

2014 Explanatory Notes

Office of Communications

Contents

Purpose Statement	11-1
Statement of Available Funds and Staff Years	11-2
Permanent Positions by Grade and Staff Year Summary	11-2
Salaries and Expenses	
Appropriations Language	11-3
Lead-off Tabular Statement	11-3
Project Statement.....	11-3
Justifications.....	11-4
Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and Staff Years.....	11-4
Classification by Objects.....	11-5
Status of Programs.....	11-6
Summary of Budget and Performance	
Statement of Goals and Objectives.....	11-12
Key Performance Outcomes and Measures.....	11-12
Full Cost by Strategic Objective.....	11-14

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Purpose Statement

The Office of Communications (OC) was established on June 7, 1913, when the Secretary of Agriculture established an Office of Information. The purpose of this office was to act as a news service to communicate possible recommendations of USDA scientists and specialists to the widest audience possible. Section 7 CFR Subtitle A delegates authority for public affairs activities from the Secretary to the Director of OC. The activities of OC have expanded as new technology has become available and as additional segments of the public have become constituents. The basic purpose, however, remains constant: to provide leadership, expertise, management and coordination to develop successful communication strategies and products that advance the mission of USDA and priorities of the Administration, while serving and engaging the public in a fair, equal, transparent and easily accessible manner.

The mission of OC is to provide leadership, expertise, counsel, and coordination for the development of communication strategies, which are vital to the overall formation and awareness of USDA programs and policies. OC serves as the principal USDA contact point for dissemination of consistent, timely information to the public.

OC is located in Washington, D. C. As of September 30, 2012, there were 65 full-time permanent employees.

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

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Available Funds and Staff Years (SY)
(Dollars in thousands)

Item	2011 Actual		2012 Actual		2013 Estimate		2014 Estimate	
	Amount	SY	Amount	SY	Amount	SY	Amount	SY
Salaries and Expenses:								
Discretionary Appropriations.....	\$9,499	65	\$8,065	59	\$8,114	62	\$8,137	62
Rescission.....	-19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Adjusted Appropriation.....	9,480	65	8,065	59	8,114	62	8,137	62
Transfers Out.....	-18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Available.....	9,462	65	8,065	59	8,114	62	8,137	62
Lapsing Balances.....	-59	-	-51	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal Obligations, OC.....	9,403	65	8,014	59	8,114	62	8,137	62
Obligations under other USDA appropriations:								
Agency Photo Services.....	102	-	32	-	32	-	32	-
OC Misc. Reimbursements.....	218	-	263	-	-	-	-	-
Working Capital Fund (WCF) a/.....	4,167	20	3,729	18	5,710	18	5,767	32
Purchase Card Rebate a/.....	-	-	35	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment a/.....	197	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total, Other USDA.....	4,684	20	4,059	18	5,742	18	5,799	32
Total, OC.....	14,087	85	12,073	77	13,856	80	13,936	94

a/ This section only includes WCF activities managed by OC. Please refer to WCF Explanatory Notes for more details about the WCF.

Permanent Positions by Grade and Staff Year Summary

Item	2011 Actual	2012 Actual	2013 Estimate	2014 Estimate
	Wash. D.C.	Wash. D.C.	Wash. D.C.	Wash. D.C.
SES.....	2	2	2	2
GS-15.....	13	11	11	11
GS-14.....	15	12	13	13
GS-13.....	10	9	12	12
GS-12.....	18	18	13	13
GS-11.....	6	6	5	5
GS-9.....	2	4	1	1
GS-7.....	3	3	2	2
GS-4.....	1	1	1	1
Ungraded				
Ungraded Positions.....	2	2	2	2
Total Perm.				
Positions.....	72	68	62	62
Unfilled, EOY.....	2	3		
Total, Perm. Full-Time				
Employment EOY.....	70	65	62	62
Staff Year Est.....	65	59	62	62

Note: Positions shown are appropriated only. For WCF financed positions, refer to WCF Explanatory Notes for more details.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

The estimates include appropriation language for this item as follows:

Salaries and Expenses:

For necessary expenses of the Office of Communications, \$8,137,000.

