



## **U.S. Department of Agriculture Office Opportunities**

**Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC)** The Farm Production and Conservation mission area supports America's farmers, ranchers, and private forest landowners by helping them manage risk, recover from natural disasters, and implement conservation practices that sustain the nation's agricultural productivity. Interns may work with the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, or Risk Management Agency, assisting with program research, outreach to producers, conservation planning, and data analysis. FPAC also includes a Business Center that provides shared services such as finance, human resources, and technology, offering interns opportunities to support internal operations that keep USDA programs running smoothly.

**Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services (FNCS)** Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services works to end hunger and improve the health of Americans through the nation's largest nutrition assistance programs. Interns may support the Food and Nutrition Service in administering programs like SNAP, WIC, and school meals, or contribute to the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, which develops the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Work may include policy research, program evaluation, communications, and supporting initiatives that promote equitable access to nutritious food.

**Office of Food Safety** The Office of Food Safety mission area protects public health by ensuring that the nation's commercial supply of meat, poultry, and egg products is safe, wholesome, and properly labeled. Interns in the Food Safety and Inspection Service may assist with policy development, scientific analysis, regulatory review, and communications that support the agency's inspection workforce and foodborne illness prevention efforts.

**Marketing and Regulatory Programs** Marketing and Regulatory Programs facilitates the fair and competitive marketing of U.S. agricultural products while safeguarding plant and animal health. Interns may work with the Agricultural Marketing Service on commodity standards, market news, and supply-chain programs; with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service on biosecurity, pest and disease prevention, and wildlife services; or with the Grain Inspection, Packers & Stockyards Administration on fair competition and trade practices. Intern responsibilities may include research, data analysis, stakeholder engagement, and program support.

**Research, Education, and Economics (REE)** The Research, Education, and Economics mission area advances agricultural science and innovation to support farmers,

policymakers, and consumers. Interns may work with the Agricultural Research Service on scientific projects, the National Institute of Food and Agriculture on grant programs and research partnerships, the Economic Research Service on economic and policy analysis, or the National Agricultural Statistics Service on data collection and reporting. This mission area is ideal for students interested in science, data, economics, or evidence-based policymaking.

**Rural Development (RD)** Rural Development strengthens rural communities by expanding economic opportunity, improving infrastructure, and supporting essential services. Interns may assist the Rural Housing Service, Rural Business-Cooperative Service, or Rural Utilities Service with program outreach, community engagement, data analysis, and project evaluation. Work may involve supporting broadband expansion, renewable energy projects, housing initiatives, or business development programs that improve quality of life in rural America.

**Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs** The Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs mission area works to expand global markets for U.S. agricultural products and strengthen international food security. Interns in the Foreign Agricultural Service may assist with trade policy analysis, export promotion programs, global market research, and international development initiatives. This mission area offers opportunities to engage with global agriculture, diplomacy, and economic development.

**Natural Resources and Environment** The Natural Resources and Environment mission area manages the nation's forests and grasslands while promoting conservation and environmental stewardship. Interns may work with the U.S. Forest Service on land management, wildfire prevention, recreation planning, environmental analysis, or community engagement. This mission area is well suited for students interested in ecology, environmental policy, or natural resource management.

**Office of the Secretary** The Office of the Secretary provides leadership and strategic direction for the entire Department, overseeing USDA's mission areas, policy priorities, and day-to-day operations. This office works closely with senior officials across the federal government, Congress, and external partners to advance initiatives that support farmers, strengthen rural communities, promote food security, and steward natural resources. Interns in the Office of the Secretary will support high-level policy coordination, assist with briefing materials, contribute to research that informs departmental decision-making, and help prepare for meetings and events involving senior leadership. This placement offers a unique opportunity to observe how major policy decisions are shaped and implemented at the highest levels of USDA.

**White House Liaison Office** The White House Liaison Office serves as the primary connection between USDA and the Executive Office of the President, ensuring that departmental operations, personnel actions, and policy initiatives align with Administration priorities. The office manages political appointments, coordinates senior staff onboarding, and facilitates communication between USDA leadership and the White House. Interns in the White House Liaison Office may assist with personnel vetting processes, research on organizational needs, preparation of briefing materials, and coordination of leadership engagements. This office is well suited for students interested in public administration, personnel policy, organizational management, or the inner workings of executive-branch leadership.

**Office of Communications** (OC) leads the Department's efforts to inform the public, engage stakeholders, and communicate the impact of USDA programs across the country. OC works closely with every USDA mission area to ensure that information about agriculture, food security, rural development, conservation, and research is accurate, accessible, and aligned with the Department's priorities. Interns in the Office of Communications will support a wide range of activities, including drafting and editing written materials, assisting with press inquiries, preparing briefing materials, and helping manage digital content across USDA platforms. They may also contribute to media monitoring, event support, visual storytelling, and strategic messaging initiatives. This office is ideal for students interested in public affairs, journalism, digital media, or strategic communications who want to gain firsthand experience working in a fast-paced, mission-driven communications environment.

**Office of Congressional Relations** The Office of Congressional Relations serves as USDA's primary liaison to the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate, ensuring that Members of Congress and their staff are informed about the Department's programs, priorities, and policy initiatives. The office coordinates briefings, prepares testimony, responds to congressional inquiries, and supports the Secretary and senior leadership during legislative engagements. Interns in Congressional Relations may assist with legislative research, track hearings and bills relevant to USDA's mission areas, prepare background materials, and help manage communications with congressional offices. This placement offers a close look at how federal agencies interact with Congress and how legislative developments shape national agricultural and food policy.

**Office of Civil Rights** The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights provides leadership, oversight, and accountability for USDA's civil rights responsibilities. OASCR ensures that all USDA customers and employees are treated fairly and that the

Department complies with federal civil rights laws in both program delivery and employment. The office investigates discrimination complaints, conducts compliance reviews, provides training and technical assistance, and works with mission areas to strengthen equal access to USDA programs. Interns in OASCR may support research on civil rights policy, assist with data analysis related to program equity, help prepare training and outreach materials, and contribute to initiatives that promote fairness and inclusion across the Department. This placement offers valuable experience for students interested in civil rights law, public administration, equity policy, or organizational compliance.

**Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement** The Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement develops and maintains partnerships focused on solutions to challenges facing rural and underserved communities in the United States. OPPE builds and strengthens partnerships with community-based organizations, educational institutions, faith-based groups, underserved producers, and local leaders to expand participation in USDA programs and advance prosperity across rural and agricultural communities. The office also leads initiatives such as the Centers of Community Prosperity, the 1890 and 1994 Land-Grant Programs, and youth engagement efforts that cultivate the next generation of agricultural leaders. Interns in OPPE may assist with outreach strategy, partnership development, research on community needs, event coordination, and the preparation of materials that support engagement with stakeholders nationwide. This office is ideal for students interested in public engagement, equity in government programs, community development, or partnership-driven policymaking.

**The Office of the General Counsel** serves as the chief legal advisor to the Secretary of Agriculture and all USDA agencies, providing guidance on the full spectrum of issues that arise across the Department's programs and operations. OGC attorneys work at the intersection of law, policy, and administration, supporting mission areas ranging from food safety and conservation to trade, rural development, and civil rights. Interns in OGC will work closely with attorneys and professional staff on legal research, drafting memoranda, reviewing regulatory materials, and assisting with case preparation. They may also observe meetings, briefings, and negotiations that illustrate how legal analysis shapes federal policymaking. This office is ideal for students interested in administrative law, environmental law, food and agriculture policy, or the legal foundations of federal government operations.