

**2027 USDA EXPLANATORY NOTES - OFFICE OF PARTNERSHIPS AND PUBLIC
ENGAGEMENT**

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PREFACE

This publication summarizes the fiscal year (FY) 2027 Budget for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Throughout this publication any reference to the "Budget" is in regard to the 2027 Budget, unless otherwise noted. All references to years refer to fiscal year, except where specifically noted. The budgetary tables throughout this document show actual amounts for 2024 and 2025, Working Families Tax Cut Act, Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agency Appropriations Act, 2026, and the President's Budget request for 2027. Amounts for 2026 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 "Working Families Tax Cut Act" is used to refer to the Public Law 119-21.

Pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, sequestration is included in the numbers for mandatory programs in 2024, 2025, 2026 and 2027.

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 small non-zero amounts that do not round up to one (1). Due to rounding, some tables may not sum exactly.

AGENCY-WIDE

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement (OPPE) was established within the USDA to achieve several key objectives. Its primary goals, as laid out in statute, are to enhance access to Department programs, improve the viability and profitability of small farms and ranches, beginning farmers and ranchers, socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, limited resource producers, and veteran farmers and ranchers, and to promote youth outreach. This establishment is authorized by 7 U.S.C. 6934.

OPPE's core responsibilities, as mentioned in 7 U.S.C. 6934, include ensuring that small farms and ranches, beginning farmers and ranchers, veteran farmers and ranchers, and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers can effectively access the Department's programs and services. To achieve this, OPPE establishes and monitors the Department's goals and objectives for increasing participation among these specific producer groups. It also assesses the effectiveness of existing Department outreach programs and develops and implements a comprehensive plan to coordinate all Department outreach activities and services. Furthermore, OPPE provides crucial input to agencies and offices on programmatic and policy decisions, measures the outcomes of Department programs and activities on these targeted farms and ranches, and recommends new initiatives and programs to the Secretary of Agriculture. The office also performs any other related duties the Secretary deems appropriate.

OPPE is physically located at USDA headquarters in Washington, D.C. As of September 30, 2025, the office's staff consisted of 44 full-time permanent employees. Of these, 10 employees are based in Washington, D.C., while the remaining 34 are situated in various locations across the United States.

AVAILABLE FUNDS AND FTES

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

Item	2024		2025		2026		2027	
	Actual	FTEs	Estimated	FTEs	Estimated	FTEs	Estimated	FTEs
Salaries and Expenses:								
Discretionary Appropriations.....	\$7,500	14	\$7,500	17	\$5,250	12	\$1,998	12
Total Discretionary Appropriations.....	7,500	14	7,500	17	5,250	12	1,998	12
Total Adjusted Appropriation	7,500	14	7,500	17	5,250	12	1,998	12
Total Available	7,500	14	7,500	17	5,250	12	1,998	12
Lapsing Balances.....	-100	-	-865	-	-	-	-	-
Total Obligations	7,400	14	6,635	17	5,250	12	1,998	12
Other Funding:								
Agency Partnership Outreach.....	7,000	30	7,006	35	-	-	-	-
Other Misc Funds.....	-	-	-	-	1,200	13	-	-
Total Appropriation, Other Funding .	7,000	30	7,006	35	1,200	13	-	-
Total Available, Other Funding	7,000	30	7,006	35	1,200	13	-	-
Lapsing Balances.....	-161	-	-495	-	-	-	-	-
Total Obligations, Other funding	6,839	30	6,511	35	1,200	13	-	-
Total Obligations, OPPE	14,239	44	13,146	52	6,450	25	1,998	12
Total, Agriculture Available	14,500	44	14,506	52	6,450	25	1,998	12
Total Available, OPPE	14,500	44	14,506	52	6,450	25	1,998	12

PERMANENT POSITIONS BY GRADE AND FTES

Table OPPE-2. Permanent Positions by Grade and FTEs

Item	2024			2025			2026			2027		
	HQ	Field	Actual Total	HQ	Field	Actual Total	HQ	Field	Estimated Total	HQ	Field	Estimated Total
SES.....	-	1	1	-	1	1	2	-	2	2	-	2
GS-15.....	-	6	6	4	1	5	-	2	2	1	1	2
GS-14.....	3	4	7	1	5	6	1	-	1	1	-	1
GS-13.....	6	25	31	3	26	29	1	1	2	2	-	2
GS-12.....	2	2	4	1	1	2	1	-	1	1	-	1
GS-11.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	2	-	2
GS-10.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	1
GS-7	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1
Total Permanent ..	11	38	49	10	34	44	9	3	12	11	1	12
Total Perm. FT EOY .	11	38	49	10	34	44	9	3	12	11	1	12
FTE.....	19	30	47	16	36	52	9	3	12	11	1	12

