



**AGRICULTURAL
MARKETING
SERVICE**

**Strategic Plan
2008 – 2013**

April 2008

**United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)
Washington, DC**



Message from the Administrator

Employees and Customers
of the Agricultural Marketing Service

Dear Colleagues and Customers:

It is with a great deal of pleasure that I announce to you the completion of the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) Strategic Plan for 2008–2013. This plan is the culmination of many months of introspection and review of where we, as an Agency, currently are and what we believe our role in U.S. agriculture should be over the next few years.

The mission of AMS is to facilitate the competitive and efficient marketing of agricultural products. Of course, there are many ways to achieve this mission but they are all related to one central vision—a marketing system that quickly and efficiently moves wholesome, affordable agricultural products from the farm to the consumer.

As an Agency, and as individual employees, we subscribe to five core values:

- Independence and Objectivity
- Customer Service
- Accountability
- Honesty and Integrity
- Fairness

AMS has four strategic goals and one management strategy that describe the major areas of emphasis we believe will enable us to accomplish our mission and achieve our vision. These goals and management strategy reflect and are integrated in the overall Strategic Plan for the Department of Agriculture. Our strategic goals for 2008–2013 are:

1. Support our customers in making verifiable market-enhancing claims about how their products are produced, processed, and packaged.
2. Provide benefits to the agricultural industry and general public by delivering timely, accurate, and unbiased market information; supporting marketing innovation; and purchasing commodities in temporary surplus and donating them for Federal food and nutrition programs.



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3. Enable agricultural groups to create marketing self-help programs designed to strengthen the industry's position in the marketplace.
4. Monitor specific agricultural industries/activities to ensure they maintain practices established by regulation to protect buyers, sellers, and other stakeholders.

Our management strategy is to:

- Procure, develop, and use resources to efficiently and effectively support AMS programs.

Every day I see the commitment of our employees to provide the best possible service to our customers. In fact, responsiveness to the industries we serve has long been the hallmark of AMS. We continuously monitor the needs of agriculture and reshape ourselves to provide the most efficient service at the lowest possible cost. Our partnerships with our customers are a source of great pride for us and enable us to adapt quickly to meet their changing needs. Our new strategic plan is a testament to our commitment to meet the needs of industry but is by no means the final word on what we can or must do in the future. A healthy agricultural industry is vital to the health of this great Nation. As the industry evolves, so will we as we strive to improve the services we provide.

I encourage you to review the AMS Strategic Plan in its entirety by visiting the AMS Web site at www.ams.usda.gov and clicking on the link for the Strategic Plan or the "About AMS" button.

Finally, I extend my sincere appreciation to the many dedicated employees of AMS and to the members of industry who have been so very important to the development of this Plan. Your contributions have been invaluable, and we look forward to our continued partnership.



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2008–2013 Strategic Plan

The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is one of 17 agencies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). AMS is responsible for developing quality grade and labeling standards for agricultural commodities, offering product verification services, issuing Market News reports, administering marketing self-help programs, and making food purchases used in USDA food assistance programs.

MISSION: The mission of AMS is to facilitate the competitive and efficient marketing of agricultural products.

VISION: We envision a marketing system that quickly and efficiently moves wholesome, affordable agricultural products from the farm to the consumer.

VALUES: As an Agency, and as individual employees, we subscribe to the following five core values:

- Independence and Objectivity: We act independently and objectively to create trust in our programs and services for individuals and businesses throughout the agricultural marketing system.
- Customer Service: We provide prompt, accurate, and technically competent services to our customers.
- Accountability: We are accountable to our customers.
- Honesty and Integrity: We maintain honesty and integrity in our programs and ourselves.
- Fairness: We treat everyone with fairness, dignity, and respect.

STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK

The AMS Strategic Plan contains four Strategic Goals that describe AMS' major areas of emphasis in accomplishing its Mission and achieving its Vision. The AMS plan is integrated with the USDA Strategic Plan.

AMS includes Objectives and Performance Actions with each Strategic Goal. Objectives are the outcomes AMS expects to achieve by 2013. Performance Actions are specific steps AMS commits to take in order to accomplish the Objectives. Performance measures are incorporated into individual AMS Program and Annual Operating Plans and are used to track progress in meeting AMS objectives.

