

**U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Secretary  
Office of the Chief Economist  
GS-0343-11, Program Analyst  
Climate Change Fellows Program**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

*Note: This position may be filled as a GS-9/11 multi-grade career ladder. Responsibilities described below are for the performance level of GS11. At developmental levels, incumbent will be acquiring background necessary to function at the next higher level, and ultimately at the full performance level. For the factor level differences for the developmental positions of GS-09, please see the GS-09, Statement of Difference (SOD). The following duties are for the developmental grade level of GS-11.*

The position is located within the Climate Change Program Office (CCPO), Office of Energy and Environmental Policy (OEEP), Office of Chief Economist (OCE), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The USDA provides leadership on food, agriculture, natural resources, and related issues based on sound public policy, the best available science, and efficient management. The OCE advises the Secretary of Agriculture on the economic implications of policies and programs affecting the U.S. food and fiber system and rural areas. OCE supports USDA policy decision making by analyzing the physical, economic, and societal impact of proposals and coordinating a response among several USDA agencies. Requests for analyses come from the Secretary, other Administration officials, and members of Congress. These requests may concern proposed changes in USDA programs, policies, and legislation. OCE also coordinates, reviews, and approves the Department's commodity, farm sector, and weather forecasts, which are available to the public.

The CCPO coordinates USDA's responses to climate change, focusing on implications of climate change on agriculture, forests, grazing lands, and rural communities. CCPO ensures that USDA is a source of objective, analytical assessments of the effects of climate change and proposed response strategies both within USDA and for our partners. CCPO is also responsible for coordinating activities with other Federal agencies, interacting with the legislative branch on climate change issues affecting agriculture and forestry, and representing USDA on U.S. delegations to international climate change discussions. CCPO's responsibilities include analysis, planning, research coordination, and the development of climate change response strategies. CCPO also serves as a liaison with other Federal agencies, informs the Department of scientific developments and policy issues relating to the effects of climate change on agriculture and forestry, and recommends responsive courses of action—ensuring that recognition of the potential for climate change is fully integrated into USDA's research, planning, and decision-making processes.

The primary purpose of this position is to serve as a developmental fellow in the Climate Change Fellows Program (CCFP), performing duties that provide training and technical expertise, in

conjunction with USDA professionals, to develop and implement climate change mitigation strategies and programs. The fellow will be responsible for coordinating analysis and synthesizing information on greenhouse gas sources and sinks in the agriculture and forest sectors and communicating information to USDA agencies, decision-makers, and the public.

## **II. MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

In a developmental capacity, the fellow applies knowledge in the evaluation and assessment of programs and policies relevant to agriculture, forestry and climate change. Performs research and studies of climate change and its effects on the production of agricultural and forestry products, as well as voluntary opportunities to reduce emissions from the U.S. agriculture and forestry sectors. These opportunities could include, for instance, examining enhanced efficiency fertilizers, drugs/feed additives that would reduce enteric methane emissions from ruminants, and sustainable forestry practices. Estimates changes in greenhouse gas emissions from the agriculture and forestry sectors and identifies strategies to reduce emissions and sequester carbon. Recommends strategies to reduce the adverse effects of climate change on the productivity of farms and forests.

The incumbent could be requested to perform analysis on carbon and biofuel markets as they apply to the agriculture and forest sectors. The incumbent will work as part of a team to provide insight as the most effective policies for incentivizing greenhouse gas mitigation on U.S. farms and ranches. The incumbent performs analysis on additional opportunities for incorporating market-based conservation principles into USDA programs and activities relative to climate change. The incumbent may also perform analysis related to the intersection of climate change and food loss and waste.

As a result of studies and analysis, the incumbent recommends changes as necessary to include designing and recommending management plans of action and training and development programs.

Works with USDA employees on climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts across the Department. Works with CCPO staff on implementation of the USDA and climate change relevant portions of the Inflation Reduction Act and supporting efforts. Analyzes programs related to agriculture, forest management and climate change, and adaptation and mitigation benefits. Assists with economic and policy analysis in the areas of agriculture, forest management and climate change, and/or development of science-based tools and information products that will help improve management of working lands in light of climate change.

The incumbent will serve as part of a team and communicate regularly with various USDA and other federal and state agencies and the private sector to exchange information regarding the Department of Agriculture policies, regulations, and business process. The incumbent actively participates in executive meetings to brief staff on accomplishments, policy changes, and constituent issues. The incumbent independently writes correspondence, reports, or other documents related to work assignments or activities.

The incumbent works to convene stakeholders for listening sessions, webinars, and other meetings regarding climate change and agriculture. The incumbent assists in organizing panels of experts for conferences and meetings related to climate change and agriculture.

