

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

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1. PURPOSE

This Departmental Regulation (DR) establishes the policies, procedures, and standards related to the planning, preparation, coordination, clearance, and control of non-administrative documents, publications and other communications materials that are developed and published by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)--either as hard copy or electronically--for use by the Department's external audiences.

2. SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS/CANCELLATIONS

This regulation supersedes DR 1410-001, *Publications Review/Clearance Policy*, dated February 7, 2003.

3. SCOPE

- a. This DR applies to all Mission Areas, agencies, and staff offices.
- b. The publications control and clearance function supports three goals:
 - (1) To ensure that USDA's publishing endeavors result from a coordinated OneUSDA approach;
 - (2) To ensure that USDA publications are necessary and cost-effective, clear and readable, and of appropriate quality; and
 - (3) To support the unique communications objectives of USDA's agencies as well as the needs of their diverse audiences.
- c. In accordance with public laws, executive orders, policies, and Congressional directives authorizing USDA to publish information on agriculture and related subjects, USDA publications span a broad range of topics including research, statistics and economics, consumer information, food and nutrition, improved farming practices, natural resources management, agricultural marketing, conservation and environmental protection, homeland security, regulatory activities, and credit and rural development programs.

4. BACKGROUND

- a. Purpose of USDA Publications
 - (1) To aid the application of technical information resulting from research in agriculture and related areas.
 - (2) To inform the public of national and regional issues concerning agriculture and the use of the Nation's natural resources.
 - (3) To inform the public of USDA programs to improve agricultural production; food processing and marketing; the quality of rural life; the environment; homeland security; and the nutrition, health, and welfare of the general public.
 - (4) To secure compliance with regulatory programs provided by legislation for the national interest.
 - (5) To provide economic and statistical data and information for use in public decision-making concerning agriculture and the use of natural resources.
 - (6) To encourage cooperation in regional, national, and international programs related to agriculture.

- (7) To advance scientific research in agriculture through communication with the scientific community, both nationally and internationally.

b. USDA Audiences

The general public; farmers, ranchers, and other land managers; educators and students; scientists; individuals in industries related to agriculture and rural development; and persons, organizations, and firms eligible to participate in USDA programs or subject to USDA-administered laws and regulations. Other important audiences include Congress; other Federal agencies and cooperators, e.g., associations, community groups, private-sector and other organizations; State, county, and municipal government units; foreign embassies and consulate offices in the United States; concerned public interest organizations; and the media.

5. POLICY

a. General Procedures of USDA Agencies

- (1) Each agency and staff office will designate its information director or the equivalent as the publications control officer for its Headquarters Office, as well as a publications control officer for each field office that develops publications for regional distribution. At their own discretion, the agency may decide to centralize field publications control under only one agency publications control officer. Publications control officers will follow the following prescribed quality control measures:
 - (a) Screen all final manuscripts to ensure that they are necessary and not a duplicate of existing materials, that they have been thoroughly edited, and that they have been thoroughly cleared, including applicable interagency reviews, before submitting them to the USDA-Office of Communications (OC) editorial team for Departmental review and clearance to proceed with design and formatting.
 - (b) Ensure only those publications filling a definite need and necessary to the official business of the agency and the USDA are prepared and issued.
 - (c) Avoid unnecessary duplication and repetition among USDA publications.
 - (d) Ensure information consistent with USDA policy, and ensure that each publication has been prepared to meet exacting standards of economy and effectiveness. Only those publications filling a definite need and necessary to the official business of the agency and the USDA are prepared and issued.

- (e) Ensure the publishing of publications, except of the most preliminary nature, does not begin until approved by an agency's publications committee and the appropriate Under or Assistant Secretary or their designee.
- (2) Each agency head or staff office director shall designate a publications clearance officer to review and clear manuscripts sent from other agencies. Communications directors often serve in this role.
- (3) Each agency or staff office shall designate its communication director or administrative equivalent as publications control officer. This officer will be responsible for assuring USDA-OC of the accurate designation of "administrative" on such materials when they are submitted for printing, since administrative documents do not undergo USDA-OC's review and clearance process.