In addition, this plan contains Management Strategies that support the President's Management Agenda (PMA) goals of expanded e-Government, improved human capital management, budget and performance integration, and improved financial management, including the elimination of



improper payments. Integral to achieving AMS objectives are outreach, sound management practices, innovation in the use of resources, and increased use of appropriate technology.

STRATEGIC GOALS

For 2008–2013, AMS Strategic Goals are to:

1. Support our customers in making verifiable market-enhancing claims about how their products are produced, processed, and packaged.
2. Provide benefits to the agriculture industry and general public by delivering timely, accurate, and unbiased market information; supporting marketing innovation; and purchasing commodities in temporary surplus and donating them for Federal food and nutrition programs.
3. Enable agriculture groups to create marketing self-help programs designed to strengthen the industry's position in the marketplace.
4. Monitor specific agricultural industries/activities to ensure that they maintain practices established by regulation to protect buyers, sellers, and other stakeholders.

LINKAGES TO PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

In designing this Strategic Plan, AMS considered the information gathered through a variety of program evaluations. AMS also examined prior data, extrapolated trends, and set new objectives based on past progress and current status in order to determine what steps to take next. Program evaluations considered in establishing and revising the general goals and objectives described in this Strategic Plan include:

- Government Accountability Office (GAO) audits.
- Recent and ongoing Office of Management and Budget (OMB) program performance assessments using the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART).
- Recent and ongoing Performance Measures included in AMS Program and Annual Operating Plans.

Future evaluations include ongoing PART evaluations, GAO and Office of Inspector General audits, and those specifically identified under applicable Strategic Goals.

LINKAGES TO USDA STRATEGIC PLAN

AMS' Strategic Plan supports the USDA Strategic Plan as follows:

All AMS Strategic Goals directly support the following USDA Strategic Goal:



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- USDA Strategic Goal 2: Enhance the Competitiveness and Sustainability of Rural and Farm Economies.

All AMS Strategic Goals indirectly support the following USDA Strategic Goal:

- USDA Strategic Goal 1: Enhance International Competitiveness of American Agriculture.

In addition, AMS Strategic Goal 2 also supports other USDA agencies in accomplishing the following USDA Strategic Goals:

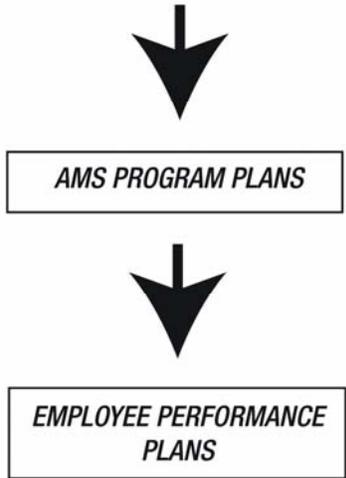
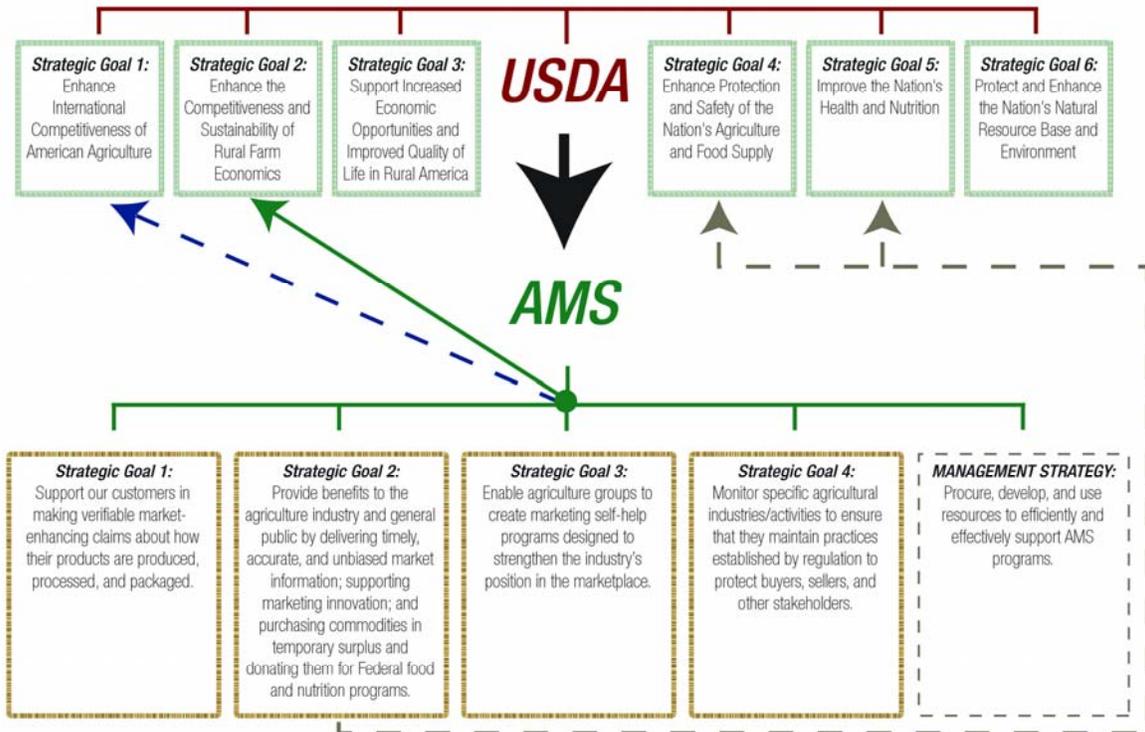
- USDA Strategic Goal 4: Enhance Protection and Safety of the Nation's Agriculture and Food Supply.
- USDA Strategic Goal 5: Improve the Nation's Nutrition and Health.