Lead-Off Tabular Statement

2013 Estimates.....	\$8,114,000
Budget Estimate, 2014.....	<u>8,137,000</u>
Change in Appropriation	<u>+23,000</u>

Summary of Increases and Decreases
(Dollars in thousands)

	<u>2011</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>2012</u> <u>Change</u>	<u>2013</u> <u>Change</u>	<u>2014</u> <u>Change</u>	<u>2014</u> <u>Estimate</u>
Discretionary Appropriations:					
Office of Communications.....	\$9,480	-\$1,415	+\$49	+\$23	\$8,137

Project Statement

Appropriations Detail and Staff Years (SY)
(Dollars in thousands)

Program	<u>2011 Actual</u>		<u>2012 Actual</u>		<u>2013 Estimate</u>		<u>Inc. or Dec.</u>		<u>2014 Estimate</u>	
	Amount	SY	Amount	SY	Amount	SY	Amount	SY	Amount	SY
Discretionary Appropriations:										
Office of communications.....	\$9,480	65	\$8,065	59	\$8,114	62	+\$23 (1)	-	\$8,137	62
Rescission.....	19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Appropriation.....	9,499	65	8,065	59	8,114	62	+23	-	8,137	62
Transfers Out:										
WCF.....	-18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rescission.....	-19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Available.....	9,462	65	8,065	59	8,114	62	+23	-	8,137	62
Lapsing Balances.....	-59	-	-51	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Obligations.....	9,403	65	8,014	59	8,114	62	+23	-	8,137	62

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Project Statement
Obligations Detail and Staff Years (SY)
(Dollars in thousands)

Program	<u>2011 Actual</u>		<u>2012 Actual</u>		<u>2013 Estimate</u>		<u>Inc. or Dec.</u>		<u>2014 Estimate</u>	
	Amount	SY	Amount	SY	Amount	SY	Amount	SY	Amount	SY
Discretionary Obligations:										
Office of Communications.....	\$9,403	65	\$8,014	59	\$8,114	62	+\$23 (1)	-	\$8,137	62
Total Obligations.....	9,403	65	8,014	59	8,114	62	+23	-	8,137	62
Lapsing Balances.....	59	-	51	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Available.....	9,462	65	8,065	59	8,114	62	+23	-	8,137	62
Transfers Out to WCF.....	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rescission.....	19	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Appropriation.....	9,499	65	8,065	59	8,114	62	+23	-	8,137	62

Justification of Increases and Decreases

The base funds will continue to support the mission of OC, which is to provide leadership, expertise, counsel, and coordination for the development of communication strategies, which are vital to the overall formation, awareness and acceptance of USDA programs and policies. OC serves as the principal USDA contact point for dissemination of consistent, timely information to the public.

- (1) An increase of \$23,000 for the Office of Communications (\$8,114,000 and 62 staff years available in 2013) consisting of:
- a. An increase of \$72,000 for pay costs which includes \$18,000 for annualization of the fiscal year 2013 pay raise and \$54,000 for the anticipated fiscal year 2014 pay raise.
This increase is needed to maintain the current level of staffing to ensure OC provides leadership, expertise, counsel, and coordination for the development of communications strategies, which are vital to the overall formation, awareness and acceptance of USDA programs and policies.
 - b. A decrease of \$49,000 for the FY 2013 Operating Cost.
OC will reduce contractual services from non Federal sources.

Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and Staff Years (SY)
(Dollars in thousands)

State/Territory	<u>2011 Actual</u>		<u>2012 Actual</u>		<u>2013 Estimate</u>		<u>2014 Estimate</u>	
	Amount	SY	Amount	SY	Amount	SY	Amount	SY
District of Columbia.....	\$9,403	65	\$8,014	59	\$8,114	62	\$8,137	62
Lapsing Balances.....	59	-	51	-	-	-	-	-
Total, Available.....	9,462	65	8,065	59	8,114	62	8,137	62

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Classification by Objects

(Dollars in thousands)

