool (BCSAT) is a survey tool used to collect information from budget personnel about various aspects of the budget process at their agency. Results from the initial survey are being used to identify areas where additional training or automation could be beneficial.
- BFELoB's Human Capital Federal Budget Core Competency Framework was developed as a resource for USDA to use in their internal workforce planning initiatives. The framework includes the "Budget Career Road Map", a set of Core Competencies, Key Behaviors, and Proficiency Levels for budget professionals. This is helpful in assessing skills and gaps, as well as developing plans for targeted growth. In addition, the BFELoB Human Capital work group offers multiple technical and developmental training opportunities throughout the year. They have developed/sponsored a variety of training classes for government budget community which include both in-class and online courses.
- Training material includes a series of four Budget Formulation Process Maps and a series of Budget Execution Process Maps depicting the major processes in Federal Budget Formulation and Execution. The maps provide standardized processes that can be used to train budget analysts. These processes have been incorporated into self-paced training courses. USDA has participated in developing and using the process maps and training modules for staff training.

#### Disaster Assistance Improvement Program (DAIP):

- DisasterAssistance.gov reduces the time needed to apply for aid and check the status of claims while decreasing redundancy in application forms and processes. The primary benefits include decreased confusion and frustration for disaster survivors, as well as reductions in the time it takes disaster survivors to identify, apply for and check status of their assistance applications. Future phases of DAIP may provide cost savings for partner agencies that use DAIP as a web presence for their Forms of Assistance (FOAs).
- DAIP provides a range of metrics to the partner agencies each month to help illustrate the value of their partnership and provide valuable insights into survivor needs and interests with respect to each partner agency's FOAs. The following site metrics were reported for USDA 2013 usage:
  - 934,062 USDA FOA page views;
  - 76,938 Transfers to USDA's URL/domain from DisasterAssistance.gov;
  - 524 Links from USDA's domain to DisasterAssistance.gov; and
  - 26,912 Referrals from DisasterAssistance.gov's questionnaire with USDA FOAs that transferred into the site's registration process.
- Through DisasterAssistance.gov, USDA and its stakeholders are helped by providing referrals to and information on 13 agency FOAs related to food assistance, business loans, farm loans and more. DAIP's outreach and education efforts also help to raise awareness of these FOAs among the agency's stakeholders at the Federal, tribal, state and local levels. For example, the agency recently deployed an interface with the Food for Florida Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (D-SNAP) [the first state-based interface in the

DAIP portfolio], began interface development efforts with Louisiana D-SNAP and developed new D-SNAP referral content.

- The portal provides qualitative cost savings related to decreased labor hours, automated tracking, reduced waste, fraud and abuse, and information-sharing, all of which helps DAIP and its partner agencies assist disaster survivors more effectively. These savings will almost certainly grow in relative proportion to the growth of the portal and interface developments.
- Currently, 17 Federal agencies contribute to the portal, which offers applications for, or information about, over 70 FOAs as well as news, information and resources to help individuals, families and businesses prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters.
- DisasterAssistance.gov is scheduled to be completed by 2015 and will include forms of assistance available at the Federal, tribal, state, regional and local levels.

#### Enterprise Human Resources Integration (EHRI):

- USDA continues to reap the benefits of the eOPF system. Since the beginning of 2011, all USDA agencies have had the transfer functionality enabled, whereby eOPFs can be sent/received electronically to other agencies and to National Personnel Records Center (NPRC). This increases the efficiency and timeliness of the process and provides additional security of the Personally Identifiable Information contained in the eOPFs. USDA has transferred over 15,000 eOPFs to NPRC and to other agencies.
- USDA worked with National Finance Center (NFC) and OPM to submit and receive the data feeds for the SF-2809s and TSP-1 and TSP-C into eOPF. These forms now flow directly from NFC's Employee Personal Page into the eOPF environment. In FY-14, USDA will be integrating our EOD (Enter on Duty) Online system with the eOPF system that will enable new hire documents and benefits forms to flow directly into eOPF, capitalizing on one time data entry.
- Conducted monthly USDA eOPF working group meetings to discuss eOPF issues with Agencies and keep them aware of system enhancements and updates.
- In 2013, all USDA employees have access to their eOPFs, with 80% of new documentation notifications featured turned on. In 2014, 100% of the new documentation notifications featured will be turned on, keeping employees informed about the documents being deposited into their Federal records.
- eOPF provides employees immediate access to their personnel forms and is available 24/7. It also reduces the cost associated with the storage, maintenance and retrieval of records.