LINKAGES WITHIN AMS

Based on the AMS Strategic Plan, individual AMS Programs develop annual operating plans, which clearly link to individual performance plans. These connections are demonstrated in the following figure.



MAKING VISION REAL



AMS' Strategic Plan is linked to USDA's Strategic Plan, AMS' individual Program Plans, and AMS' Employees' Performance Plans. AMS' Strategic Plan supports USDA in accomplishing its Strategic Plan. Individual AMS Program Plans support AMS in accomplishing its Strategic Plan. AMS Employees' Performance Plans support AMS Programs in accomplishing their Plans. Together, all combine to make real the AMS Vision of a marketing system that quickly and efficiently moves wholesome, affordable agricultural products to the consumer.





KEY EXTERNAL FACTORS

AMS' ability to achieve the goals of its Strategic Plan can be impacted by a variety of factors beyond its control. Primary external factors affecting programs are:

Economic Influences

Changes in the domestic and global economies affect the agricultural, food, and fiber industries, which in turn influence the delivery of services by AMS. Long-run projections for key economic factors are summarized below.¹

Key Assumptions

- Annual rates of world economic growth are expected to increase, particularly in developing countries. U.S. gross domestic product is expected to grow at a slower, sustainable rate.
- Growth in global population is assumed to slow, with rates remaining higher in developing countries.
- The U.S. dollar remains relatively strong by long-run historical standards, with slow appreciation resuming after continued weakening in the near term.
- Rising world oil demand is expected to continue, although increasing supplies are expected to constrain longer run price increases.
- Continued expansion in ethanol production, primarily from corn, is anticipated. To a lesser extent, biodiesel production is also expected to grow.

Key Projections

- Increases in global demand for food and agricultural products provide the foundation for gains in agricultural trade and U.S. exports. The United States will remain competitive in global agricultural markets, although trade competition will continue to be strong.
- Steady global economic growth and stronger world trade lead to gains for U.S. agricultural export volumes and higher commodity prices. Increases in U.S. consumer income and demand for a large variety of foods underlie growth in U.S. agricultural imports.
- Consumer food prices are projected to rise slowly over the next decade, although increases in meat prices push food prices up faster in some years. Consumer expenditures for food away from home continue to grow in importance and account for more than half of overall food spending during most of the projection period.

¹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Chief Economist, World Agricultural Outlook Board. [USDA Agricultural Projections to 2016](#). Long-term Projections Report OCE-2007-1. February 2007.