	2011	2012	2013	2014
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Estimate</u>	<u>Estimate</u>
Personnel Compensation:				
Washington D.C.....	\$6,360	\$5,291	\$5,516	\$5,607
11 Total personnel compensation.....	6,360	5,291	5,516	5,607
12 Personnel benefits.....	1,814	1,478	1,553	1,584
13.0 Benefits for former personnel.....	3	5	-	-
Total, personnel comp. and benefits.....	8,177	6,774	7,069	7,191
Other Objects:				
21.0 Travel and transportation of persons.....	149	172	150	150
22.0 Transportation of things.....	-	11	12	12
23.2 Rental payments to others.....	-	12	10	10
23.3 Communications, utilities, and misc. charges.....	258	198	200	225
24.0 Printing and reproduction.....	13	23	13	13
25.2 Other services from non-Federal sources.....	530	390	335	210
25.3 Other purchases of goods and services				
from Federal sources.....	198	384	300	300
26.0 Supplies and materials.....	64	48	25	25
31.0 Equipment.....	14	2	-	1
Total, Other Objects.....	1,226	1,240	1,045	946
99.9 Total, new obligations.....	9,403	8,014	8,114	8,137
Position Data:				
Average Salary (dollars), SES Position.....	\$162,000	\$163,970	\$163,970	\$163,970
Average Salary (dollars), GS Position.....	\$92,001	\$89,033	\$90,001	\$94,696
Average Grade, GS Position.....	13.2	13.1	13.2	13.3

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

STATUS OF PROGRAM

The mission of the Office of Communications (OC) is to provide leadership, expertise, management and coordination, to develop successful communication strategies and products that advance the mission of the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and priorities of the government, while serving and engaging the public in a fair, equal, transparent and easily accessible manner. OC delivers information about USDA programs and policies to the American people. To fulfill that mission, OC disseminates information concerning USDA's programs, policies and activities through various media and often directly to farmers, consumers, environmentalists, the business community and other interest groups. The success of the Department's initiatives is directly aided by the effectiveness of communication and public education campaigns and the ease with which the public can access information on the Department's programs. OC has also taken on an increasingly important role in coordinating USDA's communications during emergencies or other incidents that potentially affect large segments of the public or industry.

Current Activities:

Press Operations (PO): PO does outreach to media outlets and responds to questions from reporters as they relate to the overall mission of the Department as well as the Secretary's priorities. Communication Coordinators provide the leadership, expertise, counsel and coordination needed to develop communications plans and implement strategies vital to the overall formulation and awareness of USDA programs and policies. In addition, PO coordinates public and media communications for the Office of the Secretary and assists USDA mission areas and staff offices in developing plans for effective crafting and dissemination of information.

Speechwriting: The Speechwriting section of OC compiles briefings and drafts speeches, Op-Eds and other remarks for the Secretary and Deputy Secretary, and also provides message guidance to USDA staff.

Creative Media & Broadcast Center (CMBC): The CMBC is a central resource for high-quality and cost-effective communications products and services. CMBC is an integral part of the OC Strategic Communications Planning Team, providing creative communication strategies and solutions for the USDA Secretary and the agencies. The CMBC is responsible for the creation and oversight of a wide range of communication products, including illustrations, posters, brochures, web sites, banners, trade-show exhibits, visitor centers, information campaigns, informational videos, radio and TV public service announcements, web cast, satellite media interviews, and audio and video conferences. Users can reduce travel costs through video teleconferencing while still providing mission outreach and training between headquarters and field offices, program participants, and the public.

The CMBC creates daily and weekly radio and TV feature packages for broadcast and cable outlets, including a weekly radio feature service covering five consumer and five agricultural topics and a five minute radio feature which are all available online. Stories are also posted on USDA's web site as well as on the USDA YouTube channel. The CMBC creates a variety of multimedia products, utilizing new technologies such as audio and video web streaming of Secretarial events (live and archived) via the Internet. The CMBC's combined capabilities, technology and collaboration supports the Secretary's goal of a coordinated and centralized approach to the development of communication and training products and provides an essential service in the immediate dissemination of communications for the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Sub-Cabinet. The CMBC promotes the integrated use of media in social media outreach. The CMBC has a role in the USDA's continuity of operations and Emergency Response Communications Plans. Services are provided to international, national, regional, State, and local USDA offices, as well as to other government agencies, upon request.