The USDA-OC communications coordinators have the authority to certify or reject the administrative designation recommended by the agency.

(4) Publications Coordination

- (a) Organization of Publications Offices: Agency information divisions shall maintain responsibility for and authority within their agencies over all publishing functions--including planning, writing, editing, reviewing, preliminary designing, and preliminary decisions on printing and distribution or electronic dissemination.
- (b) Consultation: Agency information specialists should plan, together and with counterparts in OC, the various aspects of publication projects--goals, audience, budget, sequence, deadlines, liaison, production, and printing (or electronic distribution) --so that each individual will understand the responsibilities of others involved.
- (c) Cooperative Projects and Contracts: Cooperative agreements and contracts that will result in the development of a manuscript must allocate responsibilities in conformance to USDA publishing policies and regulations, and to laws applicable to Federal publishing and printing. Agencies shall submit to USDA OC Communications Coordinator and Editorial Review teams for review and clearance final manuscripts produced by the agency or staff office for publications that result from such projects.
- (d) Planning in Field Offices: All final manuscripts prepared in field offices but intended for national issuance must be cleared through USDA-OC as if they were developed in an agency's headquarters office. In such cases, agency publications control officers shall provide USDA-OC with final, fully edited, thoroughly cleared, doubled-spaced manuscripts conforming to USDA policies and request final review and clearance to publish.

- (e) Interagency clearance: Each USDA agency is responsible for proactively cooperating with other USDA agencies to ensure that the Department speaks coherently, as a team. Responsibility for obtaining review and clearance of manuscripts rests with the originating agency. Interagency reviews of manuscripts are especially important for sensitive information that presents a risk of misunderstanding and for information that is related closely to the work, programs, or policies of another agency.

Review comments and criticisms by other agencies should relate primarily to factual accuracy of policy, program, or subject matter statements rather than to editorial treatment. All differences of a factual nature shall be resolved between agencies before a final manuscript is submitted to OC for final review.

- (5) Along with final manuscripts for review and clearance, agencies shall provide USDA-OC with all documentation of interagency reviews obtained. Form Agriculture Department (AD)-159, *Manuscript Clearance*, may be used for obtaining interagency clearances. Interagency clearance documentation shall accompany final, fully edited manuscripts submitted to USDA-OC for Departmental review and clearance.
- (6) Agency public affairs offices shall maintain a listing of all pending information materials within their office intended for outreach, to include name, publication type, brief description, target audience, and estimated publishing date. The listing shall at a minimum include all publications anticipated to be released within 2 months. The listing shall be made available to USDA-OC upon request.

b. Additional Agency Procedures for Specific Types of Publications

- (1) Department Series Publications: Many publications--ranging from popular to technical--are organized in a USDA series to ensure better recognition and to facilitate a more orderly distribution and storage. Agency information personnel may contact USDA-OC's editorial review team to determine if a proposed publication is appropriate to be included in a Departmental publication series.
- (2) Agency Series Publications: USDA agencies often need special publications of limited, short-term use which do not fully meet the criteria for inclusion in any USDA series. With the approval of the USDA-OC Director of Events, Print and Editorial Review, an agency may establish its own series for such publications.
- (3) Periodicals: Periodicals may be established after justifying the need to do so and obtaining USDA-OC approval. Agencies should contact the USDA-OC editorial review team to discuss the criteria that they need to formally address in proposing to establish a new periodical.

Periodicals exclude information materials published as administrative letters, circular letters, memorandums, press and radio releases, intermittent notices,

regulations, opinions, decisions, and various management bulletins on safety, incentive awards, and similar subjects.

- (4) Annual Reports: Annual reports are developed to document and summarize a program, research, or the organization's activities conducted in the current or previous year. Before submitting a final annual report manuscript to USDA-OC editorial for Departmental review and clearance, agencies must first have their OSEC mission office review and clear the report for publishing.