- Strong expansion of corn-based ethanol production in the United States affects virtually every aspect of the field crops sector. Overall plantings expand and a higher portion of the total is planted to corn. Higher feed costs and the increased availability of distillers grains also affect the livestock sector.
- Prices of poultry and pork in the United States rise relative to the price of beef because cattle can more effectively use the increasing supply of distillers grains, a coproduct of ethanol production. Corn, needed for broilers and swine, becomes more expensive while distillers grains, used for cattle, become more abundant and relatively less expensive.
- Production of all meats slows or declines in the next few years, reflecting higher feed costs and lower producer returns as more corn is used in the production of ethanol. After those production adjustments, strong domestic demand and some strengthening in meat exports result in higher prices and higher returns.
- The production value of U.S. horticultural crops is projected to grow steadily over the next decade. Consumption of horticultural products continues to rise in the projections. Imports play an important role in domestic supply during the winter and, increasingly, during other times of the year.
- Productivity gains are expected to boost milk output per cow and total milk production, although some slowing in these increases occurs in the shorter run due to higher feed costs.
- Mill use of upland cotton in the United States declines as U.S. imports of apparel continue to increase, reducing domestic apparel production and lowering the apparel industry's demand for fabric and yarn produced in the United States.
- The tobacco sector continues to adjust to the ending of the U.S. tobacco marketing quota and price support program. Tobacco leaf production increases as many remaining growers expand operations. Domestic use of tobacco leaf is expected to decrease, while exports of tobacco leaf are projected to increase moderately.

Changing Consumer Preferences

Increases in global demand for food and agricultural products provide the foundation for gains in agricultural trade, foreign and domestic. Changes in preferences therefore affect available markets.

- Overall meat expenditures represent a declining proportion of disposable income.
- Declining cigarette consumption in the United States is an important factor underlying projected decreases in domestic use of tobacco leaf. Exports of tobacco leaf are projected to increase moderately.
- Demand for organically produced agricultural products is expected to increase substantially, resulting in greater volume and variety of organically produced food and fiber.



Funding

- Future program funding levels impact AMS' ability to achieve its goals.
- Future funding levels for salaries and related expenses affect AMS' ability to provide the staff and other resources needed to deliver the programs or achieve the anticipated level of performance.
- Agency and Departmental overhead funding requirements pressure resources available for both appropriated and user-fee programs.

State Resources

- Resource availability of cooperating State agencies impact AMS' ability to achieve Federal program goals.

Legislative and Other Regulatory Changes

- The use of corn for ethanol, in addition to feed, is expected to raise corn prices, resulting in increased prices for poultry and pork, relative to beef. This could also cause a shift in production and agricultural transportation patterns.
- Reduced trade barriers offer U.S. consumers increased variety, with freer trade enhancing global competition.
- New legislation and regulatory requirements may significantly impact AMS' programs.
- Statutory or regulatory changes related to Homeland Security may impact AMS' programs.



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: Support our customers in making verifiable market-enhancing claims about how their products are produced, processed, and packaged.

AMS provides grading and certification services, audit verification programs, and field laboratory services. These Quality Certification and Verification Programs exist to provide product or process information for buyers and consumers about the quality or specifications of the product being purchased. These programs directly benefit the requesting party by supporting product sales and are provided on a fee-for-service basis upon request.

Quality Verification
Program Activities
Grading and Certification
Audit Verification
Laboratory Services

AMS has a long tradition of offering quality grading and certification services that provide unbiased, third-party, and legally recognized confirmation of product condition, USDA grade, lot size, or other specifications stipulated under a sales contract.

More recently, AMS has developed a number of Audit Verification Programs for production and quality control systems at the request of the agriculture industry to assist in the marketing of commodities. The Audit Verification Programs make it possible for industry to make various marketing claims about their products and to reduce costs.

- For export, these services support industry sales by using internationally recognized standards to assist in export marketing.
- Domestically, audit verification may be requested to verify that:
 - A system is in place that ensures products meet purchase specifications throughout the production process, or
 - The producer and/or processor followed Food and Drug Administration’s recommended practices for food safety, including Good Agricultural Practices and Good Handling Practices.

Grading, certification, and auditing activities are performed by Federal employees and federally supervised State employees. Field Laboratory Services provide AMS commodity programs and the agricultural community with multidisciplinary analytical laboratory services to support grading, commodity purchases, and export certification programs.



Objectives for Strategic Goal 1

During 2008–2013, we will:

- 1.1 Provide value-added services to strengthen marketing support to U.S. agriculture in an environment of rising cost pressures, increasing exports, competing imports, and changing market requirements.