#### E-Rulemaking:

- USDA's use of the Regulations.gov web site and the complimentary FDMS is the Department's primary area of focus for increasing the public's participation in the process of developing and issuing regulations. USDA's fourteen rule-making agencies completed migration to the Federal Docket Management System (FDMS) on December 8, 2006. As a result, all USDA Federal Register rules, proposed rules, and notices have been made available for public comment on E-Rulemaking's Regulations.gov since that time.
- The web site has made numerous improvements over the years to improve the user's experience, and as a result public participation has continued to increase since the site's inception. In 2007, USDA agencies posted 1,343 rules, proposed rules, and notice documents and received 9,773 comments from the public in response. In 2013, USDA agencies posted 1,054 rules, proposed rules, and notice documents. USDA received 32,035 comments from the public in response. That is a 3-fold increase in public comment since the portal's launch in 2007. This is a direct demonstration of the public's increased participation in USDA's rulemaking process.

#### E-Training:

- AgLearn is USDA's implementation of the E-Training Presidential Initiative. E-Training and AgLearn provide a single, USDA-wide learning management system that replaced seven legacy, agency-specific systems and widespread manual tracking of training.
- The consolidation of training within AgLearn allows agencies to cooperate in developing, tracking, and purchasing training. Training that has proved successful for one agency can easily be made available for others, eliminating redundant costs for course development and sharing subject matter expertise to a broader audience.
- In 2013 the AgLearn program measured an estimated cost avoidance of about \$21 million. Considering that the AgLearn's decreasing budget was only about \$5 million, this represents an overall USDA return on investment of approximately 400 percent.

- With its substantial buying power, AgLearn was able to renegotiate an enterprise license for SkillSoft content for USDA-wide use at significantly reduced costs. In addition, AgLearn negotiated a reduced rate for requesting agencies to the Rosetta Stone Suite of courses in 32 languages. Currently about 2,000 people in USDA have been provided Rosetta Stone licenses.
- More than 120,000 AgLearn users (including employees, contractors and partners) completed more than 900,000 training events (e.g., online courses, webinars, and classes) during 2013. AgLearn delivered Department-wide Security Awareness, Privacy Basics, PII, Workplace Harassment Awareness, and Ethics mandatory trainings. AgLearn currently has more than 15,000 books in the training library and also includes more than 8,000 online courses and training events. AgLearn also supports the Secretary's Individual Development Plan (IDP) initiative.
- Major AgLearn initiatives in 2014 and 2015 are 1) the roll out of 360 degree feedback and leadership training across USDA, 2) signing up more external clients, and 3) continuing to make more courses available on mobile devices such as tablets and smart phones.

#### Financial Management LoB:

- The Financial Management Line of Business (FM LoB) is focused on financial systems improvements in coordination with the Chief Financial Officers Council (CFOC).
- There are thousands of interrelated systems and hundreds of stakeholders, including the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Chief Information Officer (CIO), and Chief Administrative Officer (CAO).
- The Financial Management Line of Business (FM LoB) provides the Department of Agriculture (USDA) with standards, requirements, tools, and services to support USDA's financial management activities. USDA benefitted from information sharing across the Federal community on standards and best practices in implementing financial systems based on commercial software products used across the government.
- USDA's legacy financial system, FMMI is based upon SAP Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) 6.0, a Commercial-Off-The-Shelf (COTS) software suite by SAP AG. SAP ERP 6.0 is an advanced, Web-based, financial-management system that provides general accounting, funds management, and financial-reporting capabilities.
- Since beginning operation in FY2010, FMMI has been deployed to 28 of USDA's 29 administrative organizations. USDA also chairs the SAP Customer Control Board to exchange information and ensure that future product releases and enhancements are aligned with Federal standards.
- The new scope of the FM LoB has been expanded to encompass acquisitions, the Grants Management Line of Business (GM LoB) and all forms of Federal financial assistance. The creation of the Council of Federal Assistance Reform in FY2011 will help in aligning the GM LoB goals and data transparency goals. GSA supports some of the specific financial management transparency solutions, including the Central Contractor Registry (CCR), the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS), USASpending.gov and sub recipient reporting.