- (a) Annual Reports Required by Law. The purpose of legally required annual reports varies widely. Several are necessary for compliance by specific agencies; several are required by specific programs about which the Secretary of Agriculture or the USDA as a whole must report. Also, the Secretary of Agriculture must make an annual written report to the President that contains purely business and executive matter necessary for the Secretary to submit to the President and Congress.

Up to 5,000 copies of the Secretary's Annual Report may be printed. Only up to 2,500 copies of agencies' annual reports may be printed.

- (b) Annual Reports Not Required by Law. While not required by law, an agency or Under or Assistant Secretary has determined the report necessary. These reports may be for internal use only or for reporting the results of an agency program, research, activity that may be in the public interest.
- (5) Internal Reports: An annual report of an agency, an Under or Assistant Secretary, or a group director that is intended primarily for internal use may not be reproduced in excess of 2,500 copies.
- (6) Reports to the Public: These reports are considered reports of research progress or of special program results that are in the public interest, rather than of an agency's complete activities throughout a given year. Up to 2,500 copies of reports to the public may be printed.
- (7) Directories: A USDA agency may publish and issue a directory of its personnel for administrative purposes. Agencies must avoid including information of a personal nature (Personally Identifiable Information (PII)) about employees or their families in such documents. They must also avoid the appearance of self-aggrandizement in such directories, as in all USDA publications.
- (8) Federal statistical products: These products published by federal statistical agencies or units are regulated under the *Information Quality Act*, [Public Law \(P.L.\) No. 106-554](#), § 515, the *Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018*, [P.L. No. 115-435](#), and Federal Statistical Directives. Federal statistical products are defined as information products that describe, estimate, forecast, or analyze the characteristics of groups, customarily without identifying the persons,

organizations, or individual data observations that comprise such groups. Statistical products include general-purpose tabulations, analyses, projections, forecasts, or other statistical reports. This includes products and information that support a statistical product and are released with the statistical products, such as social media text, graphics, maps, posters and charts with links to federal statistical product that it describes. With the exception of compilations of statistical information collected and assembled from other statistical products, these products shall contain or reference appropriate information on the strengths and limitations of the methodologies, data sources, and data used to produce them as well as other information such as explanations of other related measures to assist users in the appropriate treatment and interpretation of the data.

Procedures for the publishing of federal statistical products by USDA statistical agencies or units are guided by Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Statistical Directives 3 and 4. These products and information releases are controlled by statistical agency clearance processes. The timing of the release of these products is determined by the statistical agency, which should minimize the interval between the period in which the data refer and the date when the product is released to the public.

- (9) Presentations: Each agency shall establish appropriate agency policies and procedures for review and clearance of presentations by their agency or staff office.
- (10) Administrative Documents: In addition to miscellaneous periodicals and directories, agencies may publish documents that are administrative:
 - (a) Administrative documents are defined as:
 - 1 Documents with an audience limited to USDA personnel and official cooperators who need the information to carry out their program responsibilities, and there is no planned distribution to an outside group.
 - 2 Documents that fall into one of the following categories: Instruction manuals, regulations or directives governing USDA employees; preliminary reports and drafts distributed for internal review purposes.
 - (b) Examples of official cooperators include other Federal agencies, associations, community groups, and organizations, as well as state, county, and municipal government units, foreign embassies and consulate offices within the United States.
- (11) Other Information Materials: USDA also issues information materials not considered publications. These include materials intended exclusively as:
 - (a) Press, radio, photographic, and video releases when reproduced in finished form;

- (b) Background statements for use by the media;
- (c) Speeches and proclamations that receive limited distribution at time of presentation;
- (d) Forms;
- (e) Individual letters and memorandums used as correspondence;
- (f) Administrative letters, circulars, records, and memorandums intended solely for internal use;
- (g) Department directives;
- (h) Maps, posters, and charts without accompanying text matter;
- (i) Visual instructions and lecture notes for presentations and slides;
- (j) Letterheads;
- (k) Social media text and graphics;
- (l) Signs, symbols, tags, blotters and similar, items;
- (m) Podcasts; and
- (n) Video for social media, training, or film-festival distribution.