Performance Actions for Strategic Goal 1

To accomplish our Objective for Strategic Goal 1, we commit to:

- 1a. Establish procedures for AMS audit verification.
- 1b. Review our processes for certification of purchased commodities to determine the potential for service improvements.
- 1c. Enhance the AMS Web site to better communicate information on AMS services available to customers and stakeholders.
- 1d. Address marketing challenges resulting from foreign governments' trade requirements for official verification of export products, and extend the use of the AMS Electronic Document Exchange Repository Web site to address export verification issues for commodities other than peanuts.
- 1e. Evaluate industry needs to ensure AMS is offering the appropriate technical expertise to facilitate export marketing.
- 1f. Be proactive in monitoring changing marketing systems so appropriate new services are developed to address the evolving needs of the agricultural industry.
- 1g. Effectively market the value of official grades or certifications to producers, sellers, and consumers.



STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Provide benefits to the agriculture industry and general public by delivering timely, accurate, and unbiased market information; supporting marketing innovation; and purchasing commodities in temporary surplus and supplying them for Federal food and nutrition programs.

AMS delivers Public Good Programs that provide benefits and services to a broad base of agricultural producers, marketers, and consumers. These programs:

- Generate, collect, and process data that are distributed directly to users, or may be repackaged and further disseminated;
- Develop product descriptions that are used freely and widely in private contracts to provide a common language for trading;
- Gather and analyze non-recurring statistical and economic data that support agricultural marketing and contribute to public policy decisions;
- Fund grants for projects that support marketing improvements; and
- Purchase commodities for donation to USDA food and nutrition programs that benefit needy children and families.

Public Good Program Activities

Market News
 Commodity Standards
 Pesticide Data Program
 Transportation Services
 Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program
 Specialty Crop Block Grants
 Economic and Statistical Analysis
 Commodity Purchases
 Wholesale, Farmers, and Alternative Market
 Development, including
 Farmers Market Promotion Program

These programs help the agriculture industry identify alternative ways to maintain and improve the return on funds it has invested. AMS funds for these activities are appropriated.

Objectives for Strategic Goal 2

During 2008–2013, we will:

- 2.1 Respond quickly and effectively to changing markets, marketing practices, and consumer trends.
- 2.2 Support small-production agricultural producers through new and existing AMS programs that are especially beneficial to that segment of the industry.
- 2.3 Address food defense concerns.



Performance Actions for Strategic Goal 2

To accomplish our Objectives for Strategic Goal 2, we commit to:

- 2a. Conduct program evaluations on the use of program information by target users.
- 2b. Implement improvements to the Livestock Mandatory Price Reporting Program identified by GAO audit.
- 2c. Evaluate Farmers Market Promotion Program grant results and support replication of promising Farmers Market Promotion Program direct marketing projects that use best practices.
- 2d. Identify new methods and enhance existing methods of distributing fresh and processed agricultural products through the supply chain.
- 2e. Develop contingency authority to purchase commodities when surpluses are anticipated.
- 2f. Analyze the impact of surplus removal purchases on market conditions.
- 2g. Increase coordination with other government entities to protect purchased foods against intentional or unintentional contamination.
- 2h. Provide easy electronic access to current and historical Market News information to all of our customers.



STRATEGIC GOAL 3: Enable agriculture groups to create marketing self-help programs designed to strengthen the industry’s position in the marketplace.

AMS oversees two types of federally-authorized marketing self-help programs, allowing agriculture industry groups to establish programs that promote consumer purchases of their commodities on a national or regional scale. Using standing legislative authority, these customers initiate self-regulatory programs with the goal of improving their ability to market products. AMS works in partnership with the participating industry to oversee the administration of the programs. AMS’ role is to ensure that industry activities remain within legal and regulatory authority and to provide the necessary rulemaking. Program activities are funded from assessments collected by the industry that initiated the program. Federal oversight costs for Research and Promotion programs are also reimbursed from industry assessments.

Marketing Self-Help Program Activities

Research and Promotion Programs
Marketing Agreements and Orders

Objective for Strategic Goal 3

During 2008–2013, we will:

- 3.1 Respond to industry requests for planning and technical assistance.

