United States Department of Agriculture
Farm Service Agency

FSA Interactive Web Application Style Guide
Version 1.2.4

Revision History

Release No.	Date	Authors	Revision Description
Rev. 1.0	10/23/2006	N/A	New document.
Rev. 1.1	2/22/2008	N/A	Section 2.4 Page 14 Changed Accessibility to Accessibility Statement Section 3.1 Page 18 Removed Operating Systems row