United States
Department of
Agriculture

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

Plant Protection and
Quarantine

March 8, 2007

Internal Communication Guidelines for PPQ

Internal Communication Guidelines for PPQ

March 8, 2007

Internal Communication Guidelines for PPQ was prepared by the Internal Communication Implementation Team.

Cite this report as follows: USDA–APHIS–PPQ. 2006. *Internal Communication Guidelines for PPQ*. Riverdale, Maryland: USDA.

July 27, 2006

Richard Dunkle, Deputy Administrator
USDA–APHIS–PPQ

Date

Internal Communication Guidelines for PPQ is a portable electronic guide that is updated periodically. Please download the current version of the guide from its source, and then use Adobe Reader® to view it on your computer screen. You may print the guide for convenience. However, links and navigational tools are only functional when the guide is viewed in Adobe Reader®. Remember that printed copies of the guide are obsolete once a new version has been issued.

Internal Communication

Credits

Project Champions

Jane Berkow, Plant Health Programs–Analysis & Regulatory Coordination, Senior Program Analyst and Planning Specialist, Riverdale, Maryland

Paula Henstridge, Special Assistant to the Deputy Administrator, Washington, D.C.

Team Leaders

JoAnn Cruse, State Plant Health Director, Madison, Wisconsin

Joel Floyd, Emergency and Domestic Programs–Planning and Preparedness, Team Leader, Riverdale, Maryland

Writer/Editor

Patricia Michalak, Writer/Editor, Frederick, Maryland

Implementation Team

Gary Adams, State Plant Health Director, Helena, Montana

Woodward Bailey, CPHST, Global Pest and Disease Database Manager, Raleigh, North Carolina

Laney Campbell, Regional Program Manager, Raleigh, North Carolina

Marla Cazier-Mosley, Regional Program Manager, Fort Collins, Colorado

Camille Chapman, Program Analyst, Riverdale, Maryland

Jennifer Lemly, Trade Director, Riverdale, Maryland

Stephen Tolar, Plant Health Safeguarding Specialist, Raleigh, North Carolina

Kathlene Walton, Office Manager, West Valley, Utah

Reviewers

Musa Abdulshefe, Plant Pathologist, Los Angeles, California

William Bryant, Plant Health Safeguarding Specialist, Prattville, Alabama

Sharon Church, National Association of Plant Protection and Quarantine Office Support Employees (NAPPQOSE), Office Manager, Madison, Wisconsin

Gary Clement, Assistant Regional Director, Raleigh, North Carolina

Melissa Fabiano, CPHST–Plant Epidemiology Risk Analysis Laboratory, Editor, Raleigh, North Carolina

Candace Funk, Staff Officer, Riverdale, Maryland

Vicki Haygood, Professional Development Center, Training Technician, Frederick, Maryland

Diana Hoffman, Smuggling Interdiction and Trade Compliance Program, Area Manager, Seattle, Washington

Dawn Holzer, Pest Survey Specialist, Logan, Utah

Elna Hunter, Regulatory Coordination Specialist, Riverdale, Maryland

Therese Jankowski, Writer/Editor, Washington, D.C.

Donna Johnston, Office Manager, Dover, Delaware

Barbara Kennedy, Plant Health Programs–Planning Analysis and Regulatory Coordination, Writer/Editor, Riverdale, Maryland

Kristen Luurs, Resource Management Staff, Senior Management Analyst, Fort Collins, Colorado

Fred Mann, State Plant Health Director, Annapolis, Maryland

Russell McKinney, State Plant Health Director, Topeka, Kansas

Mitchell Nelson, State Plant Health Director, Portland, Oregon

Parul Patel, Offshore Pest Information Program, International Pest Information Coordinator; Riverdale, Maryland

Mike Randall, National Association of Agriculture Employees, President, Honolulu, Hawaii

Sherry Sanderson, Assistant Regional Director, Ft. Collins, Colorado

Linda Schepers, Grants Specialist, Raleigh, North Carolina

Brian Spears, CPHST–Plant Epidemiology and Risk Analysis Laboratory, Senior Risk Analyst, Raleigh, North Carolina

Regan Thomas, Program Analyst, Ft. Collins, Colorado

Dawn Wade, Professional Development Center, Senior Training Specialist, Frederick, Maryland

Donna L. West, President, National Association of Plant Protection and Quarantine Managers, Riverdale, Maryland

Andrew Wilds, Domestic Program Coordinator, Bangor, Maine

Janet Wintermute, APHIS–Legislative and Public Affairs, Writer/Editor, Riverdale, Maryland

John Yankosky, Smuggling, Interdiction & Trade Compliance, Supervisor, Elizabeth, New Jersey

Permission to Reproduce

Permission was granted to reproduce material from the following publication:

Communicators Guide. For Federal, State, Regional and Local Communicators. 2001. Federal Communicators Network [http://www.fcn.gov].

Internal Communication

Contents

Credits *page i-i*
Project Champions i
Team Leaders i
Writer/Editor i
Implementation Team i
Reviewers ii
Permission to Reproduce iii

Chapter 1
Introduction *page 1-1*
Purpose 1
History 2
Overview 3
What the Guide Covers 3
What the Guide Does Not Cover 3
How to Use the Guide 4
Directions 6
Reporting Problems 7

Chapter 2
Organizational Structure *page 2-1*
Introduction 1
Hierarchy 1
Advanced Notification of State Plant Health Directors 2
Planning Activities Within a State 2
Working With Stakeholders Within a State 2
Email Notification 2
Structure 3
USDA 3
Marketing and Regulatory Programs 3
APHIS 3
Plant Protection and Quarantine 3
PPQ Headquarters 4

Chapter 3
Policy *page 3-1*
Introduction 1
Policies 1
Issuances 1
Administrative Notices 2
Directives 2
PPQ Technical Manuals 2

Chapter 4
Written Communication *page 4-1*
Introduction 1
U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual 1
Visual Management Guidelines 2
Copyright Law 3
Official Correspondence 3
Tips for Successful Documents 4
Style Guide 5
Write With An Active Voice 5
Use Powerful Verbs Instead of State-of-Being Verbs 6
Use Personal Pronouns 6
Write Short Sentences 6
Avoid Excess Information 7
If A, Then B 7
Avoid Jargon 7
Keep Items Parallel 8
Avoid Unnecessary and Difficult Words 8
Avoid Adjective Pileups 10
Be Positive 11
Correspondence 12
PPQ Employees 12
Office of the Secretary of Agriculture or APHIS Administrator 13
Newsletters 19
Design 19
Style 21
Inside APHIS 22
Reports 23
Templates 24
Training Courses for Written Reports 24
APHIS *Weekly Activities Report 25*
Version Control 26
Microsoft Word® 27
Adobe Acrobat Professional 7.0® 28
How to Work With a Writer or Editor 29
Editing Checklist 30

Chapter 5
Electronic Communication *page 5-1*
Introduction 1
Internet 1
PPQ Web Site 1
Intranet 2
Electronic Mail 2
Highlights of PPQ Email Policy 2
Tips for Using Electronic Mail 3
Who Should Get a Copy of Your Email? 4
Security 5
IBM® Lotus Notes™ Tools 6
Sametime® 10
Conquering Email Overload 11
Team Collaboration 11
IBM® Lotus Team Workplace™ 11
Electronic Meetings 12
IBM® Lotus Sametime™ Instant Messaging and Web Conferencing 12
Microsoft® Office Live Meeting 16

Chapter 6
Telephone and Radio Communication *page 6-1*
Introduction 1
Office Telephones 1
Telephone Etiquette 1
Voice Mail 2
Mobile Telephones 3
Security 3
Two-Way Radio Communication 4
Language 4
Identification 5
Emergency Protocol 5
Prohibitions 5

Chapter 7
Meetings and Presentations *page 7-1*
Introduction 1
Meeting Management 1
Planning a Meeting 1
Conducting a Meeting 3
Meeting Follow Up 5
Planning a Costly Meeting 5
Telephone Meetings 6
Step 1. Plan the Conference Call 6
Step 2. Conduct the Conference Call 6
Etiquette 7
Video Meetings 8
Step 1. Set Up and Plan the Video Meeting 8
Step 2. Conduct the Video Meeting 8
Tips for Video Meetings 9
Electronic Meetings 9
Public Speaking 10
Tips For Overcoming Fear of Public Speaking 17
Using Transparencies and Slides 18
PowerPoint™ Presentations 19
Making Slides 19
Content 19
Photos 20
Color 20
Typography 20
Chapter 8
External Communication *page 8-1*
Introduction 1
Public Meetings and Programs 1
Media and Congressional Communication 2
Freedom of Information Act 3
Written Communication 4
Correspondence 5
Printing Options 6
Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 6

Index
page 1-1
Appendix A
Acronym Dictionary *page A-1*
Appendix B
Forms and Examples *page B-1*
APHIS and PPQ Forms 1
General Use Agency Letterhead 2
Letter 5
Memorandum 6
Informational Memorandum 7
Briefing Paper 8
Talking Points 9
Decision Memorandum 10
Daily Situation Report 11
Permission to Reproduce Copyrighted Material 12
PowerPoint™ Presentations 13
Style Sheets 13
Appendix C
Resources *page C-1*
Written Information 1
Visual Information 2
Telephone Meetings 3
Video Meetings 4

1

Internal Communication

Chapter 1

Introduction

Contents

Purpose **page 1-1**
History **page 1-2**
Overview **page 1-3**
How to Use the Guide **page 1-4**
Directions **page 1-6**
Reporting Problems **page 1-7**

Purpose

The United States Department of Agriculture–Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service–Plant Protection and Quarantine (USDA–APHIS–PPQ) prepared the guidelines as an online toolkit to help employees quickly find the information they need to effectively communicate within PPQ.

The purpose is to ensure that all PPQ employees have the information they need, when they need it, and in the format or medium that allows them to perform their job effectively and efficiently.

Find More Information	http://inside.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/communications/manual.pdf

Communicate

History

In 1999, the National Plant Board identified a need for improved communication throughout PPQ in the report *Safeguarding American Plant Resources*. The Internal Communication Project commenced, with a goal to define the kinds of communication problems that exist within PPQ.

After reviewing many recommendations, team members identified the need for an internal communication guide that would function as a tool kit for employees who desire or need to improve their communication skills.

Internal Communication Guidelines for PPQ was the result of that effort. The guide was intended to be a reference for employees who may need help to improve writing skills, use email more efficiently, make effective presentations, arrange meetings, or communicate in other ways. Many resources were brought together within the guide.

Source	**National Plant Board (NPB). July 1, 1999. Safeguarding American Plant Resources. A Stakeholder Review of the APHIS-PPQ Safeguarding System. USDA—APHIS—PPQ [http://www.safeguarding.org/].**
Find More Information	**Internal Communication Project [http://inside.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/communications/]**

Overview

Communication is an essential component of PPQ. Effective communication allows each employee to contribute in a positive and productive manner.

The guide provides communication resources that will help PPQ employees to achieve efficient, effective and practical communication.

What the Guide Covers

The guide is divided into eight chapters:

1. **Introduction**
2. **Organizational Structure**
3. **Policy**
4. **Written Communication**
5. **Electronic Communication**
6. **Telephone and Radio Communication**
7. **Meetings and Presentations**
8. **External Communication**

The index follows *Chapter 8 External Communication*. The guide also includes the following appendixes:

A. **Acronym Dictionary**

B. **Forms and Examples**

C. **Resources**

What the Guide Does Not Cover

The guide does not cover communication with non-PPQ personnel and the public. However, much of the guide applies to both internal and external communication. The guide provides limited information on external communication (see **External Communication on page 8-1**). The guide does not cover Emergency Communication.

How to Use the Guide

Use the guide on the job as a reference when communicating within USDA–APHIS–PPQ.

When communicating within PPQ, use **Table 1-1** to determine which method of communication to use.

TABLE 1-1 Decision Table for Communication within PPQ

If you need to communicate within PPQ:	Then you:	And go to this section of the guide:
Regarding awards, condolences, and disciplinary actions	Write a letter or make a telephone call	**Correspondence on page 4-12** or **Office Telephones on page 6-1**
Informally or to document an official transaction or event	Write a memorandum	**Memorandum on page 4-12**
To share information, showcase accomplishments, and highlight cooperative efforts	Create a newsletter	**Producing a Newsletter on page 4-21**
To discuss a topic, or communicate instantaneously with someone who has a telephone	Make a telephone call	**Office Telephones on page 6-1**
Quickly in a work environment that does not support the use of an office telephone, cell phone, or other electronic communication equipment	Use a two-way radio	**Two-Way Radio Communication on page 6-4**
Quickly with other people who have access to electronic equipment	Use the internet, intranet, or email	**Electronic Communication on page 5-1**
To share or discuss significant amounts of information with one or more people	Hold a meeting	**Meetings and Presentations on page 7-1**

When corresponding with the Office of the Secretary or the APHIS Administrator, use **Table 1-2** as a guide to preparing high-level documents.

TABLE 1-2 Decision Table for Corresponding with the Office of the Secretary or the APHIS Administrator

If you are corresponding with the Office of the Secretary or the APHIS Administrator for the purpose of:	Then go to:
Factually answering a technical question from a high-ranking political appointee who is unfamiliar with the details of APHIS programs	**Informational Memorandum on page 4-13** and **Figure B-5 on page B-7**
Preparing for any matters of controversy or sensitivity that might arise at a high-level meeting	**Briefing Paper and Talking Points on page 4-15** and **Figure B-6 on page B-8** and **Figure B-7 on page B-9**
Presenting APHIS' position and supporting information about an issue of interest	**Briefing Paper and Talking Points on page 4-15** and **Figure B-6 on page B-8** and **Figure B-7 on page B-9**
Advancing APHIS goals that are affected by the participants at a high-level meeting	**Briefing Paper and Talking Points on page 4-15** and **Figure B-6 on page B-8** and **Figure B-7 on page B-9**
Persuading (to influence the assessment of options)	**Decision Memorandum on page B-10** and **Figure B-8 on page B-10**
Motivating (to cause a particular decision or action)	**Decision Memorandum on page B-10** and **Figure B-8 on page B-10**

Directions

Directions were used throughout the guide to bring important information to your attention.

Directions were placed in a shaded box at the end of each topic.

Support	**Support indicates the person or agency to contact for updates or help.**
Source	**Source indicates the location of information used for writing this section of the guide.**
Find More Information	**Find More Information indicates additional sources of information that the user may find helpful.**
Chart	**Chart is used in *Chapter 2 Organizational Structure* to indicate the Web site address of the organizational chart of the USDA unit.**
Address	**Address indicates the Web site address of a group.**
Policy	**Policy directs readers to pertinent documents.**
Example	**Example provides an example of the topic.**
➡	**The green arrow directs readers to requirements.**
©	**The copyright symbol reminds readers to heed copyright laws when appropriate.**

C o m m u n i c a t o r s G u i d e

Indicates copyrighted material reprinted with permission from the following source: *Communicators Guide. For Federal, State, Regional and Local Communicators.* 2001. Federal Communicators Network [http://www.fcn.gov].

Reporting Problems

Use **Table 1-3** to report updated information which directly affects the content of the guidelines.

TABLE 1-3 Procedure to Report a Problem with *Internal Communication Guidelines*

If you have:	Then contact:
Updated information, including Web site and email addresses	Therese Jankowski USDA–APHIS–PPQ 14th and Independence Ave. SW, Room 302-E Washington, DC 20250 Fax: 202-720-8535 therese.r.jankowski@aphis.usda.gov

2

Internal Communication

Chapter 2

Organizational Structure

Contents

Introduction **page 2-1**
Hierarchy **page 2-1**
Advanced Notification of State Plant Health Directors **page 2-2**
Structure **page 2-3**

Introduction

Organization is a structure through which individuals cooperate systematically to conduct business. Use this chapter to understand how PPQ programs work together.

Hierarchy

All employees must follow chains of command as directed by management. Supervisors should direct their staff members concerning the appropriate lines of communication. In many instances, this direction will prevent breakdowns in communication.

In general, follow this hierarchy within PPQ:

- Field staff report to state managers.
- State managers report to regional managers.
- Regional managers report to headquarters staff.
- Headquarters staff should contact state or field staff through the appropriate regional managers.
- Others (CPHST, PDC, SITC, or Emergency and Domestic Programs) should contact state or field staff through the regional staff and vice versa.

When in doubt, contact your supervisor.

Advanced Notification of State Plant Health Directors

State Plant Health Directors (SPHDs) are a vital part of the PPQ team, and should be informed as much as possible about activities affecting their states. Collaborative communication helps the SPHDs to become aware of issues. Communication also helps SPHDs to make decisions based on full knowledge of actions taken and discussions held within their states. With this in mind, the following criteria should be followed before conducting any activity or meeting within a state.

Planning Activities Within a State

National and regional program managers, as well as CPHST National Science Program Leaders, Lab Directors and staff scientists who are planning a meeting or activity within a state should coordinate with the SPHD.

Working With Stakeholders Within a State

Stakeholder is a term used to describe cooperators, industries, nongovernmental entities or other groups that share a mutual interest with PPQ in safeguarding plant health.

National and regional managers, CPHST National Science Program Leaders, Lab Directors and staff scientists who have a need to work directly with a stakeholder within a state should contact the SPHD as early as possible to advise him/her of the issue and the need to visit with someone in his/her state. Every effort should be made to include the SPHD or designee in conversations with stakeholders. This notification should include the names of the visitors, the purpose of the visit, the location of the visit and when the visit will take place.

Email Notification

Email or other correspondence to stakeholders within a state should include SPHDs in the "cc" list. If possible, the authors should notify SPHDs prior to sending vital correspondence. Likewise, if a conversation has already occurred, authors should email the SPHD to advise him/her of the conversation with stakeholders within their state.

Policy	**Advanced Notification of State Plant Health Directors [http://inside.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/DAPolicy/]**

Structure

This section provides structural charts and Web addresses for organizations associated with PPQ.

USDA

Chart	**1. Go to http://www.usda.gov.** **2. Select ABOUT USDA.** **3. Select Structure and Organization: USDA ORGANIZATION CHART.**
Address	**http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdahome**

Marketing and Regulatory Programs

Address	**http://www.usda.gov/mrp/**

Business Services

Chart	**Unavailable**
Address	**http://www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/index.html**

APHIS

Chart	**http://www.aphis.usda.gov/about_aphis/orgchart.shtml**
Address	**http://www.aphis.usda.gov/index.shtml**

Plant Protection and Quarantine

Chart	**http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_health_orgcharts.shtml**
Address	**http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/index.shtml**

Eastern Region

Chart	**Unavailable**

Western Region

Chart	**http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/orgcharts/western.html**

Center for Plant Health, Science and Technology

Chart	**http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/downloads/orgcharts/cphst.pdf**
Address	**http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/cphst/index.shtml**

Professional Development Center

Chart	**http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/downloads/orgcharts/cphst.pdf**

	Address	http://inside.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/pdc/index2.html

Resource Management

Chart	http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/downloads/orgcharts/rms.pdf
Address	http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/downloads/orgcharts/rms.pdf

PPQ Headquarters

Plant Health Programs

Chart	http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/downloads/orgcharts/PHP.pdf
Address	http://www.aphis.usda.gov/subjects/plant_health/

Emergency and Domestic Programs

Chart	http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/pdmp/downloads/pdmpchart.gif
Address	http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/downloads/orgcharts/PHP.pdf

3

Internal Communication

Chapter 3

Policy

Contents

Introduction **page 3-1**
Policies **page 3-1**
Issuances **page 3-1**

Introduction

Policies serve to guide employees in new or unexpected situations, in the absence of previously issued policies or directives. This chapter provides links to policies and issuances. The topic of policy development is not included in this guide.

Policies

Policies can cover interpretations of regulations, personnel matters, or communication. Additonally, policies can offer guidance when employees interact with other agencies, industry, or other groups that share a mutual interest in plant health.

PPQ policies are issued by the Deputy Administrator and announced in email messages. Find previously issued policies at the APHIS intranet Web site.

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

Issuances

Issuances include administrative notices, directives, handbooks and manuals. Find a list of all issuances and changes that were released, expired, or canceled during a specified time period at the Issuance Checklist home page.