Performance Actions for Strategic Goal 3

To accomplish our Objective for Strategic Goal 3, we commit to:

- 3a. Provide requested assistance to Research and Promotion Boards and Marketing Order Committees.
- 3b. Increase education of and outreach to industry on marketing self-help programs.
- 3c. Develop expedited processes for rulemaking regarding marketing self-help programs.
- 3d. Work with industry to institute voluntary mechanisms that will help to resolve marketing issues related to food safety.



STRATEGIC GOAL 4: Monitor specific agricultural industries/activities to ensure they maintain practices established by regulation to protect buyers, sellers, and other stakeholders.

Certain AMS programs help ensure a fair marketplace by regulating agricultural marketing of perishable produce, organically produced products, seed, and shell eggs at the national level to protect buyers and other stakeholders. The AMS workforce has an enforcement role in the areas of:

- truthful labeling and accurate record keeping
- contract dispute settlement
- protection against fraud and abuse, and
- promotion of fair trade

Regulatory Program Activities

National Organic Program
Federal Seed
Shell Egg Surveillance
Country of Origin Labeling
Perishable Agricultural
Commodities Act Program
Pesticide Recordkeeping
Plant Variety Protection Program

Objectives for Strategic Goal 4

During 2008–2013, we will:

- 4.1 Reduce the potential for mislabeling of seed and organic products.
- 4.2 Institute an effective Country of Origin Labeling Program for all designated covered commodities.
- 4.3 Apply a variety of dispute resolution approaches to facilitate commercial dispute resolution.

Performance Actions for Strategic Goal 4

To accomplish our Objectives for Strategic Goal 4, we commit to:

- 4a. Seek opportunities to increase industry compliance with regulations.
- 4b. Seek stakeholder input during development of regulations.
- 4c. Strengthen oversight and review of the National Organic Program.
- 4d. Improve and enforce plant breeders' rights.



MANAGEMENT STRATEGY: Procure, develop, and use resources to efficiently and effectively support AMS programs.

The AMS Strategic Plan is integrated with and dependent upon the success of its Management Strategy (MS).

Objectives for Management Strategy

During 2008–2013, we will:

- MS1: Use automation to improve delivery of services.
- MS2: Improve human capital management.
- MS3: Increase budget and performance integration.
- MS4: Improve financial management, including the elimination of improper payments.

Objectives for AMS' Management Strategy correspond to the President's Management Agenda Initiatives.

Performance Actions for Management Strategy

To accomplish our Objectives for our Management Strategy, we commit to:

- MSa. Ensure an efficient, high-performing, diverse workforce, aligned with mission priorities and working cooperatively with our partners.
- MSb. Identify core skills development training and increase the number of employees with nationally and internationally recognized certifications.
- MSc. Create a common billing language across all AMS user-fee Programs.
- MSd. Implement the Web-Based Supply Chain Management (WBSCM) system for commodity purchases across the Department.
- MSe. Expand the Market News Portal to improve data access for users in all commodity areas.
- MSf. Develop an electronic reading room, which would include a database of audit and violations findings.
- MSg. Update the database on pesticide residues in foods commonly consumed by children.
- MSh. Update the Livestock Mandatory Price Reporting data collection system to reflect revised legislative requirements.
- MSi. Modernize the Plant Variety Protection database to improve access to data and customer service.



- MSj. Implement a comprehensive service-level agreement with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Marketing and Regulatory Programs Business Services (MRPBS) to successfully align human resources service delivery in support of AMS and Program hiring objectives.
- MSk. Recover overpayments made to vendor organizations.
- MSl. Establish an Agency electronic records management system.
- MSm. Adopt a standards-based service management framework for delivering Agency information technology (IT) services.
- MSn. Complete integration with the International Trade Data System.

LINK BETWEEN STRATEGIC PLAN AND PERFORMANCE PLAN

AMS uses this Strategic Plan to support the development of individual Program Annual Operating Plans and budget proposals. Each Program within AMS evaluates and identifies specific steps that contribute to accomplishing the Strategic Goals in this plan.