SHARED FUNDING PROJECTS

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

Item	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2026 Estimated	2027 Estimated
Administrative Services:				
AskUSDA Contact Center	\$13	\$12	-	-
General Counsel Legal Compliance	-	-	\$9	\$9
Human Resources Enterprise System Management	1	2	4	4
Integrated Procurement Systems	4	4	4	4
Mail and Reproduction Management Division.....	17	15	13	13
Material Management Service Center.....	7	3	4	4
Personnel and Document Security Program	-	-	2	-
Procurement Operations Division.....	-	-	8	8
Subtotal.....	42	36	44	42
Communications:				
Creative Media & Broadcast Center.....	6	7	2	2
Finance and Management:				
Internal Control Support Services	13	11	1	1
Financial Management Support Services	297	149	133	138
Financial Shared Services.....	417	445	337	391
National Finance Center	17	10	-	-
Subtotal.....	744	615	471	530
Information Technology:				
Client Experience Center	213	237	196	190
Department Administration Information Technology Office.....	873	77	87	-
Digital Infrastructure Services Center.....	640	20	38	125
Enterprise Cybersecurity Services.....	21	23	25	25
Enterprise Data and Analytics Services	2	2	-	-
Enterprise Network Services.....	28	30	24	24
Subtotal.....	1,777	389	370	364
Correspondence Management Services:				
Office of the Executive Secretariat	28	15	12	12
Total, Working Capital Fund	2,597	1,062	899	950
Department-Wide Shared Cost Programs:				
Advisory Committee Liaison Services	6	4	6	6
Agency Partnership Outreach	1	1	1	1
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility	-	-	-	-
Employee Experience.....	1	-	-	-
Intertribal Technical Assistance Network	1	-	-	-
Medical Services	5	-	-	-
NCR Interpreting Services	2	2	3	3
Physical Security.....	1	1	-	-
Security Detail	1	1	2	2
Security Operations	1	1	1	1
Talent Group	1	-	-	-
TARGET Center	-	-	-	-
Total, Department-Wide Reimbursable Programs	20	10	13	13
Agency Total	2,617	1,072	912	963

ACCOUNT 1: OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**APPROPRIATIONS LANGUAGE**

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

*Salaries and Expenses***Office of the Secretary (Including Transfers of Funds)**

For necessary expenses of the Office of the Secretary, [~~\$46,361,000~~]\$64,987,000 of which not to exceed [~~\$7,000,000~~]\$5,964,000 shall be available for the immediate Office of the Secretary[, of which \$500,000 shall be for the establishment of a Seafood Industry Liaison]; not to exceed [~~\$1,700,000~~]\$15,259,000 shall be available for the Office of Homeland Security; not to exceed [~~\$5,190,000~~]\$5,000,000 shall be available for the Office of Tribal Relations, of which \$1,000,000 shall be to continue a Tribal Public Health Resource Center at a land grant university with existing indigenous public health expertise to expand current partnerships and collaborative efforts with indigenous groups to improve the delivery of public health services and functions in American Indian communities focusing on indigenous food sovereignty; not to exceed [~~\$5,250,000~~]\$1,998,000 shall be available for the Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement; not to exceed [~~\$18,721,000~~]\$28,269,000 shall be available for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration, of which [~~\$17,015,000~~]\$26,969,000 shall be available for Departmental Administration to provide for necessary expenses for management support services to offices of the Department and for general administration, security, repairs and alterations, and other miscellaneous supplies and expenses not otherwise provided for and necessary for the practical and efficient work of the Department: *Provided*, That funds made available by this Act to an agency in the Administration mission area for salaries and expenses are available to fund up to one administrative support staff for the Office; not to exceed \$3,500,000 shall be available for the Office of Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations and Intergovernmental Affairs to carry out the programs funded by this Act, including programs involving intergovernmental affairs and liaison within the executive branch; and not to exceed [~~\$5,000,000~~]\$4,997,000 shall be available for the Office of Communications: *Provided further*, That the Secretary of Agriculture is authorized to transfer funds appropriated for any office of the Office of the Secretary to any other office of the Office of the Secretary: *Provided further*, That no appropriation for any office shall be increased or decreased by more than 5 percent: *Provided further*, That not to exceed \$22,000 of the amount made available under this paragraph for the immediate Office of the Secretary shall be available for official reception and representation expenses, not otherwise provided for, as determined by the Secretary: *Provided further*, That the amount made available under this heading for Departmental Administration shall be reimbursed from applicable appropriations in this Act for travel expenses incident to the holding of hearings as required by 5 U.S.C. 551-558: *Provided further*, That funds made available under this heading for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations and Intergovernmental Affairs shall be transferred to agencies of the Department of Agriculture funded by this Act to maintain personnel at the agency level: *Provided further*, That no funds made available under this heading for the Office of Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations may be obligated after 30 days from the date of enactment of this Act, unless the Secretary has notified the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress on the allocation of these funds by USDA agency.[: *Provided further*, That during any 30 day notification period referenced in section 716 of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture shall take no action to begin implementation of the action that is subject to section 716 of this Act or make any public announcement of such action in any form.]