Address	http://www.aphis.usda.gov/library/
Support	**FIRM (Forms, Issuances and Record Management) *or* MRP–BS (Marketing and Regulatory Programs–Business Services) *or* Executive Director for Plant Health Programs–Planning, Analysis, and Regulatory Coordination *or* Manuals Unit**

Administrative Notices

Administrative notices are temporary, one-time issuances that address a single subject or action, establish short-term programs or interim procedures, or make announcements. If information contained in a notice is of a permanent nature, it must be issued in a directive, handbook, or manual.

Address	http://www.aphis.usda.gov/library/admin_notices/

Directives

Directives are permanent issuances that are in force until canceled. Directives are used to issue delegations of authority, basic policies, and operating instructions. Directives include issuances from APHIS, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), and Grain Inspection, Packers, & Stockyards Administration (GIPSA).

Address	http://www.aphis.usda.gov/library/directives/

PPQ Technical Manuals

Manuals are permanent issuances which give technical guidance and detailed procedures on a particular subject or function, generally of the type that must be referred to on a daily or frequent basis. PPQ has available a variety of manuals related to plant protection and quarantine, policies for safety and health, human resources, management of vehicles, and other topics.

Address	http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/manuals/

4

Internal Communication

Chapter 4

Written Communication

Contents

Introduction **page 4-1**
Style Guide **page 4-5**
Correspondence **page 4-12**
Newsletters **page 4-19**
Inside APHIS **page 4-22**
Version Control **page 4-26**
How to Work With a Writer or Editor **page 4-29**

Introduction

Use this chapter as a guide for all written communication, including the following:

- Letters and memorandums (**Correspondence on page 4-12**)
- Newsletters (**Newsletters on page 4-19**)
- Reports (**Reports on page 4-23**)
- Presentations (**Meetings and Presentations on page 7-1**)
- Email and web pages (**Electronic Communication on page 5-1**)

U.S. Government Printing Office *Style Manual*

For guidance on grammar, punctuation, capitalization, abbreviation, spelling, acronyms, and other topics, consult the U.S. Government Printing Office *Style Manual* or one of the non-government style guides listed at the end of this section (see **Support on page 4-11**).

Materials that are written for internal use—such as reports that are less than several pages in length—are exempt from the guidelines of the U.S. Government Printing Office *Style Manual*.

However, written materials that are longer than several pages in length or will be distributed outside of PPQ must adhere to standards outlined in the U.S. Government Printing Office *Style Manual* [Browse or buy online at http://www.gpoaccess.gov/stylemanual/].

Communicate

Check your documents to be sure they comply with this brief summary of rules from the *Style Manual*:

- Spell out United States when it is used as a noun. When used as a unit modifier, you may abbreviate United States to U.S. with periods. US is incorrect.
- Avoid using acronyms. If used, spell out when first used. If used only once, do not spell out the acronym.
- Do not abbreviate dates. Use December 1, 2006, rather than Dec. 1, 2006. When including a complete date in a sentence, always use a comma after the year. The comma is not necessary when using just the month and year.
- Use common names for pests whenever possible. Common names are not capitalized unless the common name includes a proper noun, such as Mediterranean fruit fly.

Source ***Style Manual.* 2000. United States Government Printing Office. Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402 [Browse or buy online at http://www.gpoaccess.gov/stylemanual/].**

Visual Management Guidelines

Visual management is the way that a document, image or other visual resource looks. For guidance on visual management when writing for the U.S. Government, consult the USDA–Office of Communications–Design Center *Visual Management Guide*.

Materials that are written for internal use—such as reports and internal memos that are less than several pages in length—are exempt from the standards set by the Office of Communications–Design Center.

However, written materials that are longer than several pages in length or will be distributed outside of PPQ must adhere to standards outlined in the USDA–Office of Communications–Design Center *Visual Management Guide*. **See Visual Information on page C-2 for more information**

An electronic version of the USDA logo, and other official visual aids, are available at the Design Center Web site.

Address **http://w3.usda.gov/agency/oc/design/vis_man_guide.html**

Copyright Law

Material that you produce while on official duty cannot be copyrighted because it is already owned by the U.S. taxpayers.

However, if you are writing for an APHIS publication or a peer-reviewed journal and want to include material from another published source, you must secure permission to reproduce that information from the person or institution holding copyright to it.

U.S. copyright law is complex and permits very brief quotations (such as a sentence or two maximum) from published sources, provided that the source is cited, without your having to request permission.

You can use the following materials only if you have written permission from the copyright holder:

- Long passages
- Photographs
- Charts
- Graphs
- Line drawings

For help in writing the kind of letters needed to secure permission to reproduce copyrighted information, contact APHIS–Legislative and Public Affairs or **See Permission to Reproduce Copyrighted Material on page B-12**.

Support	**APHIS–Legislative and Public Affairs**

Official Correspondence

If you are preparing official correspondence that will be distributed externally to anybody except USDA employees and official cooperators, your prose must be edited and formatted by support staff according to agency correspondence guidelines. **See External Communication on page 8-1** **for more information.**

Support	**APHIS–Legislative and Public Affairs**

Tips for Successful Documents

Follow these tips when you prepare PPQ documents:

- Understand the needs of your audience.
- Pick a style guide and use it faithfully (see **Support on page 4-11**).
- Use the spell checking feature in your word processing software; however, be aware of its limitations.
- Use the readability statistics feature in your word processing software; however, be aware of its limitations.
- Make backup copies of all work.
- When finished, set aside completed documents for several days or longer before your final review.
- Ask a coworker or editor to review your finished document.

Style Guide

Style is the way that something is said, expressed or written. Written 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. Readers must interpret your tone and intent based solely on the words and graphic images you've included in your document. This creates the potential for miscommunication.

Use the following guidelines when writing your own documents. You will save time and money for your readers, because they will not have to contend with misleading and unprofessional documents.

Write With An Active Voice

Passive Voice	The form **was** completed.
Better	The officer **completed** the form

Explanation—Use active voice verbs in your sentences whenever possible. Active voice verbs help the reader to know who did what to whom (or what). Unfortunately, many public documents are written in the passive voice, giving them an impersonal, dry tone. Passive sentences are harder to understand. When the sentences in your documents are built with passive voice verbs, your reader will become confused.

Use Powerful Verbs Instead of State-of-Being Verbs

Weak	The specification of USDA–APHIS is that employees work between 6 AM and 6 PM.
Better	USDA–APHIS **specifies** that employees must work between 6 AM and 6 PM.
Weak	She **is of the opinion that the crew should** move the nesting box.
Better	She **decided** to move the nesting box.
True Passive	The laying hen **was examined**.
Switched to Active	She **examined** the laying hen.

Explanation—Avoid nouns created from verbs; use action verbs. Sentences with heavy, abstract nouns created from verbs are impersonal, bureaucratic, and often hard to understand.

Use Personal Pronouns

Impersonal	A permit **may not** be granted until satisfactory evidence **is** submitted to show that the product is free of pests.
Better	**The inspector** will not grant a permit until **you** submit satisfactory evidence that the product is free of pests.

Explanation—Personal pronouns include such common words as I, she, they, you, me, him, and her.

Be specific. Personal pronouns make clear to the reader who does what in the sequence of actions in a sentence. Government writers often avoid using personal pronouns.

Write Short Sentences

Explanation—Present your readers with only as many ideas as they can handle at one time. There are no hard and fast rules for determining whether a sentence is too long. When you judge a sentence, you must take into account various factors, such as your audience, the difficulty of the ideas, what has come before in the document, etc.

Avoid Excess Information

Explanation—Do not insert excess information into a sentence. Too much information in a sentence is hard to understand. There is too much in a sentence when readers cannot easily understand the meaning of a sentence (i.e., who's doing what to whom, when).

If A, Then B

Wrong	Follow Section C if you have a permit or else prohibit entry otherwise.
Better	When a permit is present, follow the conditions spelled out in Section C of the permit. If the permit is absent, prohibit entry.

Explanation—A conditional sentence is a sentence of the form "If A, then B," or "When A is the case, do B." Conditional sentences are often very complicated and hard for readers to understand. Conditional sentences are common in many government documents. You can make conditionals easier to understand by listing each condition separately and making them distinct.

Avoid Jargon

The specialized language of a trade, profession, or other group impedes understanding among lay people. Avoid highly specialized terms when writing for the public. Include an explanation with terms such as pre-treatment count, prebait, trace forward and stakeholder.

Keep Items Parallel

Wrong	The duties of the officer were the coordination of the inspection and to write the summary.
Better	The duties of the officer were to **coordinate** the inspection and to **write** the summary.
Wrong	You may obtain a permit by **completing** a form or the **submission** of a letter of acceptance.
Better	You may obtain a permit by **completing** a form or **submitting** a letter of acceptance.
Wrong	Both the surveyors and identifiers agreed that it was a quarantine-significant pest.
Better	Both **the** surveyors and **the** identifiers agreed that is was a quarantine-significant pest.

Explanation—Keep equivalent items parallel. Parallelism means that parts of a sentence with similar meaning are expressed in the same grammatical structure (e.g., all are nouns, all are prepositional phrases, or all are clauses). It's a good idea to break up a long sentence with parallel items to a list, set off by bullets or numbers.

Avoid Unnecessary and Difficult Words

Wrong	There are **three people who can sign** this application.
Better	**Three people can sign** this application.
Wrong	I want a full and complete account of why the plan wasn't considered **final and conclusive**.
Better	I want a full account of why the plan wasn't considered **final**.

Explanation—Use words that most people understand (**Table 4-1 on page 4-9**). If your readers cannot understand your document, it will not be effective.

TABLE 4-1 Words That Readers Will Understand

Replace difficult words or passages such as these:	With simple words like these:
administer	manage
afford an opportunity	allow, let
aggregate	total
allocate	assign or distribute
approximately	about
at the present time	now
enter (on a form)	write
close proximity	near
concur	agree
constitutes	is, forms
discontinue	drop, stop
due to the fact that	due to, because, since
evidenced	showed
for the duration of	during
for the purpose of	for, to
however	but
in accordance with	by, following, under
in a timely manner	on time, promptly
indicate	show
initiate	begin
in the event that	if
issue	give
magnitude	size
not later than	by
operational	working
personnel	staff
provided that	if
pursuant to	under
requirement	need
represents	is
sufficient	enough
therefore	so
transmit	send
utilize	use
with respect to	for

Avoid Adjective Pileups

Long Adjective String	The military agency published a **host area bomb shelter production planning workbook.**
Better	The military agency published a workbook **that** tells people **how to** plan the production of bomb shelters **in** the host area.
Long Adjective String	They have implemented water **resource planning and management studies** and have aided **volunteer group greenway initiators** by providing **technical and coordinated assistance.**
Better	They have implemented studies **on** planning and managing water resources and have aided volunteer groups **that** initiate efforts **to** promote greenways by providing them with technical advice and assistance in coordinating their activities.
Long Adjective String	Operations bird hazard reduction program
Better	Operational program to reduce the hazard caused by birds

Explanation—Adjective pileups happen when many adjectives precede a noun. Sentences that use such pileups are difficult for readers to understand. Break up long strings into shorter phrases to make your writing easier to read. Short adjective phrases like “Budget Office” or “price analysis” are easier to understand.

Be Positive

Negative	He was **not absent**.
Better	He was present.
Negative	**Don't exclude** me!
Better	Include me!
Negative	Do **not** use this procedure **except** when the fruit is from Hawaii.
Better	Use this procedure **only when** the fruit is from Hawaii.

Explanation—Positive sentences are easier to understand than negative ones. Two or more negative words in a sentence become very hard for readers to understand. Avoid using two or more negatives in a sentence and instead write positive statements.

Support

***The Chicago Manual of Style*. The University of Chicago Press. 2000 (15th edition). Chicago [www.chicagomanualofstyle.org].**

***The Elements of International English Style: A Guide to Writing Correspondence, Reports, Technical Documents, and Internet Pages for a Global Audience.* Edmond H. Weiss. February 2005.**

***Style Manual.* 2000. United States Government Printing Office. Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402 [Browse or buy online at http://www.gpoaccess.gov/stylemanual/].**

***Words Into Type.* Skiller, Marjorie E., Robert M. Gay. Third ed. 1974. Prentice-Hall. Englewood Cliffs, NJ.**

***2005 Associated Press Style Guide*. Norm Goldstein, ed. 2005. The Associated Press [http://www.apstylebook.com/].**

Correspondence

Correspondence is vital to the mission of PPQ. Choosing the proper tool for correspondence directly impacts the efficiency of our organization. This section provides guidelines for correspondence within PPQ.

See Electronic Communication on page 5-1 for information on corresponding electronically.

Written materials that are longer than several pages in length or will be distributed outside of PPQ must adhere to standards outlined in the following publications:

- **USDA–Office of Communications–Design Center *Visual Management Guide*. See Visual Information on page C-2 for more information.**
- **U.S. Government Printing Office *Style Manual*. See U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual on page 4-1 for more information.**

If you are preparing official correspondence that will be distributed externally to anybody except USDA employees and official cooperators, your prose must be edited and formatted by support staff according to agency correspondence guidelines. See External Communication on page 8-1 for more information.

PPQ Employees

Letter

Use the same format for electronic and printed letters. Write a letter for correspondence with PPQ employees regarding awards, condolences, and disciplinary actions. Use the same format for electronic and printed memorandums. Final drafts of letters should be submitted to office support personnel for proper formatting according to APHIS correspondence standards.

Use the example of a letter in **Figure B-3 on page B-5** as a guide.

Memorandum

Use memorandums for informal correspondence within PPQ. Memorandums can also be used to document an official conversation, transaction or event. Use the same format for electronic and printed memorandums.

To write effective memorandums, follow these rules:

- State your purpose in the first sentence.
- Stick to one or two subjects.
- Use a lean, informal style; limit length to one page.
- Use headings, numbers or bullets to add visual variety.
- Use the last sentence to tell the reader what you want them to do, even if it's nothing at all.

Use the example of a memorandum in **Figure B-4 on page B-6** as a guide.

Office of the Secretary of Agriculture or APHIS Administrator

Informational and decision memorandums, briefing papers, talking points and situation reports are high-level written communications and requests that generally come from the Deputy Administrator, Administrator, Under Secretary, or Secretary. The topics are sometimes highly visible, controversial, or sensitive. All documents destined for the Deputy Administrators office or above should be carefully reviewed, edited, and in proper format.

Informational Memorandum

In general, if you are corresponding with the Office of the Secretary, Under Secretary, APHIS Administrator, or Deputy Administrator for the purpose of factually answering a technical question from a high-ranking political appointee who is unfamiliar with the details of APHIS programs, the informational memorandum is the appropriate means of communication.

An informational memorandum is a factual answer to a technical question. An informational memorandum is usually requested by a high-ranking political appointee who is unfamiliar with the details of APHIS programs. This type of memorandum frequently addresses matters of controversy or concern.

The requestor may ask for general information. However, you might find that more detail is necessary. When preparing an informational memorandum, include the following types of information:

- Defense of APHIS rulings or actions
- Justification for:
  - Delays
  - Bad press or publicity
  - Budget overruns and variances
- Evidence of APHIS':
  - Role in performing desirable services
  - Innocence in the emergence of a problem
  - Sensitivity to, but independence from, powerful commercial interests, international or domestic
  - Political and social sensitivity and its ability to adapt traditional policies to new values and interest groups
- Proof that APHIS is making progress in solving an emerging problem

Before submitting an informational memorandum, be sure that it satisfies the checklist in **Figure 4-1**. Use the example in **Figure B-5 on page B-7** as a guide.

Checklist for Informational Memorandum

Subject and Issue

❏ Does the subject line anticipate the issue?

❏ Does the issue line make clear and precise purpose of the memorandum?

❏ Can the issue line be reduced to one, concise sentence? Is that sentence captured in the issue statement?

Background

❏ Is the discussion relevant to the issue?

❏ Does the discussion define the parties involved in the issue and state their interests?

❏ Does the discussion identify potential communication issues with Congress, media representatives, cooperators, industries, nongovernmental entities or other groups that share a mutual interest with PPQ in safeguarding plant health?

❏ Is the discussion section broken into small, manageable subsections with appropriate subheadings, if necessary?

Summary

❏ Does the summary briefly restate the background and current status of the issue line?

❏ Does the summary provide a timeline for final actions or decision if resolution is still pending?

Style and Format

❏ Is the document free from errors of style, usage, and mechanics?

❏ Is the writing as readable as possible?

❏ Is the page uncluttered and assessable?

❏ Does the document include a legend line and clearance lines?

FIGURE 4-1 Checklist for Informational Memorandum

Briefing Paper and Talking Points

Briefing papers and talking points are used interchangeably depending upon the amount of time available and the nature of the original request. Your actions will be guided by the requesting official.

APHIS is required to provide briefing materials and talking points for high-level meetings. These documents have three main functions:

1. Prepare for matters of controversy or sensitivity that might arise at the meeting.
2. Present APHIS' position and supporting information about an issue of interest.
3. Advance APHIS goals that are affected by the participants at the meeting.

Briefing papers and talking points are more than an assembly of facts. Sometimes the purpose of high-level meetings is to exchange facts, share ideas, or review information. More often, political and administrative meetings deal with problems and issues, conflicts and contests.

Before writing a briefing paper or talking points, you should know the following:

- Who will attend the meeting?
- Who called the meeting?
- What is the official purpose of the meeting?
- What are the special agendas of the participants?
- Where will conflicts likely arise?
- What false or misleading claims are likely to be voiced?
- What are the potential embarrassments for USDA or APHIS?

Before submitting a briefing paper or talking points, be sure that it satisfies the checklist in **Figure 4-2**. Use the examples in **Figure B-6 on page B-8** and **Figure B-7 on page B-9** as guides.

Checklist for Briefing Paper or Talking Points

Background (for both documents)

❏ Is the Background relevant to the purpose of the meeting?

❏ Is the Background broken into small, manageable subsections with appropriate subheadings, if necessary?

Current Status (for Briefing Papers)

❏ Does the discussion clearly describe the issue including actions being taken, pending decisions, sensitivities, and possible outcomes?

❏ Does the discussion define the parties involved in the issue and state their interests?

❏ Does the discussion identify potential communication issues with Congress, media representatives, cooperators, industries, nongovernmental entities or other groups that share a mutual interest with PPQ in safeguarding plant health?

Talking Points (for Talking Points)

❏ Have the Points been written concisely using no more than 2—3 sentences for each relevant issue, thought, or piece of information?

❏ If more than one topic is being presented, are subheadings used?

Summary (for Briefing Papers)

❏ Does the Summary briefly restate the current issue?

❏ Does the Summary provide a timeline for final actions or decision if resolution is still pending?

❏ Does the Summary make all the assertions or raise all the questions that APHIS needs at the meeting?

Style and Format (for both documents)

❏ Is the document free from errors of style, usage, and mechanics?

❏ Is the writing as readable as possible?

❏ Is the page uncluttered and accessible?

FIGURE 4-2 Checklist for Briefing Paper or Talking Points

Decision Memorandum

Decision memorandums are generally written to persuade (to influence the assessment of options) or motivate (to cause a particular decision or action). Persuasive decision memorandums are meant to influence the assessment of options. Motivational decision memorandums are meant to cause a particular decision or action.

Even though decision memorandums routinely serve as an assessment of several optional courses of action, they can be required for solicited and unsolicited proposals. A solicited proposal would be a requested plan to solve a problem or achieve an objective showing a single recommended course of action and the associated implications. An unsolicited proposal would be a request for authorization to perform certain activities initiated by a program entity.

Before submitting a decision memorandum, be sure that it satisfies the checklist in **Figure 4-2**. Use the example in **Figure B-8 on page B-10** as a guide.

Checklist for Decision Memorandum

Purpose

❏ Does the Subject line identify the central issue or proposal?

❏ Does the Purpose statement clarify the configuration of the decision?

Background

❏ Is the Background relevant to the issue, containing relevant history and significant events leading to the proposed recommendation?

❏ Does the discussion define the parties involved in the issue and state their interests?

❏ Does the discussion identify potential communication issues with Congress, media representatives, cooperators, industries, nongovernmental entities or other groups that share a mutual interest with PPQ in safeguarding plant health?

❏ Is the Background broken into small, manageable subsections with appropriate sub-headings, if necessary?

Options

❏ Are the Options clearly delineated?

❏ Does each Option include relevant information such as who may support or oppose it, what benefits can be derived from it, and what challenges it may face?

❏ Ensure that the Options are **not** set out under separate sub-headings under terms such as "pros and cons" or "costs and benefits."