AMS is organizationally structured according to commodity to better serve the unique needs of individual agricultural industries. These Commodity Programs are:

- Cotton and Tobacco
- Dairy
- Fruit and Vegetable
- Livestock and Seed
- Poultry

AMS also has centralized Programs that function across commodities:

- Compliance and Analysis provides AMS compliance, safety, and security services; budget development and execution; planning and accountability activities; employee resource services; and other management support services.
- Science and Technology provides laboratory services, plant variety protection, and statistical analysis. This Program area also includes the Information Technology Group that provides IT services for AMS.
- Transportation and Marketing supports all agricultural commodities through alternative market development, marketing innovation, two grant programs, transportation information, and the National Organic Program.

AMS also has Staff Offices that support AMS management and agency programs across commodities:

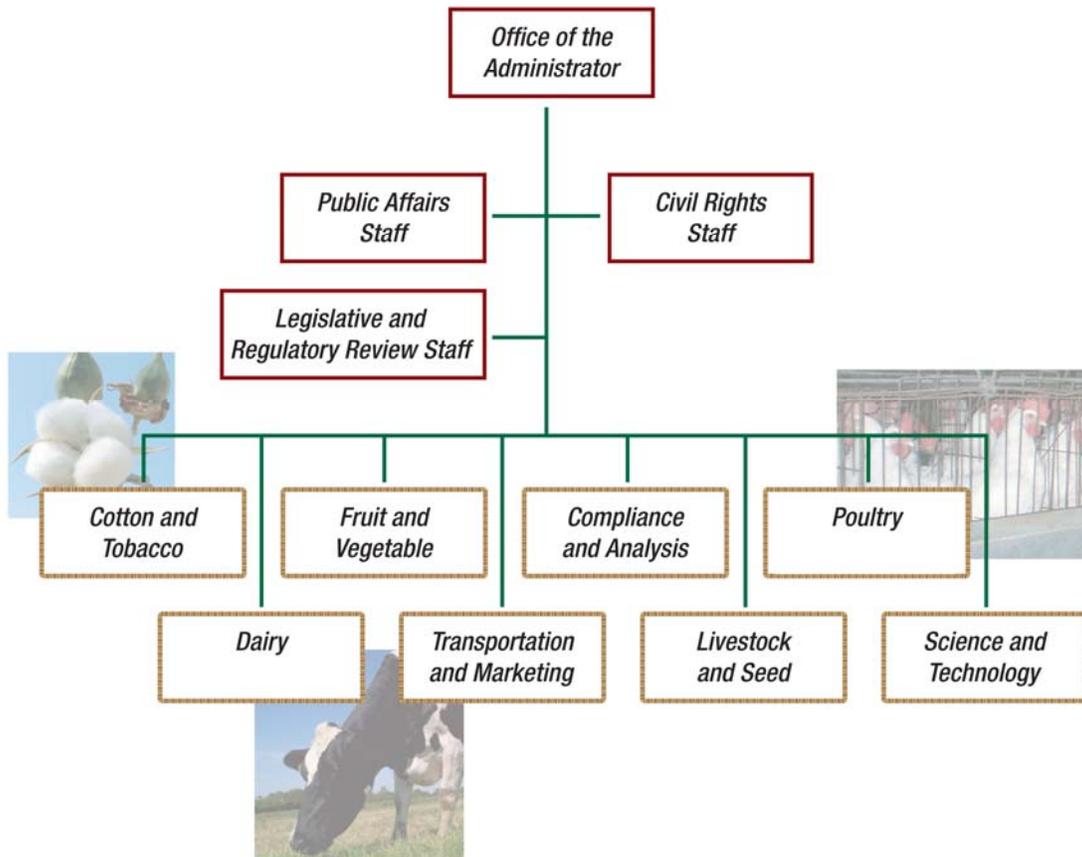
- Civil Rights ensures AMS compliance with Federal statutes that prohibit discrimination



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- in hiring, employment, and program delivery.
- Legislative and Regulatory Review responds to congressional and constituent requests for information, helps agency programs monitor proposed legislation, and assists with the drafting of new proposed regulatory actions.
 - Public Affairs informs the media and the general public about AMS programs.