LEAD-OFF TABULAR STATEMENT

Table OPPE-4. Lead-Off Tabular Statement (in dollars)

Item	Amount
Estimate, 2026.....	\$5,250,000
Change in Appropriation.....	-3,252,000
Budget Estimate, 2027	1,998,000

PROJECT STATEMENTS

Tables OPPE-5. Project Statement on Basis of Appropriations (thousands of dollars, FTEs)

Item	2024		2025		2026		2027		FTE		Chg Key
	Actual	FTEs	Actual	FTEs	Estimated	FTEs	Estimated	FTEs	Inc. or Dec.	Dec.	
Discretionary Appropriations:											
OPPE	\$6,000	14	\$6,000	17	\$3,750	12	\$1,998	12	-\$1,752	-	(1)
SDFR Policy Research Center .	1,500	-	1,500	-	1,500	-	-	-	-1,500	-	(2)
Subtotal.....	7,500	14	7,500	17	5,250	12	1,998	12	-3,252	-	
Total Adjusted Approp.....	7,500	14	7,500	17	5,250	12	1,998	12	-3,252	-	
Total Appropriation.....	7,500	14	7,500	17	5,250	12	1,998	12	-3,252	-	
Total Available	7,500	14	7,500	17	5,250	12	1,998	12	-3,252	-	
Lapsing Balances	-100	-	-856	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Obligations.....	7,400	14	6,635	17	5,250	12	1,998	12	-3,252	-	-

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

Item	2024		2025		2026		2027		Inc. or FTE Inc.		or Dec.
	Actual	FTEs	Actual	FTEs	Estimated	FTEs	Estimated	FTEs	Dec.	or Dec.	
Discretionary Obligations:											
OPPE	\$5,900	14	\$5,135	17	\$3,750	12	\$1,998	12	-\$1,752	-	-
SDFR Policy Research Center	1,500	-	1,500	-	1,500	-	-	-	-1,500	-	-
Subtotal Disc Obligations	7,400	14	6,635	17	5,250	12	1,998	12	-3,252	-	-
Total Obligations.....	7,400	14	6,635	17	5,250	12	1,998	12	-3,252	-	-
Add back:											
Lapsing Balances	100	-	865	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Available	7,500	14	7,500	17	5,250	12	1,998	12	-3,252	-	-
Total Appropriation.....	7,500	14	7,500	17	5,250	12	1,998	12	-3,252	-	-

JUSTIFICATION OF CHANGES

Base funding is crucial for OPPE to continue its essential work. These funds will primarily cover the salaries and necessary expenses of federal employees, who are dedicated to ensuring that small, beginning, and veteran farmers and ranchers can easily access the Department's vital programs and services. Without this base funding, OPPE would be unable to provide the direct support and outreach these underserved communities need to thrive. In accordance with administration policy announced in the Budget, OMB will follow new government-wide grants guidance prohibiting the use of Federal funds to pay for subscriptions to academic journals, as well as for the publication of research results that are not specifically required by Federal statute or approved in advance by a Federal agency. This policy preserves funds to support actual research by ensuring that the American taxpayer does not pay for the research, publication, and access to that research, essentially triple-charging the public for the same product.

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

- 1) A decrease of \$1,752,00 and 0 FTEs (\$3,250,000 and 12 FTEs available in 2026).

The decrease is made to better align with administration priorities through streamlining workforce efforts, facilities, and other government efficiencies, while ensuring OPPE can continue its vital mission of providing small, beginning, and veteran farmers and ranchers access to key Department programs and services. As part of this broader efficiency initiative, a specific \$2,000 decrease in National Security Related Expenses is being realigned to the

Office of Homeland Security (OHS); this strategic move enhances departmental efficiency and effectiveness by centralizing national security resources under OHS, eliminating redundancies, and improving the coordination and execution of security policies without compromising USDA's resilience or readiness.