The agency information director will meet regularly (no less than quarterly) with the USDA-OC communications coordinator assigned to their mission area to review a listing of all upcoming information materials. The USDA-OC communications coordinator and the agency publications control officer (or public affairs director) will determine the level of clearance needed for each product and determine the release timeline.

(12) Non-administrative Documents

Agencies publish documents for other audiences, e.g., brochures, factsheets, flyers, pest alerts, agricultural calendars, outlook conference programs, infographics, stickers, labels, safety guidelines for school meals, summer notices for school meals. The USDA-OC communications coordinator and the agency publications control officer (or public affairs director) will determine the level of clearance needed for each product and determine the release timeline.

c. Agency Procedures for Clearing Publication Materials Through USDA-OC

- (1) Final Manuscripts: Agencies shall submit only final, fully edited and cleared double-spaced non-administrative manuscripts for review and clearance by USDA-OC. Agencies may submit manuscripts up to 200 pages via email to the USDA-OC editorial staff. Manuscripts over 200 pages must be submitted in hard copy. Each manuscript shall be accompanied by Form [AD-59](#), *Request for Manuscript Review*, which shall include the signature of the submitting agency's publications control officer and Under Secretary, Assistant Secretary, or staff office head (or this authority can be delegated to the agency head); these signatures certify that the information presented is accurate and consistent with USDA policy and that the publication is necessary. (AD-59 signing authority for manuscripts other than annual reports may be further delegated by the agency head.)

- (a) Final manuscript copy shall have been thoroughly edited in a consistent editorial style and shall conform to USDA style guidelines and publishing practices. Further, submitting agencies shall have obtained all appropriate interagency clearances before providing final manuscripts to OC for review and clearance to publish, and they shall attach documentation of those clearances to the AD-59 that they submit to the USDA OC editorial team for review/clearance.

If the signing authority is delegated to the agency, it is incumbent upon the agency to inform and offer the mission office an opportunity to review the publication prior to submission of the manuscript and the AD-59 to USDA-OC.

- (b) Agencies shall attach to the AD-59 an OC-signed memo or an email confirming photo clearance from the USDA-OC Photography Center.
- (2) Publication-Ready Material(s): For all non-administrative publications requiring USDA-OC clearance, agencies shall submit publication-ready materials for printing through OC. These submissions shall include USDA-OC editorial's earlier marked review manuscript and all clearances required as a result of that review. When an agency submits the publication-ready copy, it shall include a fully formatted dummy reflecting the actual content and layout. Agencies are responsible for proofreading the document in its final form before they submit it to USDA-OC for clearance to print or post electronically. USDA-OC is not responsible for ensuring the accuracy of agencies' final layouts but will return the packages to agencies for rework whenever errors are spotted as needed.

For a listing of printing- and distribution-related forms that agencies need to attach to the final layout packages submitted to OC for printing, see [DR 1420-002](#) or consult with the USDA-OC Print Specialists.

- (3) Obtaining Clearances from non-USDA Federal Agencies: For manuscripts requiring formal clearance from a non-USDA Federal agency, the originating

agency shall submit a copy to the USDA-OC communications coordinator and editorial team for transmittal. USDA agencies should provide the names of cooperators or reviewing officers in the outside agency when requesting formal clearance. OC will prepare a memo requesting interdepartmental review, for transmittal by the USDA-OC Director or Deputy Director.

- (4) Clearing Material Intended for Nongovernment Publication: Section 5f, *Articles, Books, and Other Materials Published Outside the Government*, discusses procedures to be followed in clearing materials for publishing by nongovernment organizations.
- (5) Approval of Agency Field Publishing:
 - (a) Each agency publications control officer shall establish appropriate procedures and policies for the management of field publishing activities.
 - (b) Requirements of field offices. USDA field offices, subject to their agency regulations, are authorized to issue publications of local or regional interest about programs and services for which they have responsibility. While such publications do not require USDA-OC approval unless they contain information on USDA policy or of national interest, the Under or Assistant Secretary or designee must approve the development and issuance of all such publications.