USDA radio provides technical support and covers the radio news conferences with the Secretary, Deputy Secretary and other top government officials. USDA radio personnel also participate in continuity of operations planning and other Homeland Security operations.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Web Communications Division (WCD): The WCD manages and maintains the USDA.gov web portal and ensures content is available, accessible and relevant to the Department's diverse stakeholders. WCD contributes to communication planning efforts in coordination with PO, providing expertise in web communications, online community engagement and social media tactics. Web and social media analytics are evaluated for USDA.gov and agency websites to better understand our users and their access of the Department's information and services. Analytics trends are then incorporated in future communication planning efforts as well as web content management for optimization. The WCD team manages the website search tool and seeks to optimize content for search engines. The WCD team manages the Department's official social media assets such as the USDA Twitter, Facebook, Flickr and YouTube accounts, as well as the USDA Blog. We work collaboratively with agency web teams and chair the webmaster community within the Department, communicating best practices, Federal and USDA web initiatives, USDA web design and functionality, and the use of emerging tools or technologies. Additionally, WCD works collaboratively with the Office of the Chief Information Officer, public affairs directors and program employees to ensure our web communication program effectively supports the Department's mission.

Information Technology Management (ITM): The ITM staff coordinates and administers the use of Information Technology (IT) within OC. It is responsible for all IT activities in support of OC's operations, to include: cyber security; network administration; application support; liaison with the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) units supporting OC; and oversight of contractors developing and maintaining applications for OC centers and divisions. The staff works cooperatively with other agencies and offices of the Department. It also works with other Departments at the Federal level such as the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Our Information Response team emphasizes maintaining effective relationships with the general public. This group answers via an online knowledgebase system, written, telephone, and in-person inquiries from Federal and State agencies, Members of Congress, non-governmental institutions, foreign embassies, and the general public. ITM staff also provide administrative support to OC management. Included in these services are facilities and property management, oversight of telecommunications services, and the processing of all training and travel requests.

Branding Events Exhibits and Editorial Review Division (BEEERD): The branding component within BEEERD provides strategic planning and oversight for the use of the USDA brand across all media. Implementation of the "One USDA" brand has increased visibility for USDA's wide-ranging products and services. Brand management also ensures that the logo is used only where authorized, providing assurance to the public that the Department stands behind products and services that carry the USDA logo.

BEEERD's events/exhibit team coordinates outreach efforts across USDA to ensure maximum exposure using the most cost-effective means. This collaborative approach prevents duplication of effort and reduces costs Department-wide. Outreach efforts include USDA presence at conventions, meetings, and events nationwide. The Constituent Affairs component within BEEERD manages briefings at USDA headquarters with major stakeholders, including numerous national and international delegations.

Editorial review (ER) provides Departmental oversight for USDA's publishing activities. ER reviews manuscripts and authorizes final clearance for traditional and online publications from the Department's 15 agencies and 7 mission areas. The Division ensures compliance with Federal regulations and USDA guidelines.

Photography Services Division (PSD): The OC Photography Services Division provides various types of photography, including, but not limited to: photojournalism, editorial, portraiture, still life photography, multimedia productions, scientific and food photography, and photographic research for internal and external clients. PSD verifies photographic quality and subject content along with copyright and clearances for all USDA photography used externally, both print and web. The PSD also provides imagery for internal and external requestors via USDA's Flickr web site: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usdagov/>. The PSD provides photographic training for Agency Public Affairs Specialists in documenting events, post production workflow and delivery. The PSD supports the Office of the Secretary with press and event photography, delivering both high quality prints and digital imagery (including multimedia products) as requested.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Printing Division (PD): PD has central printing authority and, therefore, is USDA's liaison with the U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) and the Congressional Joint Committee on Printing. PD consults with, advises, instructs, and assists the agency printing specialists, administrative officers, editors, publications writers and information specialists on the most economical and effective printing methods and procedures.