#### Geospatial LoB:

- US Department of Agriculture (USDA) fully supports the federal government intent of deploying the Geospatial Line-of-Business (GeoLOB) as the operational implementation of prior Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) geospatial infrastructure strategy, standards, and data coordination. As a participating member of the FGDC Steering Committee, USDA endorses the recent executive leadership strategy and goals. The GeoLOB is intended to support better governance through agency coordination and exchange of geospatial assets, while helping to reduce the federal government investment cost for these solutions. Most importantly, citizens will benefit from this collaborative platform approach as public services and data become more easily accessible. USDA anticipates an immediate return on investment from the GeoLOB with respect to improved use of centralized channels to distribute data and information to agricultural and natural resources management and conservation stakeholders.
- USDA seeks to define and validate NGP content management performance measures so as to determine data and service demand, capacity management, and public relevancy of USDA geospatial assets. With evidence of this ranking and use behavior, USDA can better attend to high value assets, align scarce resources, and increase the contribution to decision-making through enhanced views, extension to new mission requirements or customer needs, and combinations with other mission content.

- Federal, state, local, regional and tribal government as well as the general public may equitably leverage the open cloud NGP to search, collaborate, refine, and innovate with USDA data and services.

#### Benefits.gov:

- Benefits.gov provides a self-service tool for citizens to get information about agency benefit programs, which reduces the need for traditional channels such as call centers and mail.
- Benefits.gov supports USDA's goal to work to reduce food insecurity in America by helping increase public awareness of USDA benefit programs and providing information on how to access safe, affordable and nutritious food.
- USDA features 34 benefit programs on Benefits.gov. The benefits programs include the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Child Nutrition Programs, and the Farmer's Market Nutrition Program (provided by the Food and Nutrition Service), Farm Labor Housing Loan and Grant programs (provided by the Rural Housing Service), various farm loan and disaster assistance programs (provided through the Farm Service Agency), the Wildlife Habitat Incentives and other conservation programs (provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service) and the Federal Crop Insurance Program (provided by the Risk Management Agency).
- In FY13, USDA added 44 new programs and received 114 program updates on Benefits.gov. Thanks to the integration of Google Analytics for website usage measures, and migration to a new system platform, the program can better identify emerging trends and respond accordingly, e.g. news articles, or clarifications to website content.
- In FY13, visitors were kept informed about USDA's benefits as demonstrated by the 2,085,919 page views on its program pages on Benefits.gov.
- In FY13, Benefits.gov transferred 466,585 referrals to USDA's website to obtain information about their specific programs.
- In FY13, there were 2,085,919 page views to USDA's 292 program pages featured on Benefits.gov.
- Benefits.gov used low/no-cost outreach tools such as a quarterly eNewsletter which is emailed to approximately 89,000 subscribers, monthly homepage articles, and a Spanish version of the site to inform citizens. USDA was profiled one time in the eNewsletter, increasing visits to USDA's program pages.
- USDA saves an average of \$6.31 per call in call center cost avoidance when citizens obtain information from Benefits.gov.
- Benefits.gov utilized low/no-cost outreach tools Facebook, Twitter and YouTube to promote awareness and drive traffic to USDA's website. To date, Benefits.gov's Facebook account has over 2,400 "Likes," 15,500+ Twitter followers, and 1,200+ YouTube subscribers.