Field public affairs offices will maintain a listing of all types of pending information materials within their office, to include name, brief description, target audience, and estimated publishing date. The listing shall at a minimum include all publications anticipated to be released within two months. The listing shall be made available to the agency publications control officer and public affairs director upon request.
 - (c) Review for field publishing: Determining what should be published nationally or regionally is a matter of judgment. Agency publications control officers should coordinate periodically with counterparts in their regional offices to ascertain the appropriate level of review and clearance for agency publications.

d. Procedures of the USDA Office of Communications

- (1) Review and Clearance of Manuscripts and Related Information Materials to Be Issued by USDA. The USDA-OC editorial and print teams, and communications coordinators review all final manuscripts (non-administrative) prepared by USDA's agencies, as well as requests for multicolor printing, special binding, and other special treatments. They determine if the information has been prepared in conformance with applicable editorial, design, photography, and printing policies, and with input from all interested USDA offices. If USDA-OC does not consider a manuscript's editorial quality or clearance to be thorough, it may return a

manuscript to the originating agency, uncleared, for further work, or it may forward the manuscript to another non-USDA Federal agency for review and clearance. USDA-OC final-manuscript reviews normally occur within 10 workdays. This review will also ensure that the Press Secretary and the Director of Communications will have the opportunity, if necessary, to review information of a critical nature prior to design and production. Federal statistical products must follow the OMB Federal statistical directives for timing of release.

- (2) Review of Materials Submitted for Printing or Electronic Posting. USDA-OC editorial must review non-administrative publications-related publication-ready copy in its final form for acceptability to print or disseminate electronically. It will forward to OC's Printing Center those packages that it finds acceptable for printing. When an agency submits printer-ready copy, it shall include for review by USDA-OC a "dummy" reflecting the actual final content and layout of the item. USDA-OC normally reviews and clears the publication-ready copy within 3 workdays.

e. Standard Publishing Practices for USDA Publications

- (1) The following statements apply to all materials to be published by USDA agencies:
 - (a) USDA publications, both formal and administrative, shall mirror American society. All information specialists shall be mindful of the need to detect and eliminate intentional and unintentional bias in their products, both text and graphics.
 - (b) Nondiscrimination Statement: All USDA publications shall include a current nondiscrimination statement. Agencies shall include the statement as it appears in [DR 4300-003](#), *USDA Equal Opportunity Public Notification Policy*, or in updates to that document. In addition to explaining USDA's policy regarding nondiscrimination, the statement explains how persons with disabilities may request the published information in alternative formats.
 - (c) Foreign Language Publications and Alternative-Format Documents: As necessary to fulfill agency objectives, at times, USDA agencies may prepare publications in languages other than English to meet the needs of segments of the population eligible to be served who have limited English proficiency. Agencies will certify that the translation is correct. Publications will also be prepared in braille, large print, audio/video, etc., to meet the needs of persons with disabilities, when requested to do so under terms of the *Americans With Disabilities Act*, [P.L. No. 101-336](#). Agencies shall cooperate with USDA's Target Center in developing these alternative-format documents.
 - (d) Distribution Plan for the General Public: For each publication, agencies will prepare and comply with a distribution plan that describes the manner in which that publication will be disseminated to the general publi.