Recommendation

❏ Is the recommendation stated succinctly and without ambiguity?

Style and Format

❏ Is the document free from errors of style, usage, and mechanics?

❏ Is the writing as readable as possible?

❏ Is the page uncluttered and accessible?

❏ Does the document include a legend line and clearance lines?

TABLE 4-2 Checklist for Decision Memorandum

Daily Situation Report for Emergencies

During high profile PPQ emergencies, headquarters staff will use a daily situation report to report progress and important daily events of the emergency response to the Deputy Administrator for PPQ, and the Administrator for APHIS. In preparing the daily situation report, do not reference names of individuals. The length of the report should be less than several pages.

The incident command posts will produce a separate, more detailed report—known as a daily response report—for the regional office and headquarters. This report, or reports from multiple command posts, are used by PPQ headquarters program managers to prepare the daily situation report.

When preparing a daily situation report, use the example in **Figure B-9 on page B-11** as a guide.

Sources

***Preparing Informational, Briefing, and Decision Memos*. Edmond H. Weiss. Version 1.5. July 1996. 78 pages. A report designed and developed for APHIS and delivered at a writing workshop in 1996 and 1997.**

Newsletters

This section provides guidelines for developing newsletters that are distributed internally. Since 1992, **only** electronic newsletters can be created. USDA controls this and wants no new printed newsletters created.

Newsletters are an effective communication tool. Use a newsletter to share information, showcase accomplishments, and highlight cooperative efforts. Newsletters have been used within PPQ to develop program understanding and provide education. Consider design and style first.

Written materials that are longer than several pages in length or will be distributed outside of PPQ must adhere to standards outlined in the following publications:

- **USDA–Office of Communications–Design Center *Visual Management Guide*. See Visual Information on page C-2 for more information.**
- **U.S. Government Printing Office *Style Manual*. See U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual on page 4-1 for more information.**

If you are preparing press releases or official USDA–APHIS publications that will be distributed externally to anybody except USDA employees and official cooperators, your prose must be professionally edited in APHIS' Legislative and Public Affairs unit. See External Communication on page 8-1 for more information.

If you are writing for an APHIS publication or a peer-reviewed journal and want to include material from another published source, you must secure permission to reproduce that information from the person or institution holding copyright to it. See Copyright Law on page 4-3 for more information.

Design

Design your own newsletter from scratch, or consult your Internet Technology staff concerning the installation of special software designed to guide you through the process. Determine the number of columns per page, design a masthead for the front page, and decide how or if you will include photographic images. See Communicators Guide on page 4-21 for more information.

Allow for creativity, but maintain uniformity throughout the newsletter. Use **Table 4-3** as a tool when formatting a newsletter.

TABLE 4-3 Format for Newsletters

Heading	Description
Body	Select a font that is easy to read at the 10 point size or greater. Use the same font throughout the newsletter. **See Typography on page 7-20** for guidelines on font selection.
Headlines	Select a contrasting font for headlines. Fonts for headlines can vary throughout the newsletter.
Captions	Select a smaller size to use for captions. Use the same font throughout the newsletter.

Style

When editing a newsletter, consider grammar, punctuation and political sensitivity. **See Style Guide on page 4-5**, **Correspondence on page 4-12**, and **Communicators Guide** (below) for more guidance.

Communicators Guide

Producing a Newsletter

- ❏ What do you want the newsletter to do?
- ❏ What will be your writing style?
- ❏ Is there enough material to do it weekly? Biweekly? Monthly? Quarterly?
- ❏ Who chooses the articles? Edits? Proofs?
- ❏ Is the newsletter for information? Entertainment? Publicity?
- ❏ Is the newsletter official or unofficial?
- ❏ How much time will you have to produce each issue?
- ❏ Who will prepare and format the newsletter?
- ❏ Do you have desktop publishing equipment and software?
- ❏ How many pages are you trying to fill?

Editing a Newsletter

Writers depend on good editors to make their work better and easier to read. Here's how you can ease the burden:

- Is the piece suitable for use? Is it well written, factual, informative and interesting? Does it conform to the purpose of the publication and does it target the intended audience? Has the author remembered to include necessary details that support the conclusion? If the content is on target, the writing style can be refined for publication. If the content isn't on target, rewrite it or replace it.
- Don't be timid about asking the writer for either a revision or an interview to expand information needed for the article. The author has information you don't, and a quick email or short phone call may complete the article. Explain any confusing or unclear statements so the author can fix them.

If you are soliciting an article, give the writer specific guidelines up front. If your authors know and understand the parameters before they begin writing, you should need to do very little editing. Be explicit about the purpose and the audience. Even better, give the writer written guidelines.

Copyrighted material reprinted with permission from: *Communicators Guide. For Federal, State, Regional and Local Communicators.* 2001. Federal Communicators Network [http://www.fcn.gov].

Inside APHIS

Inside APHIS is the agency's official newsletter produced and is available on the intranet Web site. All PPQ employees are encouraged to submit articles for consideration.

Address	http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/lpa_services/lpa2-inside.html
Support	**APHIS–Legislative and Public Affairs**

Reports

Tailor written reports to your specific program needs. Confer with your supervisor for specific format requirements.

Written materials that are longer than several pages in length or will be distributed outside of PPQ must adhere to standards outlined in the following publications:

- **USDA–Office of Communications–Design Center *Visual Management Guide*. See Visual Information on page C-2 for more information.**
- **U.S. Government Printing Office *Style Manual*. See U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual on page 4-1 for more information.**

If you are preparing press releases or official USDA–APHIS publications that will be distributed externally to anybody except USDA employees and official cooperators, your prose must be professionally edited in APHIS' Legislative and Public Affairs unit. See External Communication on page 8-1 for more information.

If you are writing for an APHIS publication or a peer-reviewed journal and want to include material from another published source, you must secure permission to reproduce that information from the person or institution holding copyright to it. See Copyright Law on page 4-3 for more information.

When writing reports, make your audience's job as easy as possible. Here are some general guidelines for a good written report:

- Plan carefully before you start writing; use an outline so that you know exactly what you'll be writing about.
- Organize your report into sections.
- Use plain language whenever possible.
- Avoid jargon and legalistic words, and explain technical terms.
- Keep your sentence length down to an average of 15 to 20 words; try to stick to one main idea in a sentence.
- Use active voice verbs as much as possible.
- Be concise.
- Imagine you are talking to your reader: write in a style that is suitable and with the right tone of voice.
- Check that your report is accurate, clear, concise and readable.

Source **http://www.plainlanguage.gov/**

Templates

You can find templates for written reports at the Web site of Microsoft, Inc.

Source	http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/templates

Training Courses for Written Reports

The USDA Graduate School provides training courses related to report writing.

Address	http://www.grad.usda.gov/

APHIS *Weekly Activities Report*

PPQ critical issues and weekly highlights reach the Secretary of Agriculture and the White House in the form of the APHIS *Weekly Activities Report* (WAR), which is prepared by LPA using inputs from PPQ. The Administrator's Office has set strict guidelines for submission of those inputs.

Potential issues or highlights must be submitted through your supervisor. Check with your supervisor for the deadline for submission of weekly highlights. Submit the following types of issues or highlights:

- Of national or international scope and significance that are timely and prospective or of great significance at a local or regional level
- Potentially controversial, politically sensitive, or likely to garner significant media interest
- Major successes

Follow these formatting guidelines:

- Place relevant dates at the front of the submission and identify the significance within the first sentence or two, making clear the action and result.

  Example **On January 25, the market for U.S. widget fruit will reopen in Country X because of the measure PPQ negotiated with Country X.**

  Between December 28, 2005, and January 6, 2006, PPQ found...

- Limit the use of acronyms; spell out the first usage.

  Example **The use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) was prohibited.**

- Use common names for plants and insects wherever they are available.

  Example **False codling moth is a significant import threat to the United States.**

- When using scientific names, capitalize the names of phylum, class, order, family, and genus; italicize genus and species names.
- Do not name individuals or staffs unless the individual or staff is receiving an honor of some kind, or there is some other compelling reason to do so; instead, report actions taken by APHIS or PPQ.
- Use Times New Roman 12 pitch font in paragraph form; eliminate logos and other design elements.
- Highlight all entries in your report that you believe should be incorporated into the APHIS WAR.

Submissions must have the attention and input of the appropriate Executive Team member or designee. Each Executive Team member will review or designate an individual at a high level to review the unit's submission each week. Backup reviewers should also be identified.

Reviewers must ensure that submissions meet both the content and format requirements outlined above. The reviewer should be named in the email transmittal. If no reviewer is identified in the transmittal, the submission will be returned with a request to identify the management reviewer. This individual will be the point-of-contact for any questions about entries in the unit's submission.

Source	**Executive Director for Plant Health Programs—Policy, Planning and Critical Issues staff**

Version Control

The circulation of documents is an important part of communication. Documents that are used only one time—such as trip reports or situation summaries—may not require more than one version.

However, many other documents require multiple drafts, changes over time, or serial releases. Some documents may require input or be reviewed by many parties. In these cases, the reader may find it difficult to determine which version is most current.

Some PPQ programs adhere to strict recordkeeping policies. However, everyone can benefit from following simple document control business practices.

Managing the quality of documents offers several advantages:

- Authors are protected from document changes made subsequent to distribution.
- Readers and decisionmakers are ensured they have the most recent version.
- More control can be placed on documents intended for internal use.

This section provides some hints for improved quality management and tracking throughout the life of documents.

All PPQ staff must be familiar with their own program's policies, if present, for generating and archiving documents.

Use the following guidelines when managing versions of your documents:

Nomenclature

Apply a consistent and visible name or number to versions of drafts and final documents, so that the most recent version is readily identifiable. This name or number should include a serial code and date stamp.

Examples	**Draft Version A-2** **07/2001-3**

Use headers or footers within the document for version identification. Electronic file names should also reflect details of the version. When in doubt, all documents should be considered out of date once printed

Drafts

Clearly mark all draft documents as such. For example, add a watermark that identifies the document as a draft. For documents with multiple drafts or versions, the archivist or controlling author should ensure all files reside in a single designated folder, along with the final version(s). This applies to electronic as well as hard copies.

Security

To secure a document, apply a security setting that prohibits or restricts changes by users. Documents made using either Microsoft Word® or Adobe Acrobat Professional 7.0® may be formatted to reflect the level of security you have chosen. Sensitive but unclassified documents should be marked with "Internal APHIS Use Only" or similar restriction.

Microsoft Word®

PPQ has approved and licensed MS Word software for word processing. MS Word software includes several tools that are particularly useful in document quality management.

Track Changes

Use Track Changes when documents are subject to review. Changes made by the reviewer are clearly visible to the controlling author, who may accept or reject changes. Reviewers are also able to add comments.

Find More Information	http://office.microsoft.com/training/training.aspx?AssetID=RC011600131033

Compare and Merge

Compare and Merge are useful if revisions have been made without use of the Track Changes option. With this option it is easy to see how a modified version differs from the original.

Find More Information	http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/assistance/HP051889391033.aspx

Versions

This feature allows the author to save multiple versions within a single file. Each time the file is modified and closed, a new version is stored. Successive versions can be recalled on demand. This feature is useful for single-authored documents. Individual versions can be stored as unique files by using the Save As option.

Find More Information	http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/assistance/HP051898391033.aspx

Adobe Acrobat Professional 7.0®

Unlike earlier versions, documents made using Adobe Acrobat Professional 7.0® can be reviewed electronically by many parties. Security features allow authors to apply a security setting that prohibits or restricts changes by users, while allowing reviewers to record their comments within the document. Later, authors can review, accept, or reject the comments.

Find More Information	http://www.adobe.com/

How to Work With a Writer or Editor

When you are preparing lengthy documents, you may want to work with an editor. Professional writers and editors have the training and experience to produce clear and concise documents quickly, saving valuable time and resources.

An editor will help you by pointing out unclear passages; misinformation; errors in spelling, grammar and word usage; graphic design; and numerous other problems.

If you are preparing press releases or official USDA–APHIS publications that will be distributed externally, your prose must be professionally edited in APHIS' Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA) unit. **See Written Communication on page 8-4** **for more information.**

Here are a few suggestions to keep in mind when producing a document that will be edited by a professional editor:

- Before you begin, agree on an outline, a style guide for formatting and text, and a due date.
- Produce the document in a common word processing software, such as Microsoft Word®, that is compatible with your publisher's software.
- Avoid using special formatting such as italics or boldface.
- Create separate documents for text, tables, and photographic images; indicate their placement by inserting comments within the text.
- Keep detailed records of your resources.
- Keep a backup copy of your document.
- If you want to achieve a certain look or style, draw it by hand on paper and give it to your editor for production.

All professional publications go through significant editing and rewriting before the final edition. Most first drafts are changed in the process because few people are able to write a perfect first draft. Adjust your thinking so you view your editor as a helper and collaborator, not a critic.

Editing Checklist

If you plan to have an editor edit your documents, prepare a list of instructions to let her/him know the level of work required for a job. You can customize the sample checklist in **Figure 4-3** to edit your own documents.

Editing Checklist For PPQ Documents

❏ Review and correct spelling, grammar and punctuation.

❏ Indicate and/or rewrite confusing sections.

❏ Track all changes.

❏ Check headings in text and tables against table of contents.

❏ Prepare the following: Table of Contents or List of Tables or List of Figures or Index.

❏ Put into this format: PDF or HTML or EXML or Other:

❏ Put into this style: New Pest Response Guidelines or PPQ Manual or Other:

❏ Follow this style guide: U.S. GPO or CMS or Other:

❏ Make tables and text consistent.

❏ Check parallelism throughout text and rewrite.

❏ Make lists consistent.

❏ Check pronouns.

❏ Replace passive constructions with action verbs.

❏ Rewrite adjective pileups.

❏ Explain unfamiliar acronyms and abbreviations at first mention.

❏ Substitute one word for many; short words for long.

❏ Make sure all referenced matter (tables, charts, footnotes, etc.) follows its first use.

❏ Check cross-references for accuracy and consistency.

❏ Prepare bibliography in consistent format.

❏ Check math, numbers, equations.

❏ Check spelling of scientific names.

❏ Review whole manuscript for sentences, paragraphs or portions that can be eliminated.

❏ Check organization and reorganize if necessary.

❏ Check accuracy of content.

❏ Confirm permission to use images, tables, text.

FIGURE 4-3 Example of Editing Checklist

5

Internal Communication

Chapter 5

Electronic Communication

Contents

Introduction **page 5-1**
Internet **page 5-1**
Intranet **page 5-2**
Electronic Mail **page 5-2**
Team Collaboration **page 5-11**
Electronic Meetings **page 5-12**

Introduction

Use the internet, intranet and email to communicate quickly within PPQ.

Internet

The Internet was originally developed for the U.S. military and later became widely used by academic and commercial researchers. The Internet evolved to an electronic communication network that connects computer networks and organizational computer facilities around the world. The World Wide Web is just one of many components of the Internet. PPQ relies on the Internet for communication.

PPQ Web Site

The PPQ Web manager works with a group of employees who maintain PPQ's Web pages. If you would like to add new content to the PPQ Web site, work with your local Web content manager. Contact the PPQ Web manager to identify your local Web content manager.

The PPQ Web manager also maintains a database to track the requests for Web maintenance. On request, the Web manager will install an icon for this database on your desktop.

➡	**All visual resources must adhere to standards set by the Office of Communications–Design Center. See Visual Management Guidelines on page 4-2 for more information.**
Source	**http://www.aphis.usda.gov**
Support	**PPQ Web Manager**
Policy	**Directive APHIS 3140. May 26, 2000. Aphis Internet Use And Security Policy [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/library/].**

Communicate

Intranet

An intranet is a private network of computers within an organization. Intranets are generally used to share information and resources among employees. The general public or users outside of the agency cannot access an organization's intranet.

Address	http://inside.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/

Electronic Mail

Electronic mail—also known as email—has probably surpassed face-to-face communication in the workplace. This section provides guidance on the use of email.

Many internal email messages are informal and require no special formatting. However, when using email for formal correspondence, use the templates for business letters and memorandums available in **Written Communication on page 4-1**.

PPQ staff members use a software program known as IBM® Lotus Notes™ to read and manage email. The remainder of this chapter will provide practical information on email and highlight some of the features of IBM Lotus Notes to help you use this tool more effectively.

Policy	http://inside.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/DAPolicy/
Support	**APHIS Technical Assistance Center**

Highlights of PPQ Email Policy

The email policy establishes protocols to be used by PPQ employees.

Identify Your Audience

Who needs the information? Limit your communication to those who need to know. To identify yourself, include a signature block or other contact information.

Use Appropriate Group Addresses

Email group addresses have been set up for many locations. You can find the group addresses in the APHIS address book in IBM Lotus Notes. If in doubt, ask your supervisor for assistance in identifying your audience.

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.

Security

There are no security guarantees with email, so don't use it to send confidential or sensitive information. The media is full of stories of people that have sent embarrassing information via email only to have it published in the newspaper or broadcast on the news. Use email in a professional manner since you cannot control where your message may be sent. Remember the following when using email:

- Don't leave your email account open when you leave your computer.
- Don't share your userID and password.
- Laws governing copyright, defamation and discrimination also apply to email.
- Be aware of viruses:
  - Don't send or open files that end with ".exe".
  - Don't open any attachment from an unknown sender.

Policy

Directive APHIS 3140. May 26, 2000. Aphis Internet Use And Security Policy [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/library/].

IBM® Lotus Notes™ Tools

IBM Lotus Notes has many tools to help you work more effectively.

Electronic Signatures

You can add text or a graphic to the bottom of messages that you send. You can have Lotus Notes automatically add a signature to all messages that you send or you can add a signature to individual messages when you send them (Table 5-1). This is helpful since it can provide your contact information much like a business card.

TABLE 5-1 Decision Table for Electronic Signatures

If you want to:	Then follow these steps:
Specify a signature	1. Open your mail, select TOOLS, and choose PREFERENCES. 2. Select SIGNATURE. 3. Specify the text in the Signature box or select File and specify the file that contains the text you want.
Add a signature to all messages	1. Open your mail, select TOOLS, and choose PREFERENCES. 2. Select SIGNATURE. 3. Select AUTOMATICALLY APPEND SIGNATURE TO MY OUTGOING EMAIL MESSAGES and click OK.
Add a signature to an individual message	1. Open the message and click where you want to add the signature. 2. Click Tools and select INSERT SIGNATURE. 3. Choose SELECT from MAIL PREFERENCE in the INCLUDE SIGNATURE dialog box. 4. (Optional) To use text from a file, select IMPORT FROM FILE and specify the file. 5. Click OK.
Use a graphic as your signature	1. Open your Stationery view in Mail, select NEW STATIONERY and select PERSONAL STATIONERY. 2. Insert your graphic in the bracket under the red bracket (it has a line above it). 3. Select SAVE and title your stationery. 4. To use this signature when sending mail, select TOOLS, select NEW MEMO–USING STATIONERY, and select your title from the SELECT STATIONERY dialog box.

Delivery Priority

Follow these steps to change the delivery priority of your messages:

Step 1. Open the message and select DELIVERY OPTIONS.

Step 2. On the BASIC tab, select HIGH, NORMAL, or LOW in the DELIVERY PRIORITY field and click OK (Table 5-2).

TABLE 5-2 Decision Table for Delivery Priority

If you select this priority:	Then IBM Lotus Notes will deliver this message:
High	Immediately
Normal	The next time your mail server is scheduled to send mail
Low	During off-peak hours; off-peak hours are between midnight and 6 AM unless the Domino administrator changes the time. If you are using a modem or wide area network this option can reduce the cost of using telephone lines.

APHIS Address Book

Store your contact information—for other employees who may need to contact you via telephone, mail or email—in the APHIS address book. You can indicate your preferences for receiving attachments and more. Take a moment to look at your information in the address book and update as needed. Use the following instructions to update your information:

Step 1. Open a server copy of the APHIS address book (Table 5-3).

TABLE 5-3 Decision Table for APHIS address Book

If IBM Lotus Notes opens to:	Then select this icon:	And then go to:
The Workspace (In the window, “Workspace IBM Lotus Notes” appears in the upper left corner)	APHIS address book	Step 2 (next page)
Anything other than the Workspace	Databases icon on the extreme left hand side of the screen	A, B, C (below)

A. Select APHIS ADDRESS BOOK.

B. On the pop-up menu, select OPEN REPLICA to bring up a list of available copies.

C. Select MAIL [your mail server number]/INT/APHIS/USDA. This will open the APHIS address Book.

Step 2. In the address book, start typing your last name. A pop-up box will accept the entry. Press the RETURN key. This will take you to the first entry with your last name. Use the arrow keys to scroll to your own entry.