#### Grants.gov:

- Grants.gov was created to provide a single website for all federal grant opportunities. It was called for from the President's Management Agenda and as part of Public Law 106-107 to streamline and simplify the grants management process by providing a central online system to find and apply for grants across the federal government.
- Grants.gov FIND provides "one-stop shopping" that will allow potential applicants to review synopses of all available competing funding opportunities for grants and cooperative agreements, as well as other types of financial assistance if the funding agency chooses, under the hundreds of discretionary grant programs. Applicants can search by agency, category of activity to be funded, Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number, and other parameters. Applicants can also sign up for email notification of newly posted opportunities based on the parameters they provide.
- Grants.gov APPLY reduces errors in the grant application process by performing data validation, based on information in the agency's application package, to ensure that required fields in the application forms have been populated correctly. If errors exist, the applicant is notified immediately and is able to correct the information before final submission to the agency.
- USDA avoids the cost of maintaining its own front-end system through Grants.gov. Moreover, the public benefits through cost elimination of traditional mail delivery service for submitting paper applications. As a result, in FY 2013, USDA posted 158 funding opportunities and application packages and received 8,328 applications.

#### Human Resources Line of Business (HR LOB) leads

- HR's Enterprise Solution delivers a common HR footprint—"One USDA," is a collaborative effort across all USDA sub-agencies, streamlining business processes and capitalizing on software acquisition/modification to support consistent requirements throughout USDA. Under the umbrella of One USDA, the Department has condensed the number of acquisition software used within USDA to one, procured an on-boarding product that capitalizes on one time data entry with integration to personnel processing system, eOPF, and the staffing acquisition tool.
- In 2014, USDA will focus on high-level activities designed to achieve the initiative's goals:
  - Implementation of enhanced core timekeeping functionality across all USDA agencies, capitalizing on integration with the personnel processing system and the accounting system, streamlining processes and improving data integrity;
  - Identification of vendor solutions for off-boarding and maintenance of office profile information, in conjunction with cross-functional staffs ensuring means to account for IT equipment, funds due or owed, ethical responsibilities, etc., when an employee separates.
  - Continued assessment and refinement of HR Enterprise Solutions to adequately address USDA consistent business processes.

#### Integrated Award Environment (IAE):

- The Integrated Award Environment (IAE) is an E-Government Initiative serving the public and the acquisition and assistance communities in all federal agencies. IAE provides a government-wide business environment unifying, simplifying, and aggregating systems and optimizes resources to deliver services for buyers as well as for vendors and sellers. IAE has freed up agencies to focus on Agency-specific needs while leveraging government-wide shared services. It has enabled transparency of the business processes by sharing data and data sets with the public. USDA uses the initiative's standards and best practices as it continues to enhance its Integrated Acquisition System.
- The IAE offers a portfolio of services which facilitate all phases of the Federal acquisition and assistance life-cycles. IAE includes capabilities for vendors, grantees, and loan recipients to register to do business with the government (System for Award Management (SAM) and Dun and Bradstreet services); vendors to find government opportunities (Federal Business Opportunities (FedBizOpps)); vendors to report sub awards (Electronic Subcontracting Reporting System (eSRS) / Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) Sub award Reporting System (FSRS)); Agencies to report contract actions (Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS)); contracting officials to check on past performance, if a party has been excluded from doing business with the Federal Government, and check vendor certifications and representations (Past Performance Information Retrieval System (PPIRS), and SAM). Together these systems provide unified shared support services to all Federal awards.
- In 2013, IAE conducted a detailed Alternative Analysis and navigated through a GSA Top to Bottom review, an OMB TechStat review and two Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analyses, and gained governance concurrence to pursue a new path forward called the Three Core With API Solution. IAE efforts are focused on delivery of a three core (entity management, pre-award, and post-award) aggregation of applications to provide more full-service and integrated capabilities. The new solution leverages digital services strategy and open government initiatives through 3rd-party application program interfaces (APIs) and governance and enforce best practices around Service Oriented Architecture (SOA), security, data management, cloud computing, and other information technology (IT) best practices, and has adopted Architectural Principles to guide decision-making going forward.
- Current IAE efforts include: defining the scope of the Entity Management core; defining requirements for Technical Governance, Common Services, and Enterprise Architecture; and enhancing and sustaining SAM and other Legacy Applications/Systems to include version releases, data reloads and helpdesk services for all systems. The key benefits include increasing transparency through data sharing, creating a simpler, common integrated data process for entities, and modernizing acquisition and assistance tools