- (e) Age of Data in Research Reports with Statistical Information: Research reports with statistical information should be published within 3 years of the date or period the information was gathered. Justify on the AD-59 the need to issue data gathered more than 3 years earlier, explaining the reasons for the delay and current need for the information.
- (f) Statements to Influence Legislation or Campaigns: No USDA publication with an intended audience outside the Federal Government shall contain any article or editorial which can be construed as advocating the audience to lobby Congress on policy or specific or pending legislation (including appropriations levels) or to influence any political campaign.
- (g) Credit Statements
 - 1 Publication Bylines: The printing of Government employees' bylines in Government publications shall be confined to authors and to photographers. These bylines shall be carried with the text or pictures.
 - 2 Publication Mastheads: The mastheads of Government publications shall include the name of the publishing department or agency and its issuing bureau, branch, or office, together with the names of the department or agency head and the head of the issuing bureau, branch, or office. Additional names may include only the names of the executive or managing editor, feature editor, photo editor, and art editor, or their editorial equivalent officers by whatever title they are identified.
 - 3 Acknowledgments: Acknowledgments may be given to persons who have made a substantial contribution in the preparation of a publication. Such acknowledgments for design, outstanding editing or peer review, or compiling data may be mentioned in an acknowledgement section. It is preferable to mention the specific work performed that merits acknowledgment rather than to use such titles as compiler, coordinator, chair, etc., since titles are not always descriptive of the contribution. Additional acknowledgements may include the names of the executive or managing editor, feature editor, photo editor, and art editor, or their editorial equivalent officers by whatever title they are identified. Determination of who receives acknowledgment shall be the responsibility of the originating agency, although the form of acknowledgment must be approved by OC.
 - 4 Courtesy Credits and Copyright Notices: Courtesy lines are permitted for uncopyrighted material contributed or loaned from private sources for use in USDA publications. Courtesy lines and copyright notices are required for contributed or loaned materials that are copyrighted so that the public will not be misled. Courtesy and copyright lines shall be in type smaller than that used for text. If several items have come from the same private

source, appropriate credit shall be given in a preliminary paragraph rather than repeated wherever the items appear. Similarly, if the items have come from several sources, the courtesy lines may be grouped in a preliminary paragraph rather than displayed with each item. Agencies must maintain permission to use copyrighted materials on file.

5 Credit Restrictions

- a Illustrations: Signatures are not permitted on freehand art or illustrations. To recognize unusual excellence, credit lines may be given in an acknowledgments section or in a paragraph in type smaller than the type used otherwise throughout the publication.
- b Design and Typography: Acknowledgment may be given for outstanding photographic, design, typographic, or layout work in an acknowledgments section in a reduced or subordinate size of type to that of both text and legends.
- c Photographs: For every photograph reproduced in any USDA publication for national distribution, a negative or reproducible positive must be placed on file in the OC Photography Center, with the publication in which the photograph appears. If photographs are to be secured from sources outside USDA, agencies will make these arrangements for their procurement prior to publishing so that the requests may be handled promptly.

f. Articles, Books, and Other Materials Published Outside the Government

- (1) Standards: USDA employees may, during duty hours, prepare books, articles, and other materials for publishing by nongovernmental organizations if such preparation is within the scope of their official duties and in accordance with applicable statutes and regulations. If the material treats a subject that interprets the policies of the USDA or deals with sensitive areas of any USDA program, the originating agency's publications control officer must first submit the material to OC for timely review. Such materials should be submitted to the OC Communications Coordinator at least 10 working days before they are offered to nongovernmental organizations for publishing (which includes web publishing of articles submitted for peer review). For the materials selected for OC review, agencies must identify the earliest point of publishing and ensure that OC receives the materials at least 10 working days prior.
- (2) Articles prepared as part of an employee's official duties or while on Government time are the property of the Government. Authors must not accept payment for official articles published in nongovernmental journals, magazines, or newspapers. All articles prepared as part of an employee's official duties must be cleared through

the agency or staff office defined process, even when the employee is not the corresponding author.