PD reviews publications submitted by the Department for conformity with printing, policy and regulations of the Department, and the Joint Committee on Printing and OMB. PD writes all specifications for printing and binding of administrative printing procured through the GPO and commercial firms, including booklets, pamphlets, forms, posters, flyers, and specialty items, such as magnets, fans, and over 50 specialty products.

Selected Examples of Recent Progress:

Press Operations (PO): Highlights include:

- Arranged interviews for the Secretary and Deputy Secretary;
- Organized press for travel for Secretary and Deputy Secretary; and
- Worked with agencies to respond to press inquiries and drafted and edited press materials.

Speechwriting: Highlights include:

- Prepared speeches and briefings for use by the Secretary and Deputy Secretary;
- Wrote weekly radio messages and columns for the Secretary, along with additional columns as appropriate for the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Subcabinet;
- Provided talking points and assisted members of the Subcabinet, Agency Heads, and their staff in preparing speeches.

Creative Media and Broadcast Center (CMBC): Highlights include:

- Produced video and radio stories covering President Obama visit to farms in Iowa with Secretary Vilsack to help communicate Federal Government policies in response to this year's historic drought, to increase understanding of rural issues.
- Provided video production for USDA's launch of the new Healthy School Meals program for nutrition promotion and information to a national audience.
- Produced multiple media tours with APHIS official on control of the Asian long-horned beetle.
- Produced video on the APHIS Bird Strike outreach initiative.
- Media tours with FSIS officials on food safety education topics.
- Created 300 training modules for FSA, RD and AMS for web delivery reducing agency travel costs.
- FSA-coordinated live training for 4670 FSA employees to participate via the Internet.
- A total of 105 Webinars were coordinated for USDA agencies during 2012, a 30 percent increase over previous year's use of webinar technology.
- Provided 10,345 audio conferences.

USDA Radio: Highlights include:

- Our three USDA Radio producers continue to cover a diverse range of topics for the Office of the Secretary and USDA agencies, as well as providing the technical support and a moderator for radio news conferences in our studio with the Secretary, Deputy Secretary and other top government officials. In 2010, USDA radio hosted 38 media news conferences with this number growing to 82 in 2012. The reporter/producers created 2401 news stories; aired 572 radio features including 52 five-minute documentaries, 260 Consumer Time Features and 260 Ag Update Features.
- There were 115,169 hits to the radio news website (102,646 in 2011), 19,299 hits to the radio web feature site (15,050 in 2011), 244,720 hits to the radio newswire podcast sources (238,146 in 2011) and 143,276 hits to the radio features podcast sources (46,605 hits in 2011). There were 2,052 calls to the radio story phone line service in 2012.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Web Communications Division (WCD): Highlights include:

- Led the Department's implementation of the Federal Digital Strategy, which includes establishment of a new Departmental Regulation for Digital Strategy Governance to better align the work of OC, OCIO and agencies.
- Conducted a Web Communications Program (WCP) assessment using a collaborative decision-making tool, including several iterations of the goal, criterion, rating scale and activities that could help USDA establish a formal WCP. Organized, hosted and participated in a series of four three-hour rating sessions with more than 40 USDA IT, CIO, web and public affairs leaders.
- Completed enterprise implementation of Google Analytics and established agency profiles to allow independent monitoring of their respective websites. Established web and social media analytics process to understand trends and use of USDA's website and social media activities.
- Evaluated a new search technology, USA Search, to improve search results and functionality on USDA.gov and agency websites. A three month pilot program will end in March 2013 followed by full implementation, which will result in significant cost savings for the agency when we retire the current search solution.
- Launched monthly #AskUSDA Twitter Chat in May 2012, which is designed to provide access to USDA leadership on a variety of topics in an open forum. We have hosted monthly chats on different topics, covering different mission areas, and resulting in positive feedback from participants.
- Assisted seven agencies in their website redesign efforts.
- Co-authored USDA's Open Gov Plan version 2.0 and identified new initiatives to enhance our transparency, openness and collaboration with stakeholders.
- Launched new Twitter account @USDAPress, focused on media operations, engagement and messaging to address current and emerging issues.
- Worked with each mission area to develop strategic communication plans and specific campaign tactics including the Forest Service National Capitol Tree trek, MyPlate outreach, Drought recovery and response activities and ARS Human Nutrition Research priority setting.
- Published more than 1,166 blogs to the USDA Blog in 2012.
- Transmitted 435 news releases and 465 media advisory distributions for press operations and agencies in 2012.
- Provided social media training and guidance to agency and program offices to share expertise and instruction for the best use of social media tools and web content.
- Developed and updated guidelines for social media use and web analytics best practices to agencies. Resource topics include a Social Media glossary, Facebook, general Twitter use, and Blogs.