The incumbent may be responsible for the implementation of contracts, grants and agreements with third parties to perform technical work products and analysis on a variety of projects related to agriculture and greenhouse gas emissions.

The incumbent develops background information on programs, policies, and internal/external issues to maintain continuity of operations within the office. The incumbent briefs the Director and CCPO staff on vital issues of interest to insure up-to-date information. The incumbent plans and facilitates executive meetings; provides records of key agreements and decisions.

Incumbent will assist with many aspects of USDA's climate change strategy, including one or more of the following:

- Providing technical support;
- Conducting analysis on or providing support to climate change initiatives;
- Writing papers and reports, developing presentations;
- Making oral presentations regarding project work;
- Assessing program execution, effectiveness, and efficiency;
- Building and maintaining relationships with stakeholders, academic institutions and other professionals or advocacy groups used as a target recruitment source.

The incumbent applies knowledge of and adheres to Departmental civil rights policies, goals, and objectives, with a philosophy of valuing diversity in performing everyday duties and responsibilities. The incumbent contributes to a productive and nondiscriminatory work environment through written and oral communications and interpersonal relations.

Performs other duties as assigned.

## **FACTOR LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS**

### **FACTOR 1 – Knowledge Required by the Position**

Knowledge and skill in applying qualitative and quantitative methods sufficient to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the agency's climate change program and to recommend improvements.

Knowledge of the agency's programs, policies, procedures, regulations and standards applicable to climate change implications, sufficient to provide assistance to higher level employees in the performance of broad studies of climate change and to analyze programs related to agriculture, forest management and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Knowledge of the sources of sources and sinks of greenhouse gas emissions from the agriculture and forestry sectors, quantification techniques for measuring these emissions, and environmental

market incentives and markets for 'climate-smart' agricultural commodities and their relationship to USDA conservation, forestry, and rural development programs.

Knowledge of the changing dynamics of climate change implications in order to evaluate newly issued guidance and regulations.

Knowledge of and skill in adapting analytical techniques and evaluation procedures to the measurement and improvement of program effectiveness and/or organizational productivity.

#### FACTOR 2 – Supervisory Controls

The supervisor assigns work by providing priorities, funding and overall project objectives. The employee, in conjunction with senior team leaders and the supervisor will develop a mutually acceptable project plan which typically includes identification of the work to be done, the scope of the project, and deadlines for its completion.

Within these parameters, the employee is responsible for planning and organizing the study, estimating costs, coordinating with USDA staff, team members, and line management personnel, and conducting all phases of the project. The employee interprets regulations and study procedures, and makes the initial recommendations relative to the application of new methods, and keeps team members and the supervisor informed of potentially controversial findings, issues, or problems.

The completed work is reviewed by the supervisor for compatibility with organizational goals, guidelines, and effectiveness in achieving intended objectives.

#### FACTOR 3 – Guidelines

Guidelines consist of standard reference material, texts, and manual covering the application of analytical methods and techniques. These guidelines are not always directly applicable to specific work assignments. Precedent studies of similar subject are available for reference. The employee must use judgment in choosing, interpreting, or adapting available guidelines to specific issues or subject studied.

The subjects studied are covered by a wide variety of administrative regulations and procedural guidelines. The employee may make recommendations for changes after analyzing the subject and existing and available guidelines.

#### FACTOR 4 – Complexity

The work requires the employee to gather information, identify and analyzes issues, and to develop recommendations to resolve substantive problems of effectiveness and efficiency of work operations in programs dealing with mitigating the effects of climate changes.

The work assignment usually consists of issues, problems, or concepts that are not always susceptible to direct observation and analysis. This is due to the fact that there are variations in the nature of administrative processes studied and information about the subject is constantly

emerging and evolving. The employee must refine existing work methods and techniques for application to the analysis of specific issues or resolution of problems.

#### FACTOR 5 – Scope and Effect

The purpose of this position is to assess the productivity, effectiveness, and efficiency of program operations involving climate change related issues. This involves using and establishing criteria to analyze and measure the attainment of program goals and objectives.

The work involves identifying and developing ways to resolve problems or cope with issues which contribute to the improvement of productivity, effectiveness, and efficiency in program operation of USDA's climate change initiatives, involving studies of various climate change.

#### FACTOR 6 – Personal Contacts

The incumbent regularly contacts persons both within and outside of the agency which may include consultants, contractors, or business executives, high level managers within the agency and the agency headquarters as well as counterparts and managers in other agencies.

#### FACTOR 7- Purpose of Contacts

Purpose of contacts is to influence manager and other officials to accept and implement findings and recommendations on organizational improvement or program effectiveness. There may be resistance due to organizational conflict or non-compliance with proposed changes.

#### FACTOR 8 – Physical Demands

The position is primarily sedentary.

#### FACTOR 9- Work Environment

The work is performed in a typical office setting