- (3) Copyright Exemption for Government Material: Articles, papers, books, and other material prepared by USDA employees as part of their official duties are works of the United States Government and are therefore not subject to copyright protection in the United States. Copyright in the private sector publication in which a USDA produced article appears does not affect the non-copyrightability of the underlying Government material. To avoid misunderstanding, agencies shall advise the private publisher of this restriction in advance.
- (4) Private sector individuals and organizations may assert copyright in manuscripts developed under USDA contracts. These copyrights cannot restrict USDA's use of these manuscripts. Agencies shall include in their contracts a clause granting the Government, and others acting on its behalf, a paid-up, nonexclusive, irrevocable, worldwide license in these manuscripts to reproduce, prepare derivative works, distribute copies to the public, and perform publicly and display publicly by or on behalf of the Government.
- (5) All outside publications should continue to acknowledge and disclose the public funding of the published work by USDA (and any other sources of funding). Funding acknowledgement statements raise the visibility of USDA-funded research efforts and allows the public to readily identify publications from USDA scientists and employees.
- (6) Model funding acknowledgement statement:

"This [research/work/presentation] was supported [in part] by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, [insert agency name]."

- (7) Each agency within USDA will continue to use its own internal policies and discretion to determine when the inclusion of a disclaimer statement is warranted as part of any outside scientific and technical publication by USDA scientists and employees, who are appearing in their official capacity and whose work has not been formally disseminated by the Department as official government positions. When such a disclaimer is deemed necessary, uniform language will be used that states:

"The findings and conclusions in this [publication/presentation/blog/report] are those of the author(s) and should not be construed to represent any official USDA or U.S. Government determination or policy."

g. Endorsement, Commercial References, and Use of Brand Names by Employees or in USDA Information

- (1) It is USDA's policy to avoid endorsing commercial enterprises or commercial products and services. In general, this policy prohibits reference to specific commercial enterprises or to proprietary or brand names of commercial products and services in interviews and addresses, in printed or duplicated material issued by USDA or its agencies, in information to be used for publication, or in visual, audio, or other electronically disseminated materials. To carry out its broad responsibilities, USDA often works with commercial products and services and cooperates with commercial enterprises. At times, referring to specific commercial enterprises or commercial products and services by proprietary or brand names may be either impractical to avoid or in the public interest. Agencies shall flag all references to commercial enterprises or commercial products and services in final manuscripts that they provide to OC for review and clearance.
- (2) Employee Endorsement Prohibited. Employees shall not allow the use of their names or images as endorsers of commercial enterprises or products.
- (3) Commercial References in Materials for Publication. No such reference will be made unless approved by the USDA-OC editorial team as being in the public interest. When commercial references are used, agencies shall include a disclaimer statement in the publication.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. In the execution of the USDA publications program, the USDA-OC Director will:
 - (1) Administer statutes, policies, and regulations governing publishing activities within USDA;
 - (2) Review and consider for approval to publish those information materials and manuscripts prepared by USDA agencies. Federal statistical products have a separate review and approval process led by the statistical agency;
 - (3) Advise agency information personnel on procedures for securing clearances; publications control; and efficient coordination of editorial, graphics, photography, and printing functions;
 - (4) Establish policies and procedures that enable agencies to publish quality information quickly and economically;
 - (5) Prepare essential publications on agricultural subjects when the agencies are unable to do so;
 - (6) When requested by the agencies, suggest sources of training in editing and writing for USDA employees who produce material for publication by USDA; and

- (7) Plan and administer assessments on the need for and effectiveness of USDA publications and to conduct surveys of the attitudes and opinions of the audiences to which they are directed.
- b. In the scope of their publishing programs, USDA agencies will:
 - (1) Ascertain supply and demand for new, revised, and existing information products;
 - (2) Fully clear and ensure quality editing of all information products before submitting them to USDA-OC to obtain departmental review and clearance to publish;
 - (3) Develop agency-specific standards and processes where needed to support departmental review and clearance;
 - (4) Cooperate with USDA-OC and other USDA agencies to ensure an effective, efficient, and coordinated departmental publishing program; and
 - (5) Maintain a listing of all pending information materials within their offices, to include name, brief description, target audience, and estimated publishing date. The listing shall at a minimum include all publications anticipated to be released within two months.

7. INQUIRIES

All inquiries about this policy should be directed towards the USDA Director of Events, Printing and Editorial Review. Contact information can be found on the USDA, OC [*Brand, Events/Exhibits & Editorial Review*](#) website.