Information Technology Resource Management (ITRM): Highlights include:

- Prepared documentation, including Performance Work Statements (PWS) for the 2013 Certification and Accreditation of three OC Systems;
- Twenty-five material weaknesses were addressed and corrected;
- Had zero security incidents for Cyber Security and ASOC during this fiscal year;
- Our security staff performed Annual System Security Controls testing on three server systems that comprised of testing 115 controls on each system in CSAM and were completed two weeks before the Departmentally-mandated deadline.
- The Information Services staff responded to over 91,200 requests for information during 2012 including:
 - 12,525 telephone/hotline requests;
 - 3,822 U.S. and foreign mail requests;
 - 29 direct e-mail requests;
 - 20 telephone and letter requests from Members of Congress; and
 - 74,889 self-served information hotline.
- Coordinated implementation of *Ask the Expert*, a Customer Relation Management system for USDA.gov. This application provides self-service support for Web users to have questions answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The service was asked 301,688 questions; the system answered 289,837 for a self-service rate of 96.1 percent. This is a 59 percent increase over the last year and the self-service rate remained at 96 percent over last fiscal year.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Branding Events Exhibits and Editorial Review Division (BEEERD): Highlights include:

- Assisted 26 national constituent organizations by serving as the conduit for their events and providing current information about agricultural related briefings to a total of 1,064 people at USDA headquarters. The constituent team arranged briefings for international agricultural constituents from Japan, China, Italy, and Germany.
- In March 2011 as part of the Department's effort to rigorously manage conference costs, BEEERD staff formalized the USDA Events/Exhibits (EE) Team to enhance conference participation by all of its agencies, to promote collaboration with those offices and agencies that exhibited at various events, and to reduce duplication of effort in planning and execution of these functions.
- More than 500 large events with 1000 attendees who represent state and local entities of national organizations, and over 40 conferences with attendance ranging from 3000-25,000 have been documented as representing USDA stakeholders.
- The editorial review and clearance team cleared 291 manuscripts and 235 camera-ready proofs for printing or Web release; worked with agencies on the MYPlate initiative, OIG Congressional Reports.
- USDA's first Art in Agriculture exhibition presents a wide array of fine art works, all created by employees across the Department. In conjunction with the 150th anniversary, USDA artists nationwide submitted entries in 10 ag-related categories. Employees then voted online for their favorite pieces, which was on display at the Headquarters South Building through December. A small team of prominent Washington-area arts professionals selected the final award winners. Works in a variety of 2-D and 3-D media showcased many aspects of USDA's contributions to agriculture and the Nation: farming past and future, forest and wildfire management, nutrition, conservation, seed banks, invasive species research, sustainable energy, foreign agriculture, rural development, civil rights and more.
- BEEERD managed a USDA-wide collaborative effort in partnership with Taste of DC to provide educational and informational products and services during the three days of the Taste of DC event, which was attended by an estimated 500,000 people.

Photography Services Division (PSD): Highlights include: completing 458 work requests in 2012 for photographic services including: passports, portraits, both local and onsite assignments, framing requests, and printing of photo exhibits and displays. PSD also reviewed and cleared 171 photo requests for publication.