Step 3. Select EDIT PERSON at the top of the page.

Step 4. Select the WORK/HOME tab. To update your information, tab between the fields and modify as needed. The following fields are the most important:

- Title
- Company (USDA–APHIS–PPQ)
- Location (City, State)
- Supervisor
- Office telephone number
- FAX telephone number
- Complete mailing address

Step 5. Select SAVE AND CLOSE at the top of the page.

Step 6. Close the APHIS address Book.

Spelling

Use the IBM Lotus Notes spell checking tool before sending your messages (Table 5-4).

TABLE 5-4 Decision Table for Spell Checking Options

If you want to check:	Then follow these steps:
All messages automatically	1. Open your mail 2. Select TOOLS 3. Select PREFERENCES 4. Select AUTOMATIC SPELL CHECKING 5. Select OK
A message before sending it	1. Open the message 2. Select DELIVERY OPTIONS 3. Select AUTO SPELL CHECK 4. Click OK

Saving Messages

To save your messages, move them to one of the following destinations:

IBM® Lotus Notes™ Folders—In IBM Lotus Notes, select CREATE NEW FOLDER and follow the directions to create and name your own folders.

An Alternate Drive—You can store email messages in folders on your personal drive, hard drive, or other storage such as CDs or USB devices.

IBM® Lotus Notes™ Archive—Use the following instructions to save your messages on the network. IBM Lotus Notes lets you archive databases automatically on a regular basis; or, you can archive manually. You can have IBM Lotus Notes automatically archive documents in a database depending on settings you specify. You can also select a document or documents at any time and archive them immediately. Before you can archive a database or a document, use **Table 5-5** to establish your archive settings.

TABLE 5-5 Decision Table for Archive Settings

To:	Follow these steps:
Archive a database	1. Open the database. 2. Choose FILE–DATABASE–ARCHIVE. 3. If there are no archive settings for the database, you are asked if you want to create them. 4. Click YES to the dialog box that asks if you want to archive documents from this database.
Archive selected documents in mail	1. Select one or more documents. 2. Choose ACTIONS–ARCHIVE–SELECTED DOCUMENTS, or drag the documents over to the archiving icon (yellow filing cabinet in the Navigation view).
Retrieve archived documents	1. Choose FILE–DATABASE–OPEN. 2. Click BROWSE. 3. Select the ARCHIVE folder. 4. Select the archived database. Archived databases are prepended with “a_.” 5. Select OPEN to open the database. 6. Select the document or documents you wish to retrieve. 7. Select EDIT–COPY. 8. Open the database and view to which you wish to restore the archived documents. 9. Select EDIT–PASTE to restore the archived documents.

Sametime®

Use IBM Lotus Sametime to instantly communicate with other PPQ staff members who are logged-on. Your Internet Technology staff will install Sametime on your computer. Use the instructions below to become familiar with the most basic options that Sametime offers.

Before you begin, learn your Lotus Notes SHORT NAME and INTERNET PASSWORD. You can find this information in your Lotus Notes profile in the APHIS address book (**See APHIS Address Book on page 5-7**). If you cannot find this information, contact your Internet Technology staff for help.

Log On

Use one of the following methods to access Sametime:

- Select the Sametime icon in the lower right corner of your screen; or
- If you are currently in Lotus Notes, select the Sametime icon on the far left side of your screen:
  - **A.** Enter your LOTUS NOTES SHORT NAME.
  - **B.** Enter your INTERNET PASSWORD.

Create a Contact List

Before you can send instant messages, you need to create a list of the people you plan to communicate with. Ask your Internet Technology staff to help you create a contact list.

Display Your Status

In the lower left corner of the Sametime window, check one of the following modes:

I AM ACTIVE—Indicates that you are available to receive messages.

I AM INACTIVE— Indicates that you may not be able to respond to messages. This mode is automatic after a period of inactivity. You are still able to receive messages, which you may reply to when you return. When you switch to this mode, you will have the option of setting an AWAY message for those who try to contact you.

DO NOT DISTURB ME—Indicates that you are unable to receive messages.

Send An Instant Message

Follow these instructions to send an instant message:

1. Select the person's name in your contact list.
2. Type your message in the chat window.
3. Select SEND or ENTER to send the message.

If the person responds, their message will appear below your message. You can continue to send instantaneous messages back and forth. If you don't receive a response, you will know the person is unavailable or unaware of your message. If the message is urgent, use the telephone to call them.

Reply To An Instant Message

If someone uses Sametime to send an instant message to you, a chat window will open on your screen. Follow these instructions to reply to an instant message:

1. Go to TYPE YOUR TEXT HERE and type your reply in the white area below.
2. Select SEND or ENTER.

Support	**Your Internet Technology staff**
Source	**IBM® Lotus Sametime™Help**

Conquering Email Overload

Leadership Decisionworks, Inc. provided the following tips for mastering email overload:

- Disable the email notification.
- Check your email at specific times during the day.
- Triage your messages before you respond. Some emails can be placed in folders without reply.
- Train your senders to be relevant. Teach people what types of information you want or need to see via email.
- Understand how people want to be contacted. Folks buried under email may prefer a telephone call for important issues or time-sensitive information. People do not always spend the day connected to email or a wireless device.

Source	http://www.leadershipdecisionworks.com/

Team Collaboration

PPQ work groups can use electronic team collaboration like an intranet storage library to share documents and other resources on the World Wide Web. Team collaboration does not enable chatting or interaction.

If your work group needs to chat or interact with other team members on the intranet, see **Electronic Meetings on page 5-12**.

IBM® Lotus Team Workplace™

Lotus Team Workplace—formerly known as QuickPlace—was designed for electronic team collaboration. Lotus Team Workplace provides the team a place on the World Wide Web to coordinate, collaborate and communicate on a project. Use this software to plan and coordinate resources in one place with a common interface for all users. Documents can be placed on the site in their native formats. For example, you can post both Microsoft Word® and Adobe® PDF documents, without reformatting.

If you are a member of a team that plans to use Lotus Team Workplace, your facilitator will send you an email message with instructions for accessing the site.

Support	**Your Internet Technology staff *or* APHIS Technical Assistance Center**

Electronic Meetings

PPQ work groups can use electronic meetings—also known as Web conferences—like an intranet meeting room on a computer screen. Electronic meetings allow two or more team members to view the same computer screen remotely. Electronic meetings allow participants to interact by chatting, or asking and answering questions.

APHIS staff members use two tools to conduct electronic meetings (**Table 5-6**):

- IBM® Lotus Sametime™ Instant Messaging and Web Conferencing
- Microsoft® Office Live Meeting

This section will provide an overview of both products.

TABLE 5-6 Decision Table for Electronic Meetings

If your electronic meeting:	Then use this Web conference tool below:
Is limited to APHIS staff members who use IBM Lotus Notes	IBM® Lotus Sametime™ Instant Messaging and Web Conferencing
Includes members from outside APHIS	Microsoft® Office Live Meeting

IBM® Lotus Sametime™ Instant Messaging and Web Conferencing

Use this Web conference tool if your meeting is limited to APHIS staff members who use IBM Lotus Notes. It allows you to simultaneously share information with many parties in the form of text, an application, a virtual whiteboard or your PC's desktop.

You can choose from two types of Sametime meetings:

- Instant meetings are held immediately. However, the whiteboard content cannot be saved.
- Scheduled meetings are held when there is time to plan and a need to save the whiteboard content.

Before You Begin

Learn your Lotus Notes SHORT NAME and INTERNET PASSWORD. You can find this information in your Lotus Notes profile in the APHIS address book (**See APHIS Address Book on page 5-7**). If you cannot find this information, contact your Internet Technology staff for help.

Connect to Sametime

To connect, use IBM Lotus Sametime on your desktop via the PPQ network and follow the instructions below. (If you are using a dial up connection, see your Internet Technology staff for instructions on connecting using your browser [i.e., Microsoft® Internet Explorer].)

1. Select the SAMETIME ICON in the lower right corner of your screen; OR
2. If you are currently in Lotus Notes, select the SAMETIME ICON on the far left side of your screen.
3. Enter your LOTUS NOTES SHORT NAME.
4. Enter your INTERNET PASSWORD.

If Nothing Happens

If you encounter a problem, use **Table 5-7** for troubleshooting or contact your Internet Technology staff.

TABLE 5-7 Troubleshooting the IBM® Lotus Sametime™Connection

If you:	Then:
Get a security warning informing you that you are about to download a program (i.e., Sametime Meeting Room)	Accept the warning in order to participate in the meeting.
Try to connect to a meeting or schedule a meeting and nothing happens	You may need to change your Internet settings as follows: 1. Open Internet Explorer. 2. Go to TOOLS. 3. Go to INTERNET OPTIONS. 4. Select ADVANCED. 5. Scroll down to the “Security” section. 6. Check the box marked ALLOW ACTIVE CONTENT TO RUN FILES ON MY COMPUTER. 7. Select APPLY. 8. Start the meeting process over. If you still experience problems, please contact ATAC for assistance.

Collaborate Instantly

Follow these instructions to collaborate instantly:

Step 1. Connect to Sametime (**See Before You Begin on page 5-12**).

Step 2. Select MEETING.

Step 3. Select COLLABORATE.

Step 4. Complete the fields (TOPIC and MESSAGE).

Step 5. Add meeting participants. Use your online list; or you can use the Lotus Notes directory by selecting the ADD INVITEES button, then selecting the DIRECTORY button.

Schedule a Meeting

Follow these instructions to schedule a meeting:

Step 1. Connect to Sametime (**See Before You Begin on page 5-12**).

Step 2. Select MEETING.

Step 3. Select SCHEDULE A MEETING.

Step 4. At the Lotus Sametime Meeting Center complete the fields on each form; the Meeting Details screen will summarize the key details of the meeting.

The help function in the Web conferencing tool provides detailed information on setting up and using this function. For Lotus Notes Sametime, APHIS Technical Assistance Center can provide customer support.

You can also test a meeting by selecting OPTIONS from the pull-down menu, then TEST MEETING. Follow the prompts on the screen to check your computer's settings and connections prior to a meeting. This will allow you to address any system problems before the meeting.

Attend a Scheduled Meeting

You can use the following two methods to attend a scheduled meeting:

Method A—When a meeting is scheduled by another party, you will receive an email notification with a hyperlink to a Web site.

Example	**Click the link below to access my Lotus Instant Messaging Web conference. http://lim03.aphis.usda.gov/stconf.nsf/meeting/34705BDDD4902D34852570820074B88B?opendocument&login**

Step 1. Select the link.

Step 2. A screen will appear. Enter your LOTUS NOTES SHORT NAME and your INTERNET PASSWORD.

Step 3. Proceed with the meeting.

Method B—

Step 1. Select ATTEND A MEETING from the MEETING pull-down menu.

Step 2. Enter your LOTUS NOTES SHORT NAME and INTERNET PASSWORD.

Step 3. Select the MY MEETINGS link and the meetings for which you are scheduled to participate will be displayed on this screen.

Support	**Your Internet Technology staff *or* APHIS Technical Assistance Center**

Microsoft® Office Live Meeting

Microsoft Office Live Meeting (MOLM) is similar to Lotus Notes Sametime Meeting. However, participants in MOLM can include persons outside of APHIS.

Microsoft Office Live Meeting is designed to enhance communications by combining collaboration and presentation capabilities. That means the leader of the meeting can demonstrate applications from their personal computer or take participants on a virtual tour of a Web site.

There are two ways to arrange a Microsoft Office Live Meeting (**Table 5-8**):

- Call the APHIS conference center to set up a Reserved Net Conference.
- Create an account for an Instant Net Conference.

TABLE 5-8 Decision Table for Arranging a Microsoft Office Live Meeting

If you are hosting:	Then use this method to set up the meeting:
A single meeting	**Reserved Net Conference** below
Infrequent meetings	
Recurring meetings	**Instant Net Conference** below

Reserved Net Conference

Call the APHIS Conference Center to schedule a meeting. Once the meeting is arranged, the APHIS Conference Center will send you an email with the information you need to connect to the conference. You can forward the information to all meeting participants.

Support	**Your Internet Technology staff *or* APHIS Conference Center at 877/855-4797**

Instant Net Conference

If you host recurring meetings, you can create your own account for Instant Net Conferencing. You will receive a meeting number and passcode that can be used to hold multiple meetings. Advance reservations are unnecessary. You should provide participants with your meeting number and passcode.

Support	**Your Internet Technology staff *or* APHIS Technical Assistance Center *or* APHIS Conference Center**
Support	**MCI Microsoft® Office Live Meeting staff**

6

Internal Communication

Chapter 6

Telephone and Radio Communication

Contents

Introduction **page 6-1**
Office Telephones **page 6-1**
Mobile Telephones **page 6-3**
Two-Way Radio Communication **page 6-4**

Introduction

Use this chapter as a guide when communicating by telephone or radio.

Office Telephones

Telephone Etiquette

Use the following tips to avoid misunderstandings and improve the efficiency of all office calls:

- When answering the telephone, identify yourself and work location.
- Pay attention to callers; make sure callers have your full attention.
- Speak slowly and clearly so that callers can understand what you are saying, especially when leaving voice mail messages.
- Try to answer by the third ring.
- Know the functions of your telephone.
- Keep a message pad near your telephone to record the caller's name and telephone number.
- When answering the telephone for someone else, be sure to ask for the nature of the call, as well as the caller's name and telephone number.
- If you are expecting an important call that refers to a certain item, such as a report, have that information at your fingertips so that callers will not have to wait for you to find it.
- Keep speaker telephones turned off or set at low volume, to avoid disturbing your neighbors—or use a headset.

Voice Mail

This section sets forth policies on the proper use of voice mail. Voice mail is an important tool that allows us to communicate with callers. It provides a way for callers to leave messages or make requests in our absence. When misused, voice mail becomes an obstacle to efficient and effective communication.

Date, Name and Program

Provide the date, your name, and the name of your program, staff, or work unit.

Daily Status

Update the message daily to reflect your work status (such as "on leave," "in travel status," "in the office, but in meetings,"or "in the office today"). For example, if you take an unplanned day of sick leave, change your message from home that morning to reflect the fact that you will not be in the office.

Request for Message

Ask callers to leave a brief message regarding the purpose of their call. This will allow you to respond to them with an answer on their voice mail if they are not there when you return the call.

Dialing Zero

Give callers the option of dialing zero to be transferred to a main telephone line. If this option is not available on your telephone system, provide an alternative number where callers can obtain additional help. Be sure these options are functional on your system.

Primary Line

Primary telephone lines in each work unit should be answered during normal business hours. Restrict voice mail on a main number for after hours messages or in the event of an emergency, such as a building evacuation.

Calling Window

When identifying normal business hours for your location, be mindful of all of your customers. For example, offices in the East that routinely do business with the West Coast, Alaska or Hawaii should ensure that telephone lines are covered during hours that give those customers a reasonable window of opportunity to make contact.

Sample Message

"You have reached the voice mail box for Sally Smith of the Professional Development Center. Today is Monday, September 19, 2001. I am unable to take your call at this time. Please record your message after the tone. If you need immediate assistance, dial "0" and another staff member will help you."

Leaving a Message

When leaving a message on voice mail, be mindful of the recipient and be sure you leave your name, telephone number, time and date of call and a brief description of the purpose of your call to expedite a response. Speak slowly and clearly so the recipient can retrieve your information accurately.

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

Mobile Telephones

Cell phone communication is not necessarily private. Be aware of security, especially if you work with sensitive information. If you need to discuss sensitive information, use an approved method of communication for the level of security of that information. Follow the same rules of etiquette as used with office telephones (**See Telephone Etiquette on page 6-1**).

Security

Cell phones operate on radio frequencies that can be monitored by commonly available radio frequency scanners. The volume of cellular phone traffic does not affect the ability to monitor cellular calls. It is easy to program a watch list of telephone numbers into a computer that automatically picks out all calls to or from the watch listed numbers and records the conversations. Although the law provides penalties for the interception of cellular telephone calls, it is easily accomplished and impossible to detect.

Two-Way Radio Communication

Many types are available, but most two-way radios used by PPQ are designated as either portable or mobile. Mobile radios are mounted in vehicles. Mobile radios should be installed by a professional installer or by a PPQ communication specialist. Most portable radios do not require installation. To learn how to operate your radio, consult the owner's manual.

Language

Speak plainly and use as few words as possible to get your point across. Avoid using codes, since they become an obstacle when many agencies are required to work together.

If details might be misunderstood, use the phonetic alphabet (**Table 6-1 on page 6-4**). For example, use the phonetic alphabet when reciting a serial number or spelling a name.

TABLE 6-1 Phonetic Alphabet

Alpha (AL fah)	November (no VEM ber)
Bravo (BRAH voh)	Oscar (OSS car)
Charlie (CHAR lee)	Papa (PAH pah)
Delta (DELL tah)	Quebec (kweh BECK)
Echo (ECK oh)	Romeo (ROW me oh)
Foxtrot (FOKS trot)	Sierra (see AIR rah)
Golf (GOLF)	Tango (TANG go)
Hotel (hoh TELL)	Uniform (YOU ne form)
India (IN dee ah)	Victor (VIK tah)
Juliett (JEW lee ETT)	Whiskey (WISS key)
Kilo (KEY loh)	X Ray (ECKS Ray)
Lima (LEE mah)	Yankee (YANG key)
Mike (MIKE)	Zulu (ZOO loo)

Identification

To make it easier to identify speakers, assign a unique identification to each user.

Emergency Protocol

If at any time you hear someone declare an emergency, cease all radio transmission until the emergency is reconciled. To declare an emergency, follow these instructions:

If You Know Whom You Need To Contact

Say "BUG 1 this is BUG 10 with **emergency** traffic." At this point all traffic should stop and only BUG 10 & BUG 1 will occupy the air.

When BUG 1 answers, BUG 10 must immediately reply with the following:

- Nature of the emergency
- Resources needed
- His/her location

If You Do Not Know Whom To Contact

Say "All stations: This is BUG 10 with emergency traffic." Repeat this transmission at least once.

At this point, the first responder will be the only other user allowed to occupy the air with the initial transmitter. If the first responder is unable to help, he/she can pass the responsibility on to another user or act as a relay if necessary.

Prohibitions

The following activities are prohibited:

- Use of profanity
- Rebroadcast of music or other radio programs
- False declaration of an emergency
- Use of a radio to conduct an illegal activity

Source and Support	**APHIS Radio Manager**

7

Internal Communication

Chapter 7

Meetings and Presentations

Contents

Introduction **page 7-1**
Meeting Management **page 7-1**
Telephone Meetings **page 7-6**
Video Meetings **page 7-8**
Electronic Meetings **page 7-9**
Public Speaking **page 7-10**
Using Transparencies and Slides **page 7-18**
PowerPoint™ Presentations **page 7-19**

Introduction

Use this chapter to help you plan and conduct face-to-face, telephone, and video meetings within PPQ. This information will be useful when conducting electronic meetings, too (**See Team Collaboration on page 5-11**).

Meeting Management

The following information applies to face-to-face, telephone, video and electronic meetings.

Planning a Meeting

Is this meeting necessary? Ask yourself the following questions before planning a meeting.

What is the purpose of this meeting?—If you cannot answer this question, don't call a meeting.

Are the people who need to attend this meeting available?—Before scheduling the meeting, poll the availability of participants. Pick a date that accommodates the majority of the key participants' schedules. Be sure that key decision-makers can attend.

Are meeting and lodging areas adequate?—Ensure there is a meeting room available, as well as lodging accommodations for participants.

Is this the right time?—Timing is everything! If the situation is not ripe or other things must be completed first, postpone the meeting to a time when it will yield more effective outcomes.

What will happen if I don't call a meeting?—If the answer is "Nothing catastrophic!", see if there is a better way to accomplish the task at hand. What alternatives do I have? Emails, memos, conference calls, and voice mail are some of the alternatives.

How much will this meeting cost?—Meetings can be very expensive when you take into account the salaries of the participants, overhead costs, and meeting preparation costs.