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APPENDIX A

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AD	Agriculture Department (prefix for Departmental form numbers)
DR	Departmental Regulations
GPO	U.S. Government Printing Office
JCP	Congressional Joint Committee on Printing
OC	Office of Communications
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
PII	Personally Identifiable Information
P.L.	Public Law
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USDA-OC	USDA's Office of Communications

APPENDIX B

DEFINITIONS

Administrative Document. A document for internal use only and not intended for the general public. The audience is limited to USDA personnel and official cooperators who need the information to carry out the agency's program responsibilities. These documents do not require OC review. Examples of official cooperators include other Federal agencies, associations, community groups, and organizations, as well as state, county, and municipal government units, foreign embassies and consulate offices within the United States.

Final Manuscript. An author's final, fully edited, thoroughly cleared, double-spaced copy that is provided to OC for final departmental review prior to publishing.

Periodical. Publications, including annual reports and newsletters, issued annually or more often and with a consistent format, content, and purpose.

Printing. All systems, processes, and equipment used to create an original reproducible image when they can reproduce multiple copies of that image. This term includes all processes and equipment related to composition, platemaking, presswork, and binding as well as to automated distribution.

Publication. A document or manuscript prepared in finished form and reproducible, including materials disseminated or made available electronically. A published work.

Publication-Ready Copy. All materials, including disks, that are suitably prepared for photographic reproduction, including illustrations (line or half-tone), type matter, charts, graphs, and other materials prepared for printing or e-publishing.

APPENDIX C

AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES

Americans With Disabilities Act, [P.L. No. 101-336](#), July 26, 1990, as amended

Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018, [P.L. No. 115-435](#), January 14, 2019

Office of Management and Budget (OMB), [Statistical Policy Directive No. 1](#): *Fundamental Responsibilities of Federal Statistical Agencies and Recognized Statistical Units*, December 2, 2014, 79 FR 71609.

OMB, [Statistical Policy Directive No. 3](#): *Compilation, Release, and Evaluation of Principal Federal Economic Indicators. Timing of Public Comments by Employees of the Executive Branch*, September 25, 1985, 50 FR 186.

OMB, [Statistical Policy Directive No. 4](#): *Release and Dissemination of Statistical Products Produced by Federal Statistical Agencies*, March 7, 2008, 73 FR 12621.

USDA, [AD-59](#), *Request for Manuscript Review*, January 1986

USDA, [AD-78](#), *Request for Printing and Binding*, July 1981

USDA, AD-159, *Manuscript Clearance*

USDA, [DR 0100-001](#), *Departmental Directives System*, January 4, 2018

USDA, [DR 1042-042](#), *Agricultural Statistics Board*, May 29, 2009

USDA, DR 1402-20, *Printing Policy*, September 8, 2016

USDA, [DR 4300-003](#), *Equal Opportunity Public Notification Policy*, October 17, 2019

USDA, [DR 9800-001](#), *Publishing Reports at the Economic Research Service, a Federal Statistical Agency*, January 4, 2017

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APPENDIX D

FORMS

[AD-59](#), *Request for Manuscript Review*. Transmits final, fully edited, thoroughly cleared, double-spaced publication manuscripts to the OC editorial team and communications coordinator for review/clearance. The AD-59 explains the need for a publication, the target audience, quantity desired, any special printing treatments planned (including justification for multicolor printing or special paper stock), etc., and is signed by the requesting agency's publications control officer and the agency administrator or designee.

[AD-78](#), *Request for Printing and Binding*. Transmits non-administrative publications print-ready materials to the USDA-OC editors for clearance to print. For administrative print publications, consult with the USDA-OC print specialists.

AD-159, *Manuscript Clearance*. Transmits draft manuscripts among USDA program agencies or Federal Departments for review/comment. AD-159 is used when an agency proposes to publish information that discusses the programs or policies of another agency or Department, or that could influence another agency or Department.