Use Subject Lines

Write clear and meaningful subject lines the reader will understand. This helps the reader shift to the proper context when opening your message. Start your subject line with one of the following designators:

- For Information Only
- Action Required [*By Date*]
- Information Request
- Establish or Update Policy
- Update Program
- Urgent [*Use only if action is required within 24 hours*.]

Be Clear and Concise

Keep your emails as brief as possible.

Set Priorities

If you request an action, indicate deadlines or time frames. Be as specific as possible.

Policy	http://inside.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/DAPolicy/

Tips for Using Electronic Mail

Email communication, unlike telephone and face-to-face communication, does not convey the facial expressions or tone that can be exchanged in person or on the telephone. The reader is left to interpret the tone and intent of your based solely on the words or graphic images in the message. This creates the potential for miscommunication.

When sending email, remember the following network etiquette tips:

Capitalization

The use of UPPERCASE letters is interpreted as yelling.

Junk Email

Do not send chain letters, urban legends, or other emails that ask you to forward the information to lots of other people. This is a waste of people's time and the server's bandwidth.

Bundling Topics

Avoid bundling too much information in one email. Use one email per subject.

Forwarding

Limit forwarding of messages. Instead, cut and paste the relevant content into a new email. Forwarding and replying can create a tangled web and one can forget the original intent of the email. The reader should not have to wade through forwarded messages to determine the context or purpose of your email.

Bandwidth

Not everyone has a fast connection. Monitor the size of your messages and attachments. Images require a lot of memory.

Repeat Messages

"Did you get the email I sent?" Avoid repeating messages. If no response was received, pick up the telephone as a courtesy. For many reasons, people cannot respond promptly to email all of the time.

Abbreviations

Avoid the latest trend of catchy abbreviations used for text messaging. You may confuse the reader.

Who Should Get a Copy of Your Email?

cc: or bcc:

To:—Main recipients of the message.

cc:—People who are directly involved with the subject.

bcc:—These addresses are blind to the "To:" and "cc:" folks. This tool may be viewed as unethical; however, it is useful for concealing addresses in large group mailings that are vulnerable to spam. You can use this function to avoid including the list of recipients if the message is printed.

Reply All—Don't use this option unless there is a specific need for everyone to receive the message.

Reply with History—If your message is complete, you will not need to use this tool. Try quoting from the previous message. Attaching old messages uses bandwidth. If you use this function, take a few seconds to save space by deleting any attachments since recipients already have them.