#### Integrated Award Environment - Loans and Grants:

- This initiative helps USDA meet the requirements of Federal Funding Accountability Transparency Act (FFATA), which requires agencies to provide Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) numbers for the Transparency Act web site. Since all contracts (and some grants) already require DUNS numbers, this initiative seeks to leverage the extant system to cover the remainder of Federal grant activity. This allows both the contracts and grants communities to feed information into the FFATA portal -- USAspending.gov. The IAE contract with Dun and Bradstreet was expanded to allow assigning these unique identifiers and to assist Federal financial award reporting.
- USAspending.gov's existence helps USDA comply with the Transparency Act. USDA uses the data to reconcile award reporting to line 2190 of the Status of Budgetary Resources financial report. This reconciliation is an important effort to improve and demonstrate data quality. It is also important to help USDA comply with the OMB Data Quality memo from the Controller date June 13, 2013.
- In 2012, the FFATA Sub-award Reporting System (FSRS) that was developed as the reporting tool Federal prime awardees ( i.e., prime contractors and prime grants recipients) use to capture and report sub-award and executive compensation data regarding their first-tier sub-awards to meet the FFATA reporting requirements was implemented for sub-grants reporting and for sub-contracting reporting down to the \$25K level. USDA in 2013 represented over one- third of all FSRS reports, demonstrating leadership in sub-award reporting compliance and use of the FSRS too.
- USDA participated in the development of the initiative committee's charter and has used the forum to advocate for policy and system changes that will improve transparency and allow for fuller reporting of a class of awards impacted by the DNS requirement.
- The initiative has also offered a demo of a grants module that could assist agencies in reporting their Federal assistance data. The IAE Grants and Loans committee offers a forum to demonstrate new tools for compliance with reporting requirements and a venue to advise the Council of Federal Assistance Reform which is useful for USDA.

The following table reflects estimated USDA contributions and funding amounts for 2012 through 2015 to the E-Government Initiatives and Lines of Business.

<b>E-Government Initiative<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>2012 Actual</b>	<b>2013 Actual</b>	<b>2014 Estimate</b>	<b>2015 Estimate</b>
1. Budget Formulation and Execution Line of Business	\$90,000	\$95,000	\$95,000	\$95,000
2. Disaster Assistance Improvement Plan	133,655	124,397	136,538	136,538
3. Enterprise Human Resources Integration (EHRI)	2,960,498	1,152,435	2,124,763	2,124,763
4. E-Rulemaking	643,970	860,467	965,000	965,000
5. E-Training	2,934,071	2,700,000	2,640,000	2,640,000
6. Financial Management Line of Business <sup>2</sup>	0	159,282	167,510	167,510
7. Geospatial Line of Business	0	0	0	225,000
8. Benefits.gov	257,246	324,550	370,656	370,656
9. Grants.gov	483,380	552,402	509,443	509,443
10. Human Resources Line of Business	260,870	260,870	260,870	260,870
11. Integrated Award Environment	597,294	653,660	634,453	634,453
12. Integrated Award Environment – Loans and Grants	1,246,016	1,285,570	1,799,269	1,799,269
<b>USDA TOTAL</b>	<b>9,607,000</b>	<b>8,168,633<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>9,703,502</b>	<b>9,928,502</b>

<sup>1</sup> USDA participates in and benefits from 24 E-Government Initiatives and Lines of Business, but not all initiatives require a financial contribution. The table above provides USDA's actual contributions for 2012 and 2013 and estimated contributions for 2014 and 2015 for only those initiatives that require financial contributions.

<sup>2</sup> Includes costs for the Grants Management Line of Business, which was in 2012.

<sup>3</sup> The FY 2013 E-Gov portfolio total for actual expenditures is \$1,320,793 less than the original planned funding total of \$9,489,426, due to unplanned cost reductions in three E-Gov initiatives. The single largest reduction of \$1,210,579 occurred in the EHRI initiative, and was the result of one-time account reconciliation for the past five years of activity at OPM. This one-time reduction will not pass forward into future years of operation. Also, the E-Gov portfolio benefitted from the FY 2013 re-classification from Cash Contribution to In-Kind Contribution of its \$102,000 stake in the Geospatial Line of Business. In addition, the Financial Management Line of Business was able to pare \$8,214 from its original operational estimate. These adjustments accrue only to the fiscal year of operation and should not be construed to automatically carry forward to future years of operation.