Is a facilitator necessary?—If you want to use a facilitator, contact him/her as soon as possible to ensure their availability. The facilitator can also help to develop an agenda.

Is an agenda necessary?—An agenda will help you achieve the outcomes you want from the meeting. Request agenda items from target participants at least one week prior to the meeting. Provide agenda items to subject-matter experts to address. These individuals may need several days to gather information to formulate a response. Last minute agenda topics may not be fully discussed at the scheduled meeting.

The following are good reasons to call a meeting:

- Hear a presentation on a completed report or project.
- Reach a group decision or judgment.
- Analyze or solve a problem.
- Gain acceptability for an idea, program, or decision.
- Achieve a training objective.
- Reconcile conflicting views.
- Communicate essential information to the group.
- Relieve tension or insecurity by providing information and management's viewpoint.
- Ensure that everyone has the same understanding of information.
- Obtain quick reactions.
- Reactivate a stalled project.
- Demonstrate a system or new business tool.
- Generate new ideas or concepts.

Conducting a Meeting

Use this section as a guide during the meeting.

Open the Meeting

- State the purpose of the meeting and desired outcomes.
- Review the agenda and time frames for each agenda item.
- Add agenda items and adjust times.
- Identify which agenda items have priority.
- Review ground rules.
- Introduce participants, if necessary.
- Assign meeting roles such as moderator and note-taker.
- Introduce agenda items.

Encourage Discussion

- Develop a set of questions to stimulate conversation on the task at hand.
- Ask open-ended questions.
- Encourage members to ask each other questions.
- Ask for different points of view when one participant's contributions silences the group.
- Provide a theoretical model or document and ask participants for their reactions and thoughts.
- Have the group brainstorm subtopics or ideas and select the top 3-4 items to discuss at length.
- Record ideas on a flip chart or on a computer using an LCD projector.

Stay Focused

- Use meeting ground rules to help the group stay on track and to manage people who tend to dominate the conversation.
- Remind the group to focus on one topic at a time and bring it to its logical conclusion before going on to another topic.
- Use a third party facilitator for meetings that may include disagreements.
- Slow the pace down if the group seems to come to closure too quickly.
- Make sure everyone understands and agrees with the final outcome.
- Create a flip chart page to capture the tangential topics that arise and figure out how the group can address the issues during the meeting without extending the meeting or will address the issue at a subsequent meeting.
- If the group's energy stalls, provide them with a break or have them do some simple stretching exercise.
- Clarify or paraphrase key ideas relating to the topic; periodically summarize the key points and ask for agreement from the group.
- Check for the group's understanding of the discussion by summarizing where you see points of agreement and disagreement and asking the group if they agree or see the same; or ask a member of the group to summarize the issues.
- When the group has made a decision, state it clearly and/or write the decision on a flip chart and make sure the entire group is in agreement.

Close the Meeting

- At the end of the meeting, list and summarize the decisions the group made.
- Review what the group discussed and accomplished relative to the desired outcomes for the meeting.
- Review any action items and due dates the group might need to take either individually or as a group.
- Set the date and logistics for the next meeting, if one is needed.
- Review the next steps, i.e., what will happen after the close of the meeting.
- Thank the group for their participation.

Meeting Follow Up

After the meeting, distribute the minutes and request all corrections within one week. Follow up with group members who were absent from the meeting. Communicate the outcomes or documents, produced by the group, with other parts of the organization.

Support and Source	**Leadership Development and Training Support Systems, Professional Development Center, Frederick, Maryland [http://inside.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/pdc/nontech/nontech_function.html]**

Planning a Costly Meeting

Compare costs when planning large meetings that may require travel for many participants (**Table 7-1**).

TABLE 7-1 Decision Table for Planning a Costly Meeting

If your meeting:	Then:
Requires travel for many participants OR Will incur costs greater than $25,000	1. Compare costs of meeting at several locations. 2. Adhere to agency guidelines. 3. Consult with your administrative staff for guidance.
Will incur costs for the following: ◆Travel ◆Hotel and meeting room rentals ◆Refreshments ◆Costs associated with non-government employees	1. There is no requirement to compare costs. 2. Adhere to agency guidelines. 3. Consult with your administrative staff for guidance.

Telephone Meetings

Telephone meetings—also known as conference calls—are an easy way for groups to meet and avoid the trouble of travel, particularly if members are scattered throughout the United States.

Before you start, review **Meeting Management on page 7-1**.

Step 1. Plan the Conference Call

A. Select one of the following methods to hold a conference call:

- ➤ Use a telephone with built-in conference call capability.
- ➤ Arrange for an approved vendor to set up a conference call.
- ➤ Install a permanent bridge line (**See Telephone Meetings on page C-3**).

B. Notify members of the following:

- ➤ Date and time of the call in their time zone
- ➤ Toll free telephone number
- ➤ Pass code
- ➤ Instructions for operator assistance
- ➤ Agenda

Step 2. Conduct the Conference Call

A. Access the call.

B. Designate a member to take minutes.

C. Conduct roll call.

D. Set rules (**See Etiquette on page 7-7**).

E. Follow the agenda.

F. Prepare minutes and distribute to all members within one week.

Etiquette

Remember these rules of etiquette when participating in telephone meetings:

- Allow one speaker at a time.
- Identify yourself and your worksite prior to speaking ("This is Hester Pinhorn, from London").
- Turn off all cell phones.
- Use the mute button or *6 on your telephone to eliminate background noise.
- If possible, select a private office for the call to avoid disruptions to yourself and others in the work area.
- Do **not** place the call on hold; other parties will hear beeping or hold-music.
- If you must take another call, exit the conference and rejoin when you have finished.
- Moderator should keep discussions on track per the agenda.
- Manage time wisely to stay on schedule.

Source **MRP—BS (Marketing and Regulatory Programs—Business Services)—Information and Technology Division—Telecommunications [http://inside.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/atac]**

Video Meetings

Video meetings or conferences help APHIS employees work faster and smarter, making better use of time, money, resources, and personnel. Video meetings may also help in the following ways:

- Reduce the time and expenses of face-to-face meetings.
- Save on the expense of employee training by having interactive or broadcast training session.
- Build collaborative workgroups among geographically dispersed staff members.
- Save on recruitment costs by meeting with job applicants via video meeting. Performance reviews can also be conducted via video meeting.

Before you start, review **Meeting Management on page 7-1**.

Step 1. Set Up and Plan the Video Meeting

A. See Video Meetings on page C-4 if you need to establish a video meeting account.

B. Contact your long distance carrier for specific directions. Your carrier will provide you with a toll-free telephone number and pass code, or with instructions for operator assistance.

C. Notify meeting members of the following:

- ➤ Date and time of the call in their time zone
- ➤ Toll free telephone number
- ➤ Pass code
- ➤ Instructions for operator assistance

Step 2. Conduct the Video Meeting

A. Access the call.

B. Designate a member to take minutes.

C. Conduct roll call.

D. Review Tips for Video Meetings below.

E. Follow the agenda.

F. Distribute minutes to all members within one week after the conference.

Tips for Video Meetings

Remember the following tips when organizing a video meeting:

- Ask participants to arrive 10 minutes early.
- Start the meeting on time.
- Use an agenda and stay on schedule.
- Introduce all participants.
- Ask participants to turn cell phones off.
- Adjust the camera by using the zoom and pan controls; frame yourself on the monitor screen so that your image appears from the waist up, with 10 percent of the total picture appearing above your head.
- Be aware of the transmission delay and pause for others to comment.
- Divide the presentations into short segments.
- After each segment, ask if there are any questions.
- Look directly at the person you are addressing or the camera.
- Be yourself, speak in a normal voice.
- Use camera zoom only when you need a close-up.
- Avoid shuffling papers or tapping objects near the microphone.
- Send hard copies of materials to remote locations prior to the conference.
- Keep curtains and blinds closed.
- Make sure all appropriate lighting is on.
- For conferences running at slower speeds, avoid rapid movements during the call.
- Start and finish your video meeting on time.

Support	**APHIS Video Conferencing Sites**
Source	**http://inside.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/atac**

Electronic Meetings

PPQ work groups can use electronic meetings—also known as Web conferences—like an intranet meeting room on a computer screen. **See Meeting Management on page 7-1** and **Team Collaboration on page 5-11** for more information.

Public Speaking

The following excerpt was reprinted from *Communicators Guide*.

Communicators Guide

Effective Speeches

You don't have to be a polished speaker to share your agency's message, but you must be able to communicate effectively. It takes time and effort to craft an effective speech. Here's how to make your speeches more successful:

Know Your Audience

- Find out who and how many will be present, their ages, interests, and occupations—Will they be friendly? If not, why not?
- What is the format of the meeting and the context of your speech?
- Will there be speakers before and after you? What will they discuss? Who will introduce you?
- Will there be a question and answer period? How long will you be expected to speak?
- What are the physical arrangements?
- What does the room look like?
- Where will you stand?
- Will you have a podium? Do you want one? Will you have a microphone? Will the speech be recorded? Will media be there? Can you have visual aids?

Know Your Subject

Public speaking is stressful under the best of conditions. But there is nothing worse than speaking to an audience without having a firm grasp of the material you're presenting. There is no substitute for knowledge of the subject. Don't speak unless you have that knowledge. If, in an emergency, you must speak on a subject you don't have a firm grasp of, immediately tell the audience you are not an expert.

Have a Clear Goal

What is your goal? Organize your presentation around it. Is your goal to inform or to persuade the audience? Appeals to reason and emotion can be effective, but a persuasive speech supported by sound evidence is more effective than a speech without it. You should restate your basic message more than once. Repetition helps audiences remember.

***Communicators Guide* continued on next page**

Communicators Guide

Prepare Thoroughly

If you don't have time to prepare thoroughly, don't accept the assignment. Public speaking is just like any other task—to do it successfully requires your time, effort, and preparation. You can grab the audience's attention immediately with a startling fact or provocative opinion. You can use a concrete illustration, a quote, or a humorous incident. Or you can ask a rhetorical question that makes people think.

Convey no more than three or four main points. Your listeners won't remember more than this. Illustrate the points with examples. Guide the listeners clearly and easily from point to point. Use your conclusion to stress the purpose of your talk. But leave no doubt about your central idea and what you've tried to say.

Take some time to prepare your own one-page introduction. Provide a copy to the person who will introduce you. Bring an extra copy with you just in case. Also, bring an extra copy or two of your speech in case anyone wants a copy.

Add Style to Your Next Speech

Some speeches linger in the hearts and minds of audiences. Others are forgotten as soon as the words have left the speaker's mouth. What makes a speech memorable? Style! Here's how you can add some style to your next speech.

Anecdotes

Even the most sophisticated audiences like to hear anecdotes. Give them what they want; they'll remember the speaker who tells a good story.

Colloquial Language

Consider the appeal of regional sayings, colorful proverbs, and casual slang.

Definitions

Ever notice how frequently speakers say, "According to Webster..." and then proceed to bore the audience with a long, technical definition they lifted straight from the dictionary? If you want to define something, look in a book of quotes or come up with something interesting. For example, here's how Edmund Burke defined government: "compromise and barter."

Parallel Structure

Use parallel structure to provide a sense of balance and create the appeal of harmony. Examples: President Johnson said, "Aggression unchallenged is aggression unleashed." President Kennedy said, "If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich."

***Communicators Guide* continued on next page**

Communicators Guide

Repetition
Repetition is crucial. Audiences get restless. Their minds wander. Distractions pop into their heads—deadlines, budgets, kids, you name it. Whole sections of a speech can pass right by their ears. So, if you have a particularly good phrase, slogan or line, repeat it. Again and again.

Rhetorical Questions
One way to involve your audience is to ask rhetorical questions. They encourage the audience to think about your topic. When you pose a rhetorical question, be sure to pause afterward—that gives the listeners some quiet time to answer the question in their own minds.

Short Sentences
Short sentences pack a big punch. They're easy for speakers to deliver and easy for audiences to grasp. Timed properly, a four-word sentence following a long one can deliver a memorable punch.

Sounds of Words
Use rhyme, alliteration, and word games—they all add style to your presentation.

Statistics
If you think statistics are boring, you haven't heard the right ones. Follow these guidelines: Round off the numbers, because your audience is listening, not reading. And put numbers in everyday terms and personalize them.

Titles
Choosing a good title will help you focus your speech. More importantly, it will help the audience grasp your main message and remember your main point. Be clever—use popular songs, movies, or best sellers as springboards. Be irreverent, if you want. Be daring. Just don't be boring.

Triads
Putting items in groups of three creates a compelling rhythm.

Visual Imagery
Who can forget the iron curtain of Winston Churchill? Or the big stick of Teddy Roosevelt?

***Communicators Guide* continued on next page**

Communicators Guide

How to Deliver Effective Speeches

Most of us fear speaking in public more than anything else. We often get a weak, queasy feeling, often accompanied by shaking, sweating, or a pounding heart. Excessive nervous energy causes these feelings. But your nervous energy can help give vitality to spark your presentation. Without it, your speech would be flat, dull, and lifeless. The key is to take your nervous energy and control and channel it.

Be Prepared

Being prepared will help remove your fear. The more prepared you are, the more confident and less nervous you will feel. Try to breathe deeply and exhale fully between breaths. Try to consciously slow down your breathing rate. When you are introduced, walk briskly to the podium. Take a step toward the listeners on one side of the room as you talk to them.

Your Appearance

How you appear will either enhance or negate your message. Project earnestness, sincerity, and enthusiasm. Try to be well rested before a speech. Rehearse the night before, but get a good night's sleep. You'll come across better and will be less prone to make mistakes.

Your clothing should not be so casual or so bold that people focus on it instead of your message. Wear an outfit that makes you feel confident and comfortable. If possible, check yourself in a full length mirror before you start.

Stand straight but not rigid. Balance your weight on both feet, and hold your stomach in—it'll improve your posture. Avoid nervous body movements, even if you feel uncomfortable. Vary your stance occasionally, but don't fidget. Unnecessary or annoying activity detracts from your message. Keep your hands away from your face and out of your pockets.

Look Them in the Eye

Eye contact with your audience is a powerful tool to connect with them. Try to include everyone in the audience equally when you look out over the crowd. Good eye contact increases your credibility as a speaker.

***Communicators Guide* continued on next page**

Communicators Guide

Smile, Smile, Smile

Remember to smile—convey a sense of comfort, relaxation, and confidence. Even if you don't feel that way initially, it'll get easier with experience. Gestures should appear to be a natural extension of your voice, neither contrived nor artificial. Avoid a white knuckle grip on the podium—relax your hands and it's easier to relax the rest of you. Move smoothly, not abruptly—the way you would do in a conversation with a friend. And vary your stance occasionally. If you're not using a stationary microphone, you have more freedom to walk about and create some visual variety for your audience.

It's fine to have notes to speak from—but don't let your notes be a distraction. It's usually apparent from your tone of voice and your appearance when you are reading from a script. But no one objects to a few index cards in your hand with the main points you want to remember to make.

Visuals

Visual props—a book, poster, exhibit, video, photos, or overhead transparencies/slides—can enhance your speech. They can help reinforce your points, but choose them carefully. They should be visible to everyone in the audience, and you should be able to handle them smoothly with no fumbling. Remember to keep your mouth near the microphone when you're talking about your props. Pre-test any equipment to be sure that it works—and that you know how to run it.

Check your visuals for accuracy and readability from a distance equal to the last chair in the room. Faulty visuals—or good visuals poorly displayed—are worse than none at all.

Overheads

With overheads/slides, the rule is less is more. The best and most effective overheads are short and to the point. You'll lose your audience if they're busy trying to figure out poor overheads. The type should be of a size and font that is easy to read. Check the readability of your overheads from the back of the room to make sure everyone can see them easily. If the audience is older, they'll be less able to read the print. Also, be sure to leave the overheads up long enough for the audience to read them. Make sure your position is not blocking anyone's view.

Think about your audience. Slides/overheads should highlight important points, not duplicate your entire presentation. Slides or overheads are meant to support your talk, not overpower it. Never read to the audience from the slides. It's okay to pause and let them read it themselves.

***Communicators Guide* continued on next page**

Communicators Guide

Think about composition. Aim for a visual balance between all the text and graphic components. Don't crowd your information too close to the edges. Leave space between lines of type to ensure legibility. Be consistent. Make the colors and styles of elements the same on all overheads or slides. Put all titles and subtitles in the same location, same color, and same type face.

Your Voice

A good speaking voice is essential for delivering an effective speech. Your voice should be pleasant, conveying a sense of warmth. It should be natural, reflecting your true personality and sincerity. It should be dynamic, giving the impression of force and strength, even when it isn't especially loud. Here are some ways, other than increasing volume, to give the impression of force or strength:

- Pitch your voice higher or lower.
- Use emphatic gestures.
- Reduce or increase your rate of speech.
- Pause for effect.

Your voice should be expressive—portraying subtle shades of meaning and never sounding monotonous or without proper emotion. It should be easily heard—with proper volume and clear articulation. Be sure you can be heard clearly. Pause to let brief interruptions (such as an airplane going over or a waiter dropping a tray) subside. Also pause when your audience is moved to laugh or applaud—you don't want them to miss anything. When you are making a natural transition in your speech, pause to let your words have a chance to soak in.

Vocal Variety

Vary your voice for a successful speech. Be sure to vary your:

- Rate (speed up or slow down to make a point)
- Pitch (work within a comfortable range, but not all on the same level)
- Tone (match your tone to your message—humorous, serious inspiring, or comforting)
- Volume (but don't under- or over-power the microphone)

***Communicators Guide* continued on next page**

Communicators Guide

Project your voice to the farthest person in your audience. Watch the audience to determine if they are receptive or if they are straining to hear. Don't over-memorize or over-rehearse your speech so much that you sound like you're doing it on automatic pilot. You want to sound confident, but also fresh. Attempt to sound conversational, certainly not pedantic or strident.

Effective Pauses

Even though many speakers are afraid of them, effectively used pauses attract listener attention. Pause when you want a point to soak into the minds of the audience before you go to the next point. Brief pauses are also effective when you're building to a climax with your message. Pause as a sign of transition—this tells your audience that you intend to shift to a new point.

Articulate

Pay attention to your articulation. Don't mumble or slur your words together. Avoid lazy utterances, like gonna for going to, or wanna for want to. Some people rehearse with a tape recorder– and then listen to themselves to find ways to improve their articulation.

Avoid Fillers

Avoid audible fillers (especially uh)—short, silent pauses are much better. Using uh between thoughts is, unfortunately, a common problem, even among experienced speakers. Listen for it on your speech tapes, or ask a friend or family member to listen to you rehearse and tell you if you're using audible fillers that are distracting. Practice silent pauses so your uhs will be silent. Train your mind to set off a little warning bell whenever you say uh and then work to eliminate this annoying habit from your speech.

Keep Your Head Up

It is harder for your audience to hear you when you're looking down at your notes or facing your visuals or props instead of the audience. Keep your head up and face your audience as much as possible.

Applause

Finally, wait for and acknowledge applause (if it's appropriate to the occasion) with a smile or nod. But don't leave the podium unattended—if you're introducing another speaker, or if there's a master of ceremonies or host, wait for that person to come back to the podium before you step aside.

Copyrighted material reprinted with permission from: *Communicators Guide. For Federal, State, Regional and Local Communicators.* 2001. Federal Communicators Network [http://www.fcn.gov]

Communicators Guide

Tips For Overcoming Fear of Public Speaking

1. Nearly everyone is nervous about public speaking—you're not alone in your fear. Effort and practice will help you overcome your fear.
2. Public speaking is a skill to develop—not an inherent talent.
3. Be glad that you care enough about succeeding that you're nervous. It can be a good sign.
4. Think of public speaking as an opportunity—not a chore.
5. It isn't a speech. It's an opportunity to share information you have with those who have an interest in hearing it.
6. Believe in yourself, but not so much that you try to wing it without adequate preparation.
7. Envision success—act the part. Think about what success would look like and then go for it.
8. Assume you will do all right, and you probably will. Assume you will fail, and you probably will.
9. Know your subject well, and thoroughly prepare yourself to talk about it.
10. Control nervous responses: Quaking hands—use them constructively with natural gestures and props. Quaking voice—take a deep breath or a sip of water.
11. Channel your nervousness into enthusiasm; if your nervousness is apparent, joke about it to ease the tension.
12. Rehearse and time your speech (with a friend, tape recorder, and/or mirror).
13. Dress at least as well as you think your audience will—or maybe a step better. Looking more casual than your audience will work against your self-confidence and detract from your credibility.
14. Have a written outline handy in case your mind goes blank.
15. Fake eye contact if you must (look at hairlines or mouths instead).
16. Have a glass of water handy. You can't talk well when your mouth is dry, and your audience will notice.
17. Don't sweat small mistakes—everyone makes them, even experienced broadcasters.
18. Afterwards, ask selected listeners for sincere feedback. People don't usually like to force it on you, but they like to be asked. Then attempt to incorporate this feedback into your next speech.
19. Seek out and accept every opportunity to speak before an audience. It does get easier over time—and for many, even enjoyable.