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MARKETING AND REGULATORY PROGRAMS
AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE**





RESPONSIBLE PROGRAMS PER PERFORMANCE ACTION

PROGRAM	PERFORMANCE ACTION
All AMS Programs and Staff Offices	1f. Be proactive in monitoring changing market systems so appropriate new services are developed to address the evolving needs of the agricultural industry.
	2a. Conduct program evaluations on the use of program information by target users.
	MSa. Ensure an efficient, high-performing, diverse workforce, aligned with mission priorities and working cooperatively with our partners.
	MSk. Recover overpayments made to vendor organizations.
Cotton & Tobacco; Dairy; Fruit & Vegetable; Livestock & Seed; Poultry	2h. Provide easy electronic access to current and historical Market News information to all of our customers.
	1g. Effectively market the value of official grades or certifications to producers, sellers, and consumers.
Cotton & Tobacco; Dairy; Fruit & Vegetable; Livestock & Seed; Poultry; Science & Technology	MSb. Identify core skills development training and increase the number of employees with nationally and internationally recognized certifications.
	MSc. Create a common billing language across AMS user-fee Programs.
Compliance & Analysis; Cotton & Tobacco; Dairy; Fruit & Vegetable; Legislative & Regulatory Review; Livestock & Seed; Poultry	1a. Evaluate procedures for AMS audit verification.
	1d. Address marketing problems resulting from foreign governments' trade requirements for official verification of export products and extend the use of the AMS Electronic Document Exchange Repository Web site to address export verification issues for commodities other than peanuts.



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PROGRAM	PERFORMANCE ACTION
	<p>3a. Provide requested assistance to Research and Promotion Boards and Marketing Order Committees.</p> <p>3b. Increase education of and outreach to industry on marketing self-help programs.</p> <p>3c. Develop expedited processes for rulemaking regarding marketing self-help programs.</p> <p>3d. Work with industry to institute voluntary mechanisms that will help to resolve marketing issues related to food safety.</p>
<p>Compliance & Analysis; Fruit & Vegetable; Livestock & Seed; Poultry</p>	<p>1b. Review our processes for certification of purchased commodities to determine the potential for service improvements.</p> <p>2e. Develop contingency authority to purchase commodities when surpluses are anticipated.</p> <p>2f. Analyze the impact of surplus removal purchases on market conditions.</p> <p>2g. Increase coordination with other government entities to protect purchased foods against intentional or unintentional contamination.</p>
<p>Compliance & Analysis; Fruit & Vegetable; Legislative & Regulatory Review; Livestock & Seed; Poultry; Science & Technology; Transportation & Marketing</p>	<p>4a. Seek opportunities to increase industry compliance with regulations.</p> <p>4b. Seek stakeholder input during development of regulations.</p>



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PROGRAM	PERFORMANCE ACTION
Fruit & Vegetable; Transportation & Marketing	2d. Identify new methods of distributing fresh and processed agricultural products through the supply chain.
Livestock & Seed	2b. Implement improvements to the Livestock Mandatory Price Reporting Program identified by GAO audit.
	MSh. Update Livestock Mandatory Price Reporting data collection systems to reflect revised legislative requirements.
Science & Technology	1e. Evaluate industry needs to ensure AMS is offering the appropriate technical expertise to facilitate export marketing.
	4d. Improve and enforce plant breeders' rights.
	MSd. Implement the Web-Based Supply Chain Management (WBSCM) system for commodity purchases across the Department.
	MSe. Expand the Market News Portal to improve data access for users in all commodity areas.
	MSg. Update the database on pesticide residues in foods commonly consumed by children.
	MSi. Modernize the Plant Variety Protection database to improve access to data and consumer service.
	MSl. Establish an Agency electronic records management system.
	MSm. Adopt a standards-based service management framework for delivering Agency IT services.
	MSn. Complete integration with the International Trade Data System.
Compliance & Analysis; Transportation & Marketing	2c. Evaluate Farmers Market Promotion Program grant results and support replication of promising Farmers Market Promotion Program direct marketing projects that use best practices.



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PROGRAM	PERFORMANCE ACTION
	4c. Strengthen oversight and review of the National Organic Program.
Compliance & Analysis	MSj. Implement a comprehensive service-level agreement with the APHIS-MRPBS to successfully align human resources service delivery in support of AMS and Program hiring objectives.
Public Affairs	1c. Enhance the AMS Web site to better communicate information on grading and certification services to customers and stakeholders.
Compliance & Analysis; Livestock & Seed; Transportation & Marketing	MSf. Develop an electronic reading room, which would include a database of audit and violation findings.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination write to USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.