U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Freedom of Information Act Annual Report FY 2020

I. BASIC INFORMATION REGARDING REPORT

For questions concerning this report please contact Alexis R. Graves, Director, Office of Information Affairs, 1400 Independence Avenue, South Building, Room 4035, Washington DC 20250-0706, telephone number (202) 690-3318, email USDAFOIA@usda.gov.

This report is available at http://www.usda.gov/da/foia.htm. You may obtain a paper copy of this report by visiting the USDA website or by contacting the Departmental FOIA Officer using the information above.

II. MAKING A FOIA REQUEST

Before submitting FOIA requests, we encourage you to review USDA’s website. USDA routinely posts information so you may find what you are looking for is already posted.

You should also keep in mind that because we have a decentralized FOIA program, each FOIA agency or staff office is independently handling and processing its requests. Therefore, before emailing or mailing your request, you should try to determine whether it is likely that the agency or staff office will have the records you are seeking. The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of all FOIA agencies or staff offices that receive FOIA requests are available at: http://www.dm.usda.gov/foia/poc.htm.

If you are unsure about which FOIA agency or staff office will have responsive records, submit your request to the Office of Information Affairs using the above information. Requesters will be notified when their requests are routed. This notification will include the FOIA agency or staff office likely to have responsive records in addition to the point(s) of contact.
A FOIA request can be made for any agency record. This does not mean however, that the USDA will disclose every record sought. There are statutory exemptions that authorize the withholding of agency records in part or full. For additional information regarding USDA’s FOIA processing procedures and regulations, please visit: http://www.dm.usda.gov/foia/poc.htm.

III. Agency Component Abbreviations

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<th>Component Abbreviation</th>
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<td>Office of the Chief Financial Officer</td>
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<td>Office of the General Counsel</td>
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<td>Office of Hearings and Appeals</td>
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<td>Description</td>
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<td>Office of the Secretary</td>
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<td>REE</td>
<td>Research, Education, and Economics</td>
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<td>RMA</td>
<td>Risk Management Agency</td>
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<td>7 U.S.C. § 8791(b)(2)</td>
<td>&quot;[I]nformation provided by an agricultural producer or owner of agricultural land concerning the agricultural operation, farming or conservation practices, or the land itself, in order to participate in programs of the Department&quot; or &quot;geospatial information...maintained by the Secretary about agricultural land or operations.&quot;</td>
<td>Cent. Platte Nat. Res. Dist. V. U.S. Dep't of Agric., 643 F.3d 1142, 1147-48 (8th Cir. 2011); Ctr. for Biological Diversity v. USDA, 626 F.3d 1113, 1118 (9th Cir. 2010); Zanoni v. USDA, 605 F. Supp. 2d 230, 237-38 (D.D.C. 2009).</td>
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<td>7 U.S.C. § 2276(a)(2)</td>
<td>&quot;[I]nformation furnished under a provision of law referred to in subsection (d) of this section…unless such information has been transformed into a statistical or aggregate form that does not allow the identification.&quot;</td>
<td>Strunk v. U.S. Dept. of Interior, 752 F. Supp. 2d 39, 44-45 (D.D.C. 2010).</td>
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<td>Information contained within a Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) program evaluation databases</td>
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<th>Number of Requests Received in Fiscal Year</th>
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After reviewing its database, the USDA updated the number of requests pending at the start of the Fiscal Year for the following components: RD, OSEC, OGC, OCFO, NRCS, OHA, FSIS, FSA, FS, DA, APHIS.

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## V.B.(1). DISPOSITION OF FOIA REQUESTS -- ALL PROCESSED REQUESTS

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<th>Number of Full Grants</th>
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V.B.(2). DISPOSITION OF FOIA REQUESTS -- "OTHER" REASONS FOR "FULL DENIALS BASED ON REASONS OTHER THAN EXEMPTIONS"

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### VI.A. ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS OF INITIAL DETERMINATIONS OF FOIA REQUESTS -- RECEIVED, PROCESSED, AND PENDING ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS

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After reviewing its database, USDA adjusted the number of consults pending as of the start of the Fiscal Year for the following components: OGC and FSA.
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### XII.D.(1). COMPARISON OF NUMBERS OF REQUESTS FROM PREVIOUS AND CURRENT ANNUAL REPORT -- REQUESTS RECEIVED AND PROCESSED

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*GIPSA has been merged into AMS. AMS data for Last Year's Annual Report include GIPSA request(s).*
### XII.D.(2). COMPARISON OF NUMBERS OF REQUESTS FROM PREVIOUS AND CURRENT ANNUAL REPORT -- BACKLOGGED REQUESTS

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XII.E.(1). COMPARISON OF NUMBERS OF ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS FROM PREVIOUS AND CURRENT ANNUAL REPORT -- APPEALS RECEIVED AND PROCESSED

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