- 2) A decrease of \$1,500,000 for the SDFR Policy Research Center and 0 FTEs (\$1,500,000 and 0 FTEs available in 2026).

This adjustment reflects a strategic realignment of resources to better align with current administration priorities. The Department remains fully committed to supporting farmers and ranchers, and this change allows for a more focused approach, potentially shifting resources towards direct program delivery, enhanced technical assistance, or integrating policy research functions more efficiently within existing departmental structures to maximize impact and ensure the most effective use of taxpayer funds.

GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF OBLIGATIONS AND FTEs

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

State/Territory/Country	2024		2025		2026		2027	
	Actual	FTEs	Actual	FTEs	Estimated	FTEs	Estimated	FTEs
Arizona	\$204	1	\$118	1	-	-	-	-
District of Columbia	5,579	11	4,484	12	\$3,240	9	\$1,704	11
Georgia	57	1	-	-	178	1	-	-
Kentucky	60	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
New York	-	-	97	1	-	-	-	-
Pennsylvania	-	-	170	1	170	1	-	-
Texas	-	-	266	2	162	1	294	1
Obligations	5,900	14	5,135	17	3,750	12	1,998	12
Lapsing Balances	100	-	865	-	-	-	-	-
Total, Available	6,000	14	6,000	17	3,750	12	1,998	12

Table OPPE-8. Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and FTEs for SDFR Policy Research (thousands of dollars, FTEs)

State/Territory/Country	2024		2025		2026		2027	
	Actual	FTEs	Actual	FTEs	Estimated	FTEs	Estimated	FTEs
District of Columbia	\$1,500	-	\$1,500	-	\$1,500	-	-	-
Obligations	1,500	-	1,500	-	1,500	-	-	-

OBJECT CLASSIFICATION

Table OPPE-9. Classification by Objects – Discretionary Funding (thousands of dollars)

Item No.	Item	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2026 Estimated	2027 Estimated
Personnel Compensation:					
	Washington D.C.....	\$1,593	\$1,745	\$1,380	\$1,163
	Personnel Compensation, Field	322	909	438	233
11	Total personnel compensation.....	1,915	2,654	1,818	1,396
12	Personal benefits.....	704	1,045	647	387
	Total, personnel comp. and benefits	2,619	3,699	2,465	1,783
Other Objects:					
21.0	Travel and transportation of persons	178	42	38	-
23.1	Rental payments to GSA.....	1	-	-	-
	Communications, utilities, and misc.				
23.3	charges	46	59	54	-
24.0	Printing and reproduction	12	-	-	-
25.1	Advisory and assistance services.....	-	4	2	-
25.2	Other services from non-Federal sources ..	676	28	26	-
	Other goods and services from Federal				
25.3	sources	2,289	1,127	1,000	215
26.0	Supplies and materials.....	52	2	6	-
31.0	Equipment	27	4	4	-
41.0	Grants, subsidies, and contributions	1,500	1,500	1,500	-
	Total, Other Objects	4,781	2,936	2,785	215
99.9	Total, new obligations.....	7,400	6,635	5,250	1,998
DHS Building Security Payments					
	(included in 25.3).....	\$3	\$4	\$4	\$4
Position Data:					
	Average Salary (dollars), ES Position	\$204,010	\$216,168	\$218,330	\$220,513
	Average Salary (dollars), GS Position.....	\$112,183	\$118,832	\$120,020	\$121,221

STATUS OF PROGRAMS

The Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement (OPPE) is dedicated to fostering opportunity, wealth creation, and asset building in rural and underserved communities across the United States. OPPE achieves this by developing and maintaining strategic partnerships that connect these communities to the vital education, tools, and resources available through Department of Agriculture programs and initiatives.

Current Activities

- **Coordinated Outreach:** OPPE streamlines USDA's public engagement processes, effectively coordinating interactions and supporting partner events at national, regional, and local levels.
- **Interagency Collaboration:** We actively partner with key agencies such as the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, U.S. Small Business Administration, and Department of Labor, as well as other governmental and non-governmental entities, to strengthen service delivery to rural and underserved populations.
- **Data and Policy Support:** OPPE provides critical data coordination and strategic support for various USDA and White House initiatives, responding to Secretarial directives as needed.