- USDA's 150th Celebration
- G8 Summit
- White House Rural Council Meetings (5)
- Drought Disasters
- Wildfire Disasters
- White House Champion of Change Events
- American Indian Higher Education Consortium
- Inaugural meeting of the Council for Native American Farming and Ranching
- USDA's Agriculture Outlook Forum
- Smithsonian Folk Life Festival, including the 1890's Land Grant Celebration
- Streamlined workflow processes for image acquisition, decreasing time it takes to post images to USDA's Flickr Photostream. USDA's Flickr photostream had over two million views this year.
- PSD, along with the Digital Asset Management (DAM) working group, determined an enterprise-wide DAM solution for all creative assets, to include: still photography, video clips, and production files in various formats. The target date to have the pilot implemented in pre-production phase is December, 2012.
- Managed reimbursable agreements totaling \$55K for APHIS, NRCS and FAS.

Printing Division (PD): Highlights include:

- Managed 13 printing contracts that were written by the Government Printing Office (GPO) for use by USDA. We are the Contracting Officer's Representatives (CORs) who order the printing work with these contractors, determining printing schedules, specifications, and costs. These contracts allow USDA to achieve the most economical cost and meet critical deadlines required by USDA customers.
- Manage and utilize the Program 960 Simplified Purchase Agreement (SPA) for OC and several customer

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

agencies. We are the liaison with the GPO to establish the contract and represent our customers when disputes occur. Our customers experience satisfaction in being able to be involved hands-on in the selection and production process of their print jobs, thus saving time and allowing them to personally track their print procurements. Over 171 print jobs placed on the SPA contract in 2012.

- Another important procurement activity is the use of the GPO Express program. The GPO has partnered with Federal Express (FED-EX) Office for copier/duplicating services. This program works effectively with many of our customers who travel and require materials for meetings, seminars, etc. The program provides established prices, schedules, and the assurance of a standard product nationwide. The GPO Express Program for 2012 has reported purchases of \$383,209.75, with an average transaction of \$211.00. This is a \$633,634.03 savings, i.e., 62.3 percent off of the retail price of \$1,016,843.37. By using these contracts, USDA is in compliance with Title 44, U.S. Code, Public Printing, and all Government printing and binding regulations.

Listed below are figures showing publications and forms printed during 2012 with comparative figures for 2011. In 2012, GPO reported 7,346 USDA print orders processed with 2,897 performed in the Washington, DC area totaling \$2,499,539.57 (these figures do not include USDA In-House facility).

<u>Publications and Forms Printed</u>	<u>FY 2011</u>	<u>FY 2012</u>
Dollars billed to USDA by GPO (nationwide)	\$11,707,396.00	\$9,908,215.00
Dollars billed to USDA by GPO (Wash. area)	\$3,808,763.00	\$2,499,539.57
Dollars billed to USDA by GPOEXPRESS Program (nationwide)	\$590,181.61	\$383,209.75
Print jobs processed through GPO and/or contract (Wash. area)	4,141	2897
Print jobs processed through the USDA In-House Facility	<u>5,617</u>	<u>3,660</u>
Total jobs processed (Wash. Area)	9,758	6,557

*Not available.

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Summary of Budget and Performance
Statement of Agency Goals and Objectives

The Office of Communications (OC) was established on June 7, 1913, when the Secretary of Agriculture established an Office of Information. The purpose of this office was to act as a news service to communicate possible recommendations of USDA scientists and specialists to the widest audience possible. Section 7 CFR Subtitle A delegates authority for public affairs activities from the Secretary to the Director of OC. The activities of OC have expanded as new technology has become available and as additional segments of the public have become constituents.

OC has one strategic goal and two strategic objectives that contributed to the strategic goals of the Department.

Agency Strategic Goal	Agency Objectives	Programs that Contribute	Key Outcomes
Provide maximum support to all mission areas of the Department in the development of programs, in creating awareness among the American public about USDA’s major initiatives and services, and providing emergency public information and warnings when necessary.	Provide resources and state-of-the art facilities to enhance communication by USDA and its agencies. Provide efficient coordination and instructive guidance to enhance communication by USDA and its agencies.	All programs and activities within OC. All programs and activities within OC.	Intended audiences receive the material or information distributed, and intended audiences have access to tools to answer their questions and provide feedback on issues.