Copyrighted material reprinted with permission from: *Communicators Guide. For Federal, State, Regional and Local Communicators.* 2001. Federal Communicators Network [http://www.fcn.gov]

Using Transparencies and Slides

LPA worked with the USDA Design Center to develop a customized, color-coded template for PPQ slides and PowerPoint™ presentation graphics. Subsequent parts of this chapter (**PowerPoint™ Presentations on page 7-19**) explain more about the template.

For More Information	Public Affairs Unit

The following excerpt from Communicators Guide provides general tips on using slides and overhead transparencies.

Communicators Guide

Highlight—Slides and overheads should highlight your presentation, not duplicate.

Pause—Never read to the audience from the slides. Instead, pause and let them read.

Compose—Think about composition. Aim for a visual balance between text and graphic components. Don't crowd your information too close to the edges. Leave space between lines of type to ensure legibility.

Uniformity—Be consistent. Make color and styles of elements the same on all overheads or slides. Put all titles and subtitles in the same location, same color and same type face.

Copyrighted material reprinted with permission from: *Communicators Guide. For Federal, State, Regional and Local Communicators.* 2001. Federal Communicators Network [http://www.fcn.gov]

PowerPoint™ Presentations

USDA–Office of Communications–Design Division has prepared the following guidance on making visual products to make your speeches and presentations more interesting.

Making Slides

Whenever you can use visual products to make your speeches and presentations more interesting, you should do so. But to make PowerPoint presentation graphics work best for APHIS and PPQ, all agency presenters' slides should have the same look and feel. Fortunately, the Design Division of the Department of Agriculture—part of USDA's Office of Communications—has prepared some guidance on this subject for agency personnel.

This section summarizes that guidance and gives examples of PowerPoint text slides that have been formatted to meet the USDA standards. It also includes two color palettes you can choose from in order to prepare graphics that reinforce PPQ's corporate identity (**See PowerPoint™ Presentations on page B-13**). Other units in APHIS may eventually have guides similar to this one, but only PPQ employees will be using the two color schemes used here.

When preparing slides, remember that all written materials that are longer than several pages in length or will be distributed outside of PPQ must adhere to standards outlined in the USDA–Office of Communications–Design Center *Visual Management Guide*. See Visual Information on page C-2 for more information.

Content

Let the content of your message drive the graphics—not the other way around. Your slides should be used to control the timing, pace, and flow of your talk. Obviously, they will not contain the entire script of your presentation. But you should capture each important point in one or more relevant slides. And though you will not be reading to the audience from the slides, they can keep you on your game plan and help you remember which topics in your speech are the most important ones for the audience to remember.

A good general rule is to prepare one slide for every 2 minutes of your talk. For example, a 30-minute presentation should have no more than 15 slides. Intersperse slides showing photos or graphs and charts with slides that have only text on them. Doing that helps keep your audience awake (no small consideration if your time slot is after lunch or if the auditorium has been greatly darkened to facilitate viewing).

Photos

Photographs and other line art for use in PowerPoint presentations should not be made at a resolution higher than 72 dots per square inch (dpi). If the files for a picture are much more dense than that, they won't work in PowerPoint.

Support	**Legislative and Public Affairs Photographer**

Color

Research by the famous Wharton School of Finance at The University of Pennsylvania revealed that color can increase comprehension by more than 70 percent. But you have to choose colors wisely. Both color palettes exemplify the following general principles.

First, get used to using light-colored lettering on dark-colored backgrounds. That's the opposite of what you generally see in printed materials, but the light-on-dark format makes projected images easier to read.

You can certainly have lettering in different colors. But use the same color for each title, for each first-degree head, for each second-degree head, and for all words in the body of your slides. Doing that will make it easier for your audience to grasp the structure and subordination of ideas in your talk.

Never use blue and red or red and green side by side. Juxtaposing those colors makes the eyes jump, causing your audience to squint and have trouble focusing on the text.

Instead, choose red, orange, or burgundy for underlines, bullets, or single words you want to emphasize.

Avoid using green for text lettering because people who are color blind cannot see it well. (Some individuals have yellow–blue color blindness, but the inability to see reds and greens is much more common.)

Keep the number of colors low and the hues, except for the background color, bright. Don't try for tricky effects like printing every letter of a title in a different color or using exotic type styles. Your goal is to create slides that are interesting to look at and easy to read, even from the back rows of the auditorium. Wacky graphic effects just detract from the overall effectiveness of your presentation.

Remember that, when printed on a black and white printer, color parts of your presentation may be difficult to see. Plan your colors accordingly.

Typography

Readability

Did you know there are literally thousands of different fonts, or type faces? PowerPoint supports only a limited number of these, but some are much better suited to making slides than others.

Typographers—specialists in this subject—generally divide all fonts into two big families: the serif fonts and the ones without serifs, which are called (in French) sans-serif fonts. Serifs are the little squiggles and lines at the tops and bottoms of individual letters and numbers.

Most of the older (pre 20th-century) fonts have serifs, and using serif fonts in long documents makes them easier to read. But for graphics and short textual materials, sans-serif fonts are better. They don't have any squiggles on individual letters or numbers and are much cleaner and more modern looking.

Helvetica, Univers, Futura, and Verdana are examples of sans-serif fonts. Within the Microsoft Word™–PowerPoint environment, Arial is the equivalent of Helvetica. Arial is your best choice for the letters on text slides and charts and graphs.

Size

Type sizes are measured by the height of their capital letters. The unit of measurement is called a point, and 1 point equals 1/72 of an inch. For presentation graphics, optimal font sizes are between 26 and 45 points.

More than any other single factor, type size affects readability. Keep in mind the fact that not all of your target audience is sitting in the first five rows. Folks in the back need to be able to read what's on your slides, too. So never use a font size smaller than 18 points.

See PowerPoint™ Presentations on page B-13 for examples of style sheets that show the title in 32-point Arial boldface, bullet 1 in 22-point Arial, and the sub bullet in 18-point Arial.

Type Size Affects Content

Using big type sizes means you cannot put a great deal of text onto any one slide. Seven is your magic number. Don't put more than seven bulleted items on a slide. And don't type more than seven words in a given line.

ALL CAPS

Never use all capital letters. They're hard to read and even harder to proofread. In titles, capitalize the first letter of every important word. That includes all verbs, even short ones like "is." Capitalize all prepositions that have four or more letters (e.g., between, among, with, and from).

Text Attributes

Text attributes are features of your type font that are used for special purposes. For instance, normal body type is set in lightface, but titles are always set in bold type. Italics (slanted type) is used to set scientific names for plants and animals and to set words you really need to emphasize. Underlining is a possible text attribute, but avoid using it: putting rules below letters impinges on letters that have descenders (the tails that hang down from such letters as lowercase "y" and "g").

Source	http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/art_symbols/art/tipsheet.pdf
Support	http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/lpa_services/index.html

8

Internal Communication

Chapter 8

External Communication

Contents

Introduction **page 8-1**
Public Meetings and Programs **page 8-1**
Media and Congressional Communication **page 8-2**
Written Communication **page 8-4**
Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 **page 8-6**

Introduction

Accurate, consistent, and timely external communication is vital to our effectiveness as an agency.

Communication with outside entities that share a mutual interest with APHIS to safeguard U.S. agricultural and environmental resources—such as the media, industry representatives, and Congress—is subject to agency guidelines. The guidelines are issued periodically in directives generated by APHIS-Legislative and Public Affairs and are summarized in this chapter.

Use this chapter as a guide when communicating with entities outside of PPQ.

Public Meetings and Programs

Contact APHIS-Legislative and Public Affairs if you are planning any of the following:

- **Public meetings or localized programs that may generate media or congressional interest**
- **Emergency programs**
- **Programs of national concern**

Support **APHIS–Legislative and Public Affairs**

Communicate

Media and Congressional Communication

Because APHIS program activities often involve high-profile and/or sensitive issues, PPQ staff members must refer the following types of requests to Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA):

- **Congressional calls**
- **Written inquiries from Congress, other agencies, countries, or industry**
- **Requests to testify before or brief a State legislature**
- **National and local media calls from the following:**
  - **Network news programs**
  - **Television shows**
  - **Radio networks**
  - **News wire services**
  - **Daily newspapers**
- **Requests for PPQ records**

Written materials that will be distributed outside of PPQ must adhere to standards outlined in the following publications:

- **USDA–Office of Communications–Design Center *Visual Management Guide*. See Visual Information on page C-2 for more information.**
- **U.S. Government Printing Office *Style Manual*. See U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual on page 4-1 for more information.**

If you are preparing press releases or official USDA–APHIS publications that will be distributed externally to anybody except USDA employees and official cooperators, your prose must be professionally edited in APHIS' Legislative and Public Affairs unit.

LPA is charged with ensuring that information provided to congressional representatives and reporters is up to date, accurate, and consistent with information being provided by officials at the Department level, including the Office of Communications, the Office of Congressional Relations, and the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs.

Many of you are experts in your particular programs and do extensive public outreach about our mission. However, in this age of instantaneous electronic information, any story from local media, trade press, or the Internet can easily be picked up and distributed nationally via newswires and networks. Please be mindful of this reality and tap into the communication expertise in LPA when outreach results in media and congressional interest in our work.

Freedom of Information Act

Agency records that are not published, bound, or in brochure format for public dissemination, or that are not found on the APHIS Web site, are subject to review and analysis under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). If you receive a phone call or a written request for records or information that your office does not normally give out, then the requester needs to make a written FOIA request for the information.

TABLE 8-1 Decision Table for Information Requests

If you receive this type of inquiry:	Then refer the call to:
Congressional calls	(202) 720-2511
Congressional letters	(301) 734-7776 and fax the letter to (301) 734-5387
Media inquiries	National [(202) 720-2511] or local LPA Office
Freedom of Information Act	Refer the call to (301) 734-8296

Support and Source	**APHIS–Legislative and Public Affairs** **http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/lpa_services/index.html**
Support	**Directive or Policy**

Written Communication

See How to Work With a Writer or Editor on page 4-29 for general information on working with a professional editor.

Written materials (e.g., letters, memorandums, reports, press releases, or other) that will be distributed outside of PPQ must adhere to standards outlined in the following publications:

- **USDA–Office of Communications–Design Center V*isual Management Guide*. See Visual Information on page C-2 for more information.**
- **U.S. Government Printing Office *Style Manual*. See U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual on page 4-1 for more information.**

If you are preparing press releases or official USDA–APHIS publications that will be distributed externally to anybody except USDA employees and official cooperators, certain rules apply. The materials must go through the following processes:

- **Professional editing within APHIS' Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA) unit**
- **Clearance at the agency and Department levels**
- **Design within APHIS' Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA) unit or through LPA by the USDA Design Center**
- **Printing through the U.S. Government Printing Office**

Support	**APHIS–Legislative and Public Affairs**

Correspondence

Correspondence is vital to the mission of PPQ. Choosing the proper tool for correspondence directly impacts the efficiency of our organization. First, determine if you will write a letter or memo. This section provides guidelines for determining which type of written correspondence applies.

See Electronic Communication on page 5-1 for information on corresponding electronically.

See Written Communication on page 4-1 for information on internal communication.

Letters

Use the same format for electronic and printed letters. Write a letter for correspondence with officials of foreign governments, private individuals, firms, universities, international organizations, cooperators, industries, nongovernmental entities, or other groups that share a mutual interest with PPQ in safeguarding plant health.

Use **Table 8-2** as a tool when drafting a business letter. Or, use the sample letter in **Forms and Examples on page B-1** as a guide.

TABLE 8-2 Format for Business Letters

Heading	Description
Date	Complete when signed.
Addressee	Limit outside address to 5 lines; spell out state; two spaces between state and zip code.
Salutation	Dear Ms./Mr./Dr./Ms.; omit title if unsure.
Body	Block style; flush with left margin; single space with double space between paragraphs.
Second page	Place name/title of addressee flush with left margin; place page number flush with right margin; continue text on third line below the name/page number.
Signature block	Add `Sincerely', your signature, title, city and state.
Enclosures	Indicate the number of enclosures and a brief description or filename if appropriate.
cc	List other recipients.

Printing Options

TABLE 8-3 Decision Table for Printing Documents

If the audience of your document is:	Then use this printer:
Anybody except APHIS or USDA employees and official cooperators	U.S. Government Printing Office
APHIS or USDA employees and official cooperators	Print shop in MRP–BS

In spring 2006, the Government Printing Office changed its regulations to give Federal agencies a new option for printing small numbers of documents at private-sector duplicating firms. This work can be handled by charging the cost to a support staff credit card. Consult LPA's printing specialist for guidance on what kinds of jobs this printing method is most appropriate for.

Support **APHIS–Legislative and Public Affairs**

Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995

Your office cannot ask the public to provide it with information just because you have decided that you need the information. In response to public complaints about the burden of Federal paperwork, the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) and its implementing regulations require Office of Management and Budget (OMB) clearance for any planned information collections. That means all electronic or printed forms or requests for information that are used by the public must meet the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. The regulation may apply to documents that will be used primarily by PPQ personnel, too. Check with LPA to be sure.

All electronic or printed forms or requests for information that are used by the public must meet the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. The regulation may apply to documents that will be used primarily by PPQ personnel, too. Surveys also fall under OMB's oversight. You must get approval from OMB before you print and issue a survey to the public.

Support **APHIS–Legislative and Public Affairs**

Source **Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995[http://www.cio.gov/archive/paperwork_reduction_act_1995.html] or [http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/advanced.html]**

Internal Communication

Index

A

Abbreviation
how to use 4–1

Acronym
Acronym Dictionary A–1
how to use 4–1
spell out vs. acronym 4–2

Administrative notice
definition 3–2

Adobe Acrobat
version Professional 7.0 4–28

APHIS
administrative notices 3–2
directives Web site 3–2
Inside APHIS newsletter 4–22
internet use and security policy 5–1
intranet Web site 3–1
issuance checklist Web site 3–1
organizational chart Web site 2–3
Weekly Activities Report 4–25

Arrow, green
definition 1–6

C

Capitalization
how to use 4–1

Communicators Guide
permission to reproduce i–iii, 1–6
producing a newsletter 4–21
speaking tips 7–10
using transparencies and slides 7–18

Copyright
direction 4–3
explanation 1–6
permission to reproduce 4–3

CPHST
chain of command 2–1
organizational chart Web site 2–3

D

Dates
how to report 4–2

Directives
definition 3–2

Draft
See version control 4–26

E

Eastern Region
organizational chart Web site 2–3

Editor
how to work with 4–29
instructions for 4–30

Electronic mail
See email 5–2

Email
recipients 5–4
tips for using 5–3

Emergency and Domestic Programs
chain of command 2–1
organizational chart Web site 2–4

F

Federal Communicators Network i–iii

Forms B–1

G

Grammar
how to use 4–1

Graphic design
Design Center Visual Management Guide 4–2
USDA logo 4–2

Communicate

I

IBM 5–6

IBM Lotus Notes
  explanation of tools 5–6

Internet
  definition 5–1

Intranet
  definition 5–2

Issuance
  definition 3–1

J

Jargon 4–7

L

Letters
  electronic 4–12
  external 4–12
  GPO Style Manual 4–12
  sample B–5

Logo
  USDA 4–2

M

Manuals
  definition 3–2
  PPQ Manuals Unit Web site 3–2

Marketing and Regulatory Programs
  organizational chart Web site 2–3

Memorandums 4–12

Microsoft Word
  version control 4–27

N

Names
  pests
    scientific or common 4–2

Newsletters 4–19

P

PDC
  chain of command 2–1
  organizational chart Web site 2–3

Plain Language.gov 4–23

Plant Health Programs
  organizational chart Web site 2–4

Policy
  definition 3–1

PowerPoint
  style sheets B–13

PPQ
  management of Web site 5–1
  organizational chart Web site 2–3

Punctuation
  how to use 4–1

R

Reports 4–23
  templates 4–24

Resource Management
  organizational chart Web site 2–4

S

Security
  and document version control 4–26
  and email 5–5

SITC
  chain of command 2–1

Spelling
  GPO Style Manual 4–1

Stakeholder
  definition 2–2

State Plant Health Director
  notification of 2–2

U

U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual 4–1

United States
  spell out vs. acronym 4–2

USDA
  organizationl chart Web site 2–3

V

Visual management
  guidelines 4–2
  stationery
    letterhead B–2

W

Western Region
  organizationsl chart Web site 2–3

Writing Style resources 4–11

A

Internal Communication

Appendix A

Acronym Dictionary

AC. Animal Care.

ACO. Authorized Certification Official.

ACS. Automated Commercial System.

AD. Assistant Director ***or*** Additional Declaration.

ADC. Animal Damage Control.

ADODR. Authorized Departmental Officer's Designated Representative.

AFB. Air Force Base ***or*** American Farm Bureau.

AG. Agricultural inspection.

AGM. Asian Gypsy moth.

AGOA. African Growth and Opportunity Act.

AHAT. Animal Health Assessment Team.

AHB. Africanized honey bee.

AHPA. Animal Health Protection Act.

AHT. Animal health technician.

AIC. Animal Import Center.

AID. Agency for International Development.

AIR. Affirmation of Interim Rule.

ALB. Asian long-horned beetle.

ALJ. Administrative Law Judge.

AMOM. Airport and Maritime Operations Manual.

AMS. Agriculture Marketing Service.

AMT. APHIS Management Team.

ANAWG. APHIS Native American Working Group.

ANG. Air National Guard.

ANLA. American Nursery and Landscape Association.

ANPR. Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking.

APA. Administrative Procedures Act.

APEC. Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation.

APHIS. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

APHS. Animal, Plant Health Specialist.

APM. Animal Product Manual.

APS. American Phytopathological Society.

AQI. Agricultural Quarantine and Inspection.

AQIM. Agricultural Quarantine and Inspection Monitoring.

ARD. Assistant Regional Director.

ARS. Agricultural Research Service

ASA. American Soybean Association ***or*** Administrative Support Assistant.

ASAP. As soon as possible.

ASF. African Swine Fever.

ASTA. American Seed Trade Association.

ATA. Air Transport Association.

ATAC. APHIS Technical Assistance Center.

ATS. Automated Targeting System.

AUSA. Assistant United States Attorney.

AVIC. Area Veterinarian-in-Charge.

AWS. Alternate work station ***or*** site ***or*** schedule

Communicate

BA. Biological assessment.

BAD. Budget Analysis and Development.

BASE. Budget and Accounting Service and Enhancement.

BAST. Basic Agriculture Specialist Training.

BATS. Biological Assessment and Taxonomic Support.

BC. Biological control.

BCR. Border Cargo Release.

BE. Biological evaluation.

BEI. Behavioral Event Interview.

BLM. Bureau of Land Management.

BOD. Board of Directors of Plant Health Programs.

BOLO. Be on the look out.

BPI. Budget and performance integration.

BPT. Business Practices Team.

BRASS. Border Release Advance Selectivity System.

BRS. Biotechnology Regulatory Services.

BSR. Black stem rust.

BSE. Bovine spongiform encephalitis (mad cow disease).

BT. *Bacillus thuringiensis*.

BTS. Biological and Technological Support.

BW. Boll Weevil.

BWEP. Boll Weevil Eradication Program.

CAA. Clean Air Act.

CA. Compliance Agreement.

CAPIS. Customs Accelerated Passenger Inspection System.

CAPS. Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey.

CBI. Confidential Business Information ***or*** Caribbean Basin Initiative.

CBD. Convention on Biological Diversity.

CBP. Customs and Border Protection.

CCA. Consultative Committee on Agriculture.

CCC. Civilian Conservation Corp ***or*** Commodity Credit Corporation.

CCEP. Citrus Canker Eradication Program.

CDC. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

CDFA. California Department of Food and Agriculture.