Key Outcome: Intended audiences receive the material or information distributed, and intended audiences have access to tools to answer their questions and provide feedback on issues.

Key Performance Measure and Targets:

Performance Measure	2008 Actual	2009 Actual	2010 Actual	2011 Actual	2012 Actual	2013 Target	2014 Target
Percent of prepared materials that are accepted for use by commercial media outlets and the public.	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
Cost (thousands)	\$8,322	\$8,490	\$8,620	\$8,458	\$7,137	\$7,226	\$7,246
Percent of ongoing and information campaigns timely completed and promoting unified accomplishment of USDA mission area in an effective manner.	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
Cost (thousands)	\$876	\$945	\$963	\$945	\$877	\$888	\$891

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Selected Past Accomplishments Toward Achievement of Key Outcome:

- Launched monthly #AskUSDA Twitter Chat in May 2012, which is designed to provide access to USDA leadership on a variety of topics in an open forum. We have hosted monthly chats on different topics, covering different mission areas, and resulting in positive feedback from participants.
- Transmitted 435 news releases and 465 media advisory distributions for press operations and agencies in 2012.
- Created 300 training modules for FSA, RD and AMS for web delivery, reducing agency travel costs.

Selected Accomplishments Expected at the 2014 Proposed Resource Level:

Commercial media outlets will receive the materials and information distributed by the Department; that there is a high acceptance and use of prepared materials; and that OC facilities can produce products meeting industry standards in ways that continue to enhance OC's ability to advance the mission of USDA and priorities of the Administration, while serving and engaging the public in a fair, equal, transparent and easily accessible manner.

Strategies for achieving performance in 2014:

- OC plans to continue to evaluate its strategic objectives and performance measures in light of revised budget authority to ensure it can provide the maximum support possible to agencies and the public.
- Use audio and video teleconferences, as well as public meetings, to communicate with representatives of minority and other underserved groups who should be served by USDA programs and services.
- Use audio and video teleconferences to assist USDA agencies in reducing their travel costs associated with regular meetings and training.
- Provide centralized operations for design and production, review/clearance, and distribution of messages and information (video, print, and broadcast) to USDA's primary constituencies and the general public to ensure that they get understandable and relevant information about USDA programs and services.
- Coordinate the development of communications plans for all USDA cross-cutting or interagency initiatives showing each mission's and/or agency's information role.
- Maintain capability to provide all of OC's basic services in a crisis situation even if it involves a relocation of senior Department officials from the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

Strategic Goal Funding Matrix

(Dollars in thousands)

<u>Program / Program Items</u>	<u>2011 Actual</u>	<u>2012 Actual</u>	<u>2013 Estimate</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>2014 Estimate</u>
Agency Strategic Goal: Provide maximum support to all mission areas of the Department in the development of programs, in creating awareness among the American public about USDA's major initiatives and services, and providing emergency public information and warnings when necessary.					
Office of Communications.....	\$9,480	\$8,065	\$8,114	+\$23	\$8,137
Staff Years.....	65	59	62	-	62

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Full Cost by Department Strategic Goal
(Dollars in thousands)

Agency Strategic Goal: Provide maximum support to all mission areas of the Department in the development of programs, in creating awareness among the American public about USDA's major initiatives and services, and providing emergency public information and warnings when necessary.

Program / Program Items	2011 Actual	2012 Actual	2013 Estimate	2014 Estimate
<u>Office of Communications</u>				
Administrative costs (direct).....	\$8,177	\$6,774	\$7,069	\$7,191
Indirect costs.....	1,226	1,240	1,045	946
Total Costs.....	9,403	8,014	8,114	8,137
FTEs.....	65	59	62	62
Performance Measure:				
Percent of prepared materials that are accepted for use by commercial media				
Measure.....	95%	95%	95%	95%
Cost per measure (unit cost).....	8,458	7,137	7,226	7,246
Performance Measure:				
Percent of ongoing and information campaigns timely completed and promoting unified accomplishments of USDA mission areas in an effective manner				
Measure.....	95%	95%	95%	95%
Cost per measure (unit cost).....	945	877	888	891