CE. Categorical Exclusion.

CEAH. Centers for Epidemiology and Animal Health.

CEI. Center for Emerging Issues.

CEQ. Council on Environmental Quality.

CERIS. Center for Environmental, Regulatory, and Information Systems.

CES. Customs Examination Site.

CFC. Combined Federal Campaign.

CFIA. Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

CFR. Code of Federal Regulations.

CFS. Container Freight Station.

CGS. Coast Guard Station.

CHRP. Citrus Health Response Plan.

CIAO. Commodity Import Analysis and Operations.

CIPM. Center for Integrated Pest Management.

CITES. Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (SIGH teez).

CLAMP. Closing the L.A. Marketplace Pathway.

CO. Contracting Officer.

COB. Close of business.

CODEX. Codex Alimentarius Commission.

COOP. Continuation of Operations Plan.

COTR. Contracting Officer's Technical Representative.

CPAT. Civil Penalties Action Team.

CPHST. Center for Plant Health Science and Technology.

CPO. Contact Point Officer.

CR. Civil rights ***or*** continuing resolution.

CRA. Commodity Risk Assessment.

CREC. Civil Rights Enforcement and Compliance staff.

CRIA. Civil Rights Impact Analysis.

CSI. Container Security Initiative.

CSREES. Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service.

CSRS. Civil Service Retirement System.

C-TPAT. Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism.

CTT. Commuted travel time.

CTUS. Customs territory of the United States.

CUE. Critical Use Exemption.

CWA. Clean Water Act.

DA. Deputy Administrator.

DFO. District field office.

DFR. Direct Final Rulemaking.

DGSV. Direcion General de Sanidad Vegetal (Mexico).

DHS. Department of Homeland Security.

DOC. Department of Commerce.

DOD. Department of Defense.

DOI. Department of the Interior.

DOJ. Department of Justice.

DOT. Department of Transportation.

DPI. Department of Plant Industry (State of Florida).

DUR. Dose Uniform Ratio.

E&T. Endangered and threatened (species).

EA. Environmental Assessment.

EAB. Emerald Ash Borer.

EAD. Environmental Analysis and Documentation.

EA–FONSI. Environmental Assessment—Finding of No Significant Impact.

EAN. Emergency Action Notification (PPQ 523).

EAP. Employee Assistance Program.

EC. European Commission.

ECO. ***See*** ECS.

ECS. Export Certification Specialist.

EEO. Equal Employment Opportunity.

EIA. Environmental Impact Assessment.

EIS. Environmental Impact Statement ***or*** Environmental Impact Standard.

EMLC. Emergency Management Leadership Council (EM lik).

EMPPO. European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization (EM po).

EMRS. Emergency Management Response System (EE mers).

EO. Executive Order.

EOM. End of message.

EOP. Emergency Operations Plan.

EPA. Environmental Protection Agency.

EPI. Word processing and statistical database for public health (EP ee).

EPPO. European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organization.

EPWG. Exotic pest working group.

ER. Eastern Region ***or*** employee relations.

ERS. Economic Research Service.

ES. Environmental Services.

ESA. Endangered Species Act ***or*** Entomological Society of America.

ET. Executive Team.

EU. European Union.

EXCERPT. Export Certification Project.

FACA. Federal Advisory Committee Act.

FAO. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

FAR. Federal Acquisitions Regulations.

FAS. Foreign Agricultural Service.

FDA. Food and Drug Administration.

FEGLI. Federal Employees Group Life Insurance.

FEHB. Federal Employees Health Benefits.

FEMA. Federal Emergency Management Agency.

FERS. Federal Employees Retirement System.

FICA. Federal Insurance Contributions Act ***or*** Social Security.

FICMNEW. Federal Interagency Committee for the Management of Noxious and Exotic Weeds.

FIFO. First in, first out.

FIFRA. Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act.

FIRM. Forms, Information, and Records Management.

FIS. Federal Inspection Services.

FIST. Florida Investigation and Surveillance Team.

FLSA. Fair Labor Standards Act.

FMD. Foot–and–mouth disease.

FNS. Food and Nutrition Service.

FNWA. Federal Noxious Weed Act.

FOIA. Freedom of Information Act.

FONSI. Finding of no significant impact.

FPPA. Federal Plant Pest Act.

FPS. Federal Protective Service.

FQPA. Food Quality Protection Act.

FR. Federal Register.

FRM. Final rulemaking.

FS. Forest Service.

FSA. Federal Seed Act ***or*** Flexible Spending Account.

FSIS. Food Safety and Inspection Service.

FSN. Foreign Service National.

FSO. Field Servicing Office.

FTE. Full-time equivalent.

F&V. Fruits and vegetables.

FY. Fiscal year.

FYI. For your information.

FWS. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

GAO. Government Accountability Office ***or*** Government Accounting Office.

GATT. ***See*** **WTO**.

GIPSA. Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (JIP sah).

GIS. Geographic Information System.

GWSS. Glassy-winged sharpshooter.

GM. Genetically modified ***or*** Gypsy moth.

GMO. Genetically modified organism.

GN. Golden nematode.

GOV. Government owned vehicle.

GPEA. Government Paperwork Elimination Act.

GPDD. Global Pest and Disease Database.

GPO. Government Printing Office.

GPRA. Government Performance and Results Act.

GPS. Global positioning system.

GSA. General Services Administration.

HACCP. Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HAA sip).

HC. Hog cholera.

HHS. Department of Health and Human Services.

hold. Agricultural hold.

Hort. Horticulture.

HR. Human Resources.

HRD. Human Resources Division.

HSPD. Homeland Security Presidential Directive.

I&I. Impact and implementation.

I&R. Inspect and release.

IAG. Interagency agreement.

IATA. International Air Transport Association.

ICE. Immigration and Customs Enforcement ***or*** in case of emergency.

ICS. Incident Command System.

IDP. Integrated data processing.

IE. Immediate export.

IES. Investigative and Enforcement Services.

IFA. Imported fire ant.

IGR. Insect growth regulator.

ILA. International Longshoreman's Association ***or*** Institute for Legislative Action.

IMT. Incident Management Team.

INS. Immigration and Naturalization Service.

IPM. Integrated pest management.

IRIS. Integrated risk information system.

IRM. Interim rulemaking.

IPIC. International Pest Information Coordinator.

IPPC. International Plant Protection Convention.

IPPO. International Plant Protection Organization.

IS. International Services.

ISAP. APHIS contract for purchase of computers and software.

ISPM. Invasive Species and Pest Management ***or*** International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures.

ISO. International Standards Organization.

IT. Immediate transport ***or*** Information technology.

ITDS. International Trade Data System.

JB. Japanese beetle.

KB. Karnal bunt ***or*** Khapra beetle.

KBw. Karnal bunt of wheat.

LAN. Local area network.

LCL. Less than container load.

LIMS. Laboratory information management systems.

LMO. Living modified organism.

LMR. Labor management relations.

LPA. Legislative and Public Affairs.

MAFF. Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (Japan).

MAF. Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (New Zealand).

MB. Methyl bromide.

MCI. Military Customs Inspector.

MFF. Mediterranean fruit fly ***or*** Mexican fruit fly.

MOU. Memorandum of understanding.

MRP. Marketing and Regulatory Programs.

MRP–BS. Marketing and Regulatory Programs Business Services.

NAAE. National Association of Agriculture Employees.

NFC. National Finance Center.

NAFTA. North American Free Trade Agreement.

NAHPS. National Animal Health Programs Staff.

NAL. National Agricultural Library.

NAPIS.National Agricultural Pest Information System.

NAPPO. North American Plant Protection Organization.

NAPPQM. National Association of Plant Protection and Quarantine Managers.

NAQIT. National AQI Team (NAY quit).

NAPPQOSE. National Associate of PPQ Office Support Employees.

NAS. Naval Air Station ***or*** National Academy of Sciences.

NASDA. National Association of State Departments of Agriculture.

NATO. North American Treaty Organization.

NBIS. National Biosurveillance Information System.

NCIE. National Center for Import and Export.

NEPA. National Environmental Policy Act.

NER. North East Region.

NGO. Nongovernmental organization.

NIH. National Institutes of Health.

NIMS. National Incident Management System.

NIOSH. National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

NIPP. National Infrastructure Protection Plan.

NIS. National Identification Services.

NMWPM. Non-manufactured wood packing material.

NOAA. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

NOT. Notice ***or*** new officer training.

NPAG. New Pest Advisory Group.

NPB. National Plant Board.

NPC. National Potato Council.

NPDES. National Pollution Discharge Elimination System.

NPDN. National Plant Diagnostic Network.

NPPO. National Plant Protection Organization.

NRDC. National Resources Defense Council.

NRP. National Response Plan.

NWA. Noxious Weed Act.

OA. Office of the Administrator.

OAS. Organization of American States.

OBPA. Office of Budget and Program Analysis.

OCE. Office of the Chief Economist.

OCR. Office of Civil Rights.

ODA. Office of the Deputy Administrator.

OGC. Office of General Counsel.

OCIO. Office of the Chief Information Officer.

OFF. Oriental fruit fly.

OIC. Officer in charge.

OIE. World Organization for Animal Health—Organisation International des Epizooties.

OIG. Office of Inspector General.

OIRA. Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs.

OM. Office manager.

OMB. Office of Management and Budget.

OO. Office of Operations.

OPIS. Offshore Pest Information System.

OPM. Office of Personnel Management.

ORACBA. Office of Risk Assessment and Cost Benefit Analysis (or a CEE ba).

OSec. Office of Secretary.

OSHA. Occupational Safety & Health Administration.

OT. Overtime.

OWCP. Office of Worker's Compensation Program.

OV. Official verification.

PAD. Policy Analysis and Development.

PAG. Preclearance Advisory Group.

PBW. Pink Bollworm.

PC. Phytosanitary Certificate.

PCD. *Phytophthora* Canker Disease (Sudden Oak Death).

PCMS. Purchase Card Management System.

PD. Port Director ***or*** pest detection.

PDC. Professional Development Center, Frederick, Maryland.

PDMA. Program Data Management and Analysis.

PDMP. Pest Detection and Management Program.

PEI. Prince Edward Island, Canada.

PEM. Policy Evaluation and Monitoring.

PEPPA. Preparedness for Emergency Plant Pest Action.

PERAL. Plant Epidemiology and Risk Analysis Laboratory.

PGQO. Plant Germplasm Quarantine Office.

PHP. Plant Health Programs.

PHS. Public Health Service.

PHYTO. Phytosanitary certificate.

PIM. Phytosanitary issues management.

PIN. Pest Information Network.

PIS. Plant inspection station.

PL. Public law.

PLG. Program Leaders Group.

PMTV. Potato mop top virus.

PO. Purchase order.

POE. Port of entry.

POV. Privately owned vehicle.

Port Ops. Port Operations.

PPA. Plant Protection Act of 2000.

PPCI. Policy, Planning and Critical Issues.

PPD. Policy and Program Development.

PPQ. Plant Protection and Quarantine.

PPV. Plum pox virus.

PQA. Plant Quarantine Act.

P&RA. Permits & Risk Assessments.

PRAG. Peer Review Advisory Group.

PRPT. Peer Review Product Tracking Database.

PRI. Permits, Registrations and Importers.

PRA. Pest risk analysis ***or*** Pest risk assessment.

PRM. Proposed rulemaking.

PSA. Program Support Assistant.

PSPI. Plant Safeguarding and Pest Identification.

PSB. Pine shoot beetle.

PVYN. Potato virus Y necrotic strain.

QA. Quality assurance.

QC. Quality certified ***or*** quality control.

QIM.Quarantine intercepted material (KWIM).

QMI. Quarantine material intercepted.

QPAS. Quarantine Policy and Analysis Staff (KEW pass).

RA. Risk assessment ***or*** risk analysis.

RAD. Regulatory Analysis and Development.

RAS. Risk analysis systems.

RC. Regulatory Coordination ***or*** residual cargo ***or*** residue cargo

RD. Regional Director.

RIA. Regulatory Impact Analysis ***or*** regulatory analysis.

RIF. Reduction-in-force.

RMS. Resource Management Staff.

RMSES. Resource Management Systems and Evaluation Staff (RAM sees).

ROB. Regulatory Oversight Board.

ROT. Reimbursable overtime.

RPM. Regional Program Manager.

RRA. Risk reduction analysis.

SAF. Society of American Florists ***or*** Society of American Foresters.

SAG. Servicio Agricola y Ganadero (Chile equivalent of APHIS) (SAG).

SAGARPA. Secretaria de Agricultura, Ganaderia, Desarrollo Rural, Pesca, y Alimentacion or Secretary of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries, and Food products in Mexico (sa GAR pa).

SCR. South Central Region.

SEPPC. Surveillance, Emergency Program Planning and Coordination (SEP see).

SER. South East Region.

SIG. Senior Implementation Group.

SITC. Smuggling, Interdiction & Trade Compliance ***or*** Safeguarding Intervention and Trade Compliance (SIT see).

SMCI. Senior Military Customs Inspectors.

SME. Subject–matter expert.

SOD. Sudden oak death *(Phytopthera ramorum)*.

SOP. Standard operating procedure.

SOSO. State Operations Support Officer.

SPHD. State Plant Health Director (SPUD).

SPRO. State Plant Regulatory Official (SPROH).

SPS. Sanitary and phytosanitary.

STAT. Citation to U.S. Statutes at Large, a compendium of all U.S. laws arranged in chronological order.

SVD. Swine vesicular disease.

SWPM. Solid wood packing material.

T&A. Time and attendance.

T&E. Transportation and exportation ***or*** threatened and endangered (species).

TAG. Technical advisory group.

TBD. To be determined.

TDY. Temporary duty.

TECS. Treasury Enforcement Computer System (TEX).

TEU. 20-foot equivalent (container) unit.

TM. Treatment Manual.

TP. Talking points ***or*** tangible products ***or*** technical protocols.

TSA. Tropical soda apple.

TSE. Transmissible spongiform encephalitis.

TSP. Thrift Savings Plan.

TST. Trade Support Team ***or*** trade team.

UC. Unified command.

UK. United Kingdom (England, Scotland, and Wales).

ULP. Unfair labor practice.

UN. United Nations.

USA. United States of America ***or*** U.S. Attorney.

USC. U.S. Customs Service ***or*** U.S. Code.

USCA. U.S. Code Annotated.

USDA. U.S. Department of Agriculture.

USDI. U.S. Department of the Interior.

USHRL. U.S. Horticultural Research Laboratory.

USTR. U.S. Trade Representative.

VMO. Veterinary Medical Officer.

VRS. Veterinary regulatory support.

VVND. (Viscerotropic Velogentic) Newcastle Disease.

VS. Veterinary Services.

WADS. Work Accomplishment Data System.

WAH. Work at home.

WBBS. Work–based budgeting system.

WR. Western Region.

WS. Wildlife Services.

WSSA. Weed Science Society of America.

WHO. World Health Organization.

WTO. World Trade Organization.

WW. Witch weed.

B

Internal Communication

Appendix B

Forms and Examples

Contents

APHIS and PPQ Forms **page B-1**
General Use Agency Letterhead **page B-2**
Letter **page B-5**
Memorandum **page B-6**
Informational Memorandum **page B-7**
Briefing Paper **page B-8**
Talking Points **page B-9**
Decision Memorandum **page B-10**
Daily Situation Report **page B-11**
Permission to Reproduce Copyrighted Material **page B-12**
PowerPoint™ Presentations **page B-13**

APHIS and PPQ Forms

Administrative clerks maintain a library of APHIS and PPQ forms at each PPQ facility. Individuals can also find the APHIS library of forms online.

Address	http://www.aphis.usda.gov/library/forms/

Communicate

General Use Agency Letterhead

Use the excerpt from the USDA Design Center *Visual Management Guide* as a guide to create letters and memorandums on USDA letterhead stationery (**Figure B-1 on page B-3** and **Figure B-2 on page B-4**). See also the examples of a letter (**Letter on page B-5**) and memorandum (**Memorandum on page B-6**).

Source	http://w3.usda.gov/agency/oc/design/vis_man_guide.html

IX Addendum a. General Use Agency Letterhead for Correspondence Generated in Word Processing Based Applications / Use and Specifications

Use

This general purpose letterhead is designated for the Department's business correspondence generated with word processing applications when page layout functions impede rapid production. It is designed to be used by a broad spectrum of personnel specialties for on-demand printing and where the names and locations of units change frequently.

Typesetting

Users should select mainstream serif or sans serif fonts with few embellishments that are easily readable and generally available. Preferred typefaces are Times (serif) and Helvetica (a sans serif typeface also known as Arial). Type all text flush left, rag right, with normal word and character spacing. Text should be 9 to 12 points in size.

Department identity: The preferred identity for the Department is the symbol only, centered, 1/2" (.500) wide positioned as shown on the grid. An alternate designation is to use the name spelled out in one line, centered, typed in 8 point Helvetica bold. Do not use the symbol and the name together.

Agency identity and address: Use agency symbols as desired. Position them only in the space allocated on the grid.

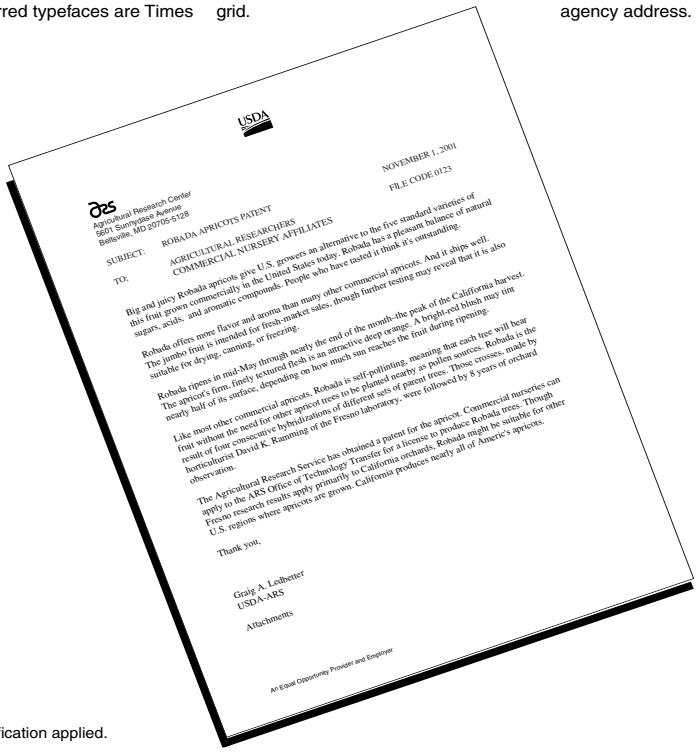
Subject and addressee: Set up the subject, addressee, date and the like, in a manner that conforms to the Department Correspondence Standards as shown. The desirable type size is 12 point.

Mission statement, slogans, partnerships, affiliations: Type in a maximum of two lines at 8 point size.

EEO statement: Type on one line at 8 point size.

Body of the Letter

Begin the body of the letter 1" (1.000) from the left edge of the page and two line spaces after the last line of the agency address.



USDA

ARS
Agricultural Research Center
5601 Sunnyside Avenue
Beltsville, MD 20705-5128

NOVEMBER 1, 2001

FILE CODE 0123

SUBJECT: ROBADA APRICOTS PATENT

TO: AGRICULTURAL RESEARCHERS
COMMERCIAL NURSERY AFFILIATES

Big and juicy Robada apricots give U.S. growers an alternative to the five standard varieties of this fruit grown commercially in the United States today. Robada has a pleasant balance of natural sugars, acids, and aromatic compounds. People who have tasted it think it's outstanding.

Robada offers more flavor and aroma than many other commercial apricots. And it ships well. The jumbo fruit is intended for fresh-market sales, though further testing may reveal that it is also suitable for drying, canning, or freezing.

Robada ripens in mid-May through nearly the end of the month–the peak of the California harvest. The apricot's firm, finely textured flesh is an attractive deep orange. A bright-red blush may tint nearly half of its surface, depending on how much sun reaches the fruit during ripening.

Like most other commercial apricots, Robada is self-pollinating, meaning that each tree will bear fruit without the need for other apricot trees to be planted nearby as pollen sources. Robada is the result of four consecutive hybridizations of different sets of parent trees. Those crosses, made by horticulturist David K. Ramming of the Fresno laboratory, were followed by 8 years of orchard observation.

The Agricultural Research Service has obtained a patent for the apricot. Commercial nurseries can apply to the ARS Office of Technology Transfer for a license to produce Robada trees. Though Fresno research results apply primarily to California orchards, Robada might be suitable for other U.S. regions where apricots are grown. California produces nearly all of America's apricots.

Thank you,

Graig A. Ledbetter
USDA-ARS

Attachments

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

Example of specification applied.

FIGURE B-1 General Use Agency Letterhead, page 1

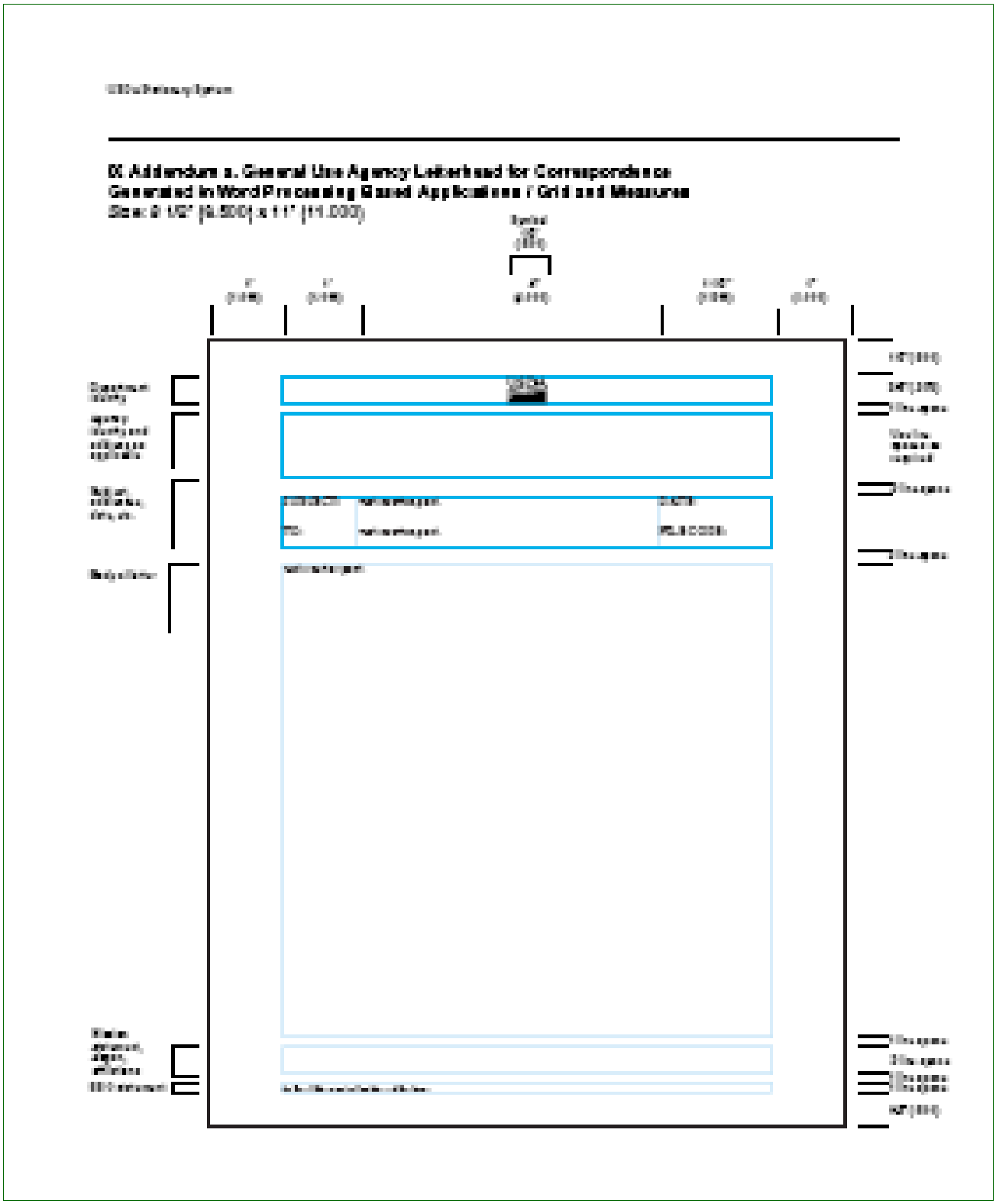


FIGURE B-2 General Use Agency Letterhead, page 2

Letter

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection
Service

Plant Protection
and Quarantine

2150 Centre Ave
Bldg B-3E10
Fort Collins, CO
80526

(970) 494-7500
FAX: 494-7501

DATE: Complete when signed.

ADDRESSEE: Limit outside address to 5 lines. Spell out state. Insert two spaces between state and zip code.

SALUTATION: Dear Ms./Mr./Dr./Ms.

BODY: Block style; flush with left margin; single space with double space between paragraphs.

SECOND PAGE: Place name/title of addressee flush with left margin. Place page number flush with right margin. Continue text on third line below the name/page number.

SIGNATURE BLOCK: Add 'Sincerely', your signature, title, city and state.

ENCLOSURES: Indicate the number of enclosures and a brief description or filename if appropriate.

cc: List other recipients.

FIGURE B-3 Example of Letter

Memorandum

USDA

United States Department of Agriculture

Marketing and Regulatory Programs

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

Plant Protection and Quarantine

2150 Centre Ave
Bldg B-3E10
Fort Collins, CO
80526

(970) 494-7500
FAX: 494-7501

MEMORANDUM

DATE: Leave blank until signed.

SUBJECT: Indicate the subject of the memorandum.

TO: Alphabetize names of recipients.

FROM: Include your name.

Text of memo begins 3 spaces after last line of addressee:

- Use block style with font no smaller than 10 point.
- Single space between lines.
- Double space between paragraphs.
- If more than one page, type addressee name on second page flush with left, and page number flush with right margin; then begin text on third line after page number.

Make sure memos are printed on proper letterhead.

SIGNATURE BLOCK: Signature block is placed three spaces below text.

ATTACHMENT: Use attachment and not enclosure for memos. For a single attachment, type the notation "Attachment" flush with the left margin, two lines below the last line of the signature block.

cc: List other recipients.

APHIS

APHIS - Protecting American Agriculture
An Equal Opportunity Employer

Federal Relay Service (Voice/TTY/ASCII/Spanish)
1-800-877-8339

FIGURE B-4 Example of Memorandum

Informational Memorandum

INFORMATIONAL MEMORANDUM FOR THE DEPUTY SECRETARY

[Triple Space]
THROUGH: Include your name, title, and staff.

[Double Space]
FROM: Include your name, title, and staff.

[Double Space]
SUBJECT: Provide a brief description of the subject.

[Triple Space]
ISSUE: Use two or three sentences to define the issue clearly.

[Triple Space]
BACKGROUND: Clearly and briefly describe the background and current situation, including relevant history, actions taken, pending decisions, sensitivities, and possible outcomes. Define the parties involved in the issue and state their interest. Identify potential communication issues with Congress, media representatives, cooperators, industries, nongovernmental entities or other groups that share a mutual interest with PPQ in safeguarding plant health.

[Double Space]
SUMMARY: Briefly summarize the background and current status and provide a timeline for final actions or decisions if resolution is still pending.

[Insert legend line and clearance line.]

APHIS - Protecting American Agriculture
An Equal Opportunity Employer

Federal Relay Service (Voice/TTY/ASCII/Spanish)
1-800-877-8339

FIGURE B-5 Example of Informational Memorandum

Briefing Paper

BRIEFING PAPER ON [INSERT TOPIC]

DATE: [Insert date]

BACKGROUND: Provide relevant history and a brief statement on the issue.

CURRENT STATUS: Clearly and briefly describe the current situation, including actions taken, pending decisions, sensitivities, and possible outcomes. Define the parties involved in the issue and state their interest. Identify potent ional communication issues with Congress, media representatives, cooperators, industries, nongovernmental entities or other groups that share a mutual interest with PPQ in safeguarding plant health.

SUMMARY: Briefly summarize the background and current status and provide a timeline for final actions or decisions if resolution is still pending.

APHIS - Protecting American Agriculture
An Equal Opportunity Employer

Federal Relay Service (Voice/TTY/ASCII/Spanish)
1-800-877-8339

FIGURE B-6 Example of Briefing Paper

Talking Points

TALKING POINTS ON [INSERT TOPIC]

DATE: [Insert date]

BACKGROUND: Provide relevant history and a brief statement on the issue.

TALKING POINTS: Provide a brief bullet point (no more than 2—3 sentences) for each relevant issue or thought. If necessary, use subheaders as follows:

Subtopic #1

-
-
-

Subtopic #2

-
-
-

APHIS - Protecting American Agriculture
An Equal Opportunity Employer

Federal Relay Service (Voice/TTY/ASCII/Spanish)
1-800-877-8339

FIGURE B-7 Example of Talking Points

Decision Memorandum

DECISION MEMORANDUM FOR THE ADMINISTRATOR

[Triple Space]
THROUGH: Include your name, title, and staff. If unused, delete this line.

[Double space]
FROM: Include your name, title, and staff.

[Double space]
SUBJECT: Provide a brief description of the subject.

[Triple space]
ISSUE: Use 2—3 sentences to define the issue clearly.

[Triple space]
BACKGROUND: Clearly and briefly describe the background and current situation, including relevant history, actions taken, pending decisions, sensitivities, and possible outcomes. Define the parties involved in the issue and state their interest. Identify potential communication issues with Congress, media representatives, cooperators, industries, nongovernmental entities or other groups that share a mutual interest with PPQ in safeguarding plant health.

[Double space]
OPTIONS: Create a numbered list of options. Define each option, including relevant information—such as feasibility, challenges, or benefits—that will help decisionmakers. Do not use subheads.

RECOMMENDATION: Use one sentence to indicate which option is recommended. For example, "APHIS recommends option # 3."

DECISION BY THE ADMINISTRATOR:

Approve: _____ Date: _____

Disapprove: _____

Discuss with me: _____

[Insert legend line and clearance line.]

APHIS - Protecting American Agriculture
An Equal Opportunity Employer

Federal Relay Service (Voice/TTY/ASCII/Spanish)
1-800-877-8339

FIGURE B-8 Example of Decision Memorandum

Daily Situation Report

DAILY SITUATION REPORT: [NAME OF PEST]

DATE:

DATA SUMMARY OF PROGRAM: If appropriate, include a table with new or changing information related to program progress. Include the most important activities for the past 24 hours, with cumulative totals for the program. For example:

Activity	Daily Total	Cumulative Total
Number of samples taken		
Number of positive samples		
Number of EANs issued		
Number of treatments applied		
Number of PPQ employees on project		
Number of State employees on project		

MAJOR EVENTS OR CHANGES SINCE LAST REPORT: Include short, bulleted statements detailing important events or progress that took place in the reporting period. Use the following categories:

- Survey/Detection
- Identification/Diagnostics
- Regulatory
- Control/Treatments
- Public Outreach/Media Contacts
- Trade Information

BACKGROUND: Include a brief narrative of the emergency, including the following:

- Date of the emergency
- Event that started the emergency
- Major cooperators involved
- Location of the command post(s)
- History and scope of the program

APHIS - Protecting American Agriculture
An Equal Opportunity Employer

Federal Relay Service (Voice/TTY/ASCII/Spanish)
1-800-877-8339

FIGURE B-9 Example of Daily Situation Report

Permission to Reproduce Copyrighted Material

United States Department of Agriculture

Marketing and Regulatory Programs

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

Plant Protection and Quarantine

2150 Centre Ave
Bldg B-3E10
Fort Collins, CO
80526

(970) 494-7500
FAX: 494-7501

DATE: (Complete when signed)

Publisher or Holder of copyright
Name
Address

Dear Mr./Ms.:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture/Animal and Health Inspection Service requests your written permission to reproduce a [photo/drawing/graph] currently residing on the World Wide Web at [paste the complete URL here]. We believe you are the holder of the copyright on that illustration.

It is our intention to reuse that image in our [manual/publication/other], which will not be printed on paper, but will be available at no charge on the World Wide Web only.

We will acknowledge the source of this image in the [manual/publication/other]. If this arrangement is agreeable, we ask you to print out this email and sign and date the concurrence line below. Fax the signed letter back to us at [your FAX number].

Concurrence:

Printed name and title:

Thanks very much for your prompt reply.

[Your name and title]
[Your mailing address]
[Your telephone number]
[Your FAX number]

APHIS - Protecting American Agriculture
An Equal Opportunity Employer

Federal Relay Service (Voice/TTY/ASCII/Spanish)
1-800-877-8339

FIGURE B-10 Example of Request to Reproduce Copyrighted Material

Support and Source	**APHIS–Legislative and Public Affairs**

PowerPoint™ Presentations

For more information about using PowerPoint, see **PowerPoint™ Presentations on page 7-19**.

Style Sheets

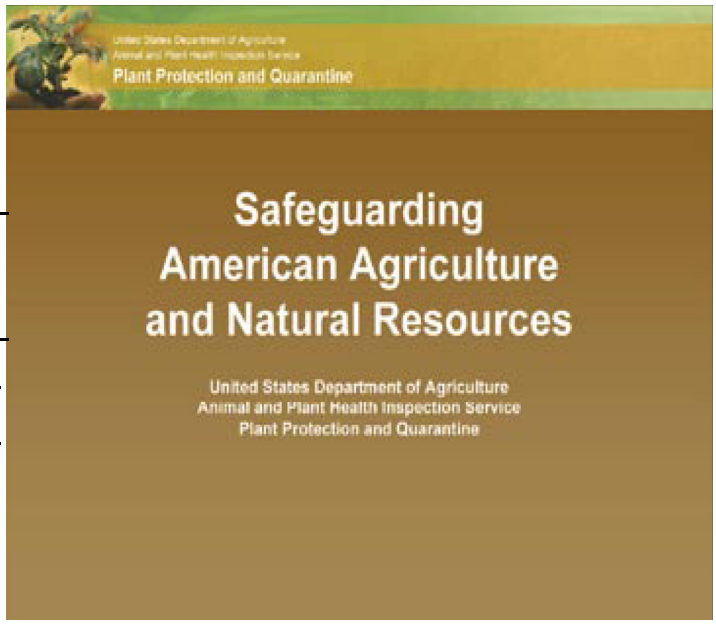
Title Slide: Color Palette 1

Presentation Title

Arial Bold 40 pt.

Identity

Arial Bold 18 pt.



Text Slide: Color Palette 1

Slide Title

Arial Bold 32 pt.

Text

Bullet level 1
Arial Bold 22 pt.

Bullet level 2
Arial Bold 18 pt.

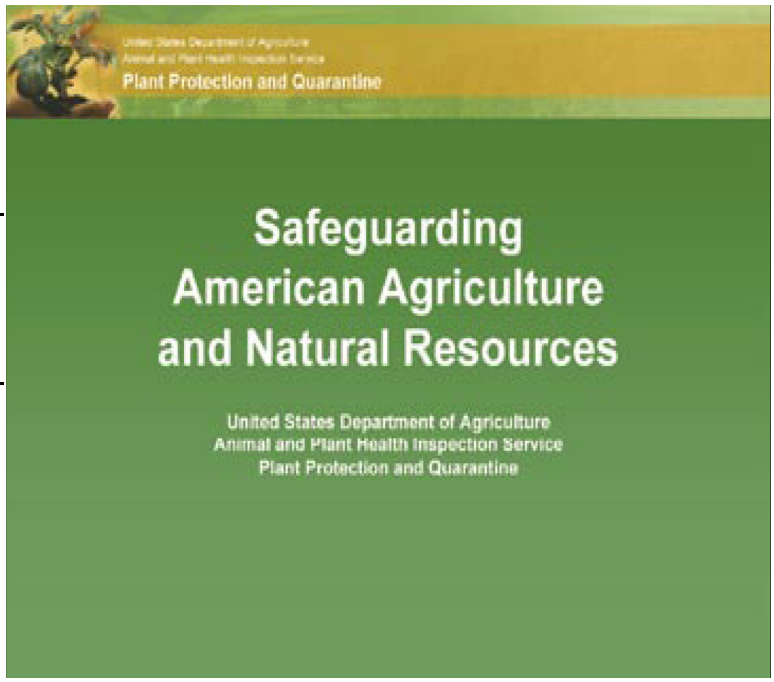
Title Slide: Color Palette 2

Presentation Title

Arial Bold 40 pt.

Identity

Arial Bold 18 pt.



Text Slide: Color Palette 2

Slide Title

Arial Bold 32 pt.

Text

Bullet level 1
Arial Bold 22 pt.

Bullet level 2
Arial Bold 18 pt.

Source	http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/art_symbols/art/tipsheet.pdf
Support	http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/lpa_services/index.html
Templates	http://www.aphis.usda.gov/newsroom/art_symbols/symbols.shtml

C

Internal Communication

Appendix C

Resources

Contents

Written Information **page C-1**
Visual Information **page C-2**
Telephone Meetings **page C-3**
Video Meetings **page C-4**

Written Information

For guidance on grammar, punctuation, capitalization, abbreviations and other rules to use when writing for the U.S. Government, consult the U.S. Government Printing Office *Style Manual* or one of the non-government style guides (**See Support on page 4-11**).

Materials that are written for internal use—such as reports and correspondence that are less than several pages in length—are exempt from the guidelines of the U.S. Government Printing Office *Style Manual*.

However, written materials that are longer than several pages in length or will be distributed outside of PPQ must adhere to standards outlined in the U.S. Government Printing Office *Style Manual*.

Source

***Style Manual.* 2000. United States Government Printing Office. Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402 [Browse or buy online at http://www.gpoaccess.gov/stylemanual/].**

Visual Information

Visual management is the way that a document, image or other visual resource looks. For guidance on visual management when writing for the U.S. Government, consult the USDA–Office of Communications–Design Center *Visual Management Guide*.

Materials that are written for internal use—such as reports and correspondence that are less than several pages in length—are exempt from the standards set by the Office of Communications–Design Center.

However, written materials that are longer than several pages in length or will be distributed outside of PPQ must adhere to standards outlined in the USDA–Office of Communications–Design Center *Visual Management Guide*.

Address http://w3.usda.gov/agency/oc/design/vis_man_guide.html

Visit the Web site of the Design Center for downloadable artwork and visual information standards. Visual resources include the following:

- Standard and special-purpose letterhead and envelopes
- Memorandums
- Notepads
- Personal notes
- Business cards
- Information folders
- News releases
- Name tags and table identification cards
- Printed reports, books and brochures
- Posters and other exhibit media
- Presentation materials (i.e., PowerPoint slides)
- Web sites

Source http://w3.usda.gov/agency/oc/design/index.html

Telephone Meetings

Before you start, review **Telephone Meetings on page 7-6**.

Use the following instructions to install a permanent bridge line:

A. If you have an existing account, skip to **Step 2. Conduct the Conference Call on page 7-6**.

B. Obtain approval from your supervisor.

C. Establish an account at least 7 working days prior to your first call.

D. Go to MRPBS Telecommunications Web site at http://inside.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/atac.

E. Select HIERARCHY DATA CHARTS.

F. Select PLANT PROTECTION AND QUARANTINE.

G. Write down your four digit agency code (in the far left column).

H. Go to MRP–BS Telecommunications Web site at http://inside.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/atac.

I. Select ESTABLISHING AN ACCOUNT/ONLINE ORDER FORM.

J. Complete the online order form.

K. Submit the form.

L. MRP–BS will send you a confidential authorization number and further instructions.

Video Meetings

Before you start, review **Video Meetings on page 7-8**.

Use the following instructions to establish the video meeting account:

1. If you have an existing account, skip to **Step 1. Set Up and Plan the Video Meeting on page 7-8**.
2. Establish an account at least 7 working days prior to your call.
3. Obtain approval from your supervisor.
4. Go to MRPBS Telecommunications Web site at http://inside.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/atac.
5. Select HIERARCHY DATA CHARTS.
6. Select PLANT PROTECTION AND QUARANTINE.
7. Write down your four digit agency code (in the far left column).
8. Go To MRP–BS TELECOMMUNICATIONS Web site at http://inside.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/atac.
9. Select AUDIO CONFERENCING.
10. Select ESTABLISHING AN ACCOUNT/ONLINE ORDER FORM.
11. Complete the online order form.
12. Submit the form.
13. MRP–BS will send you a confidential authorization number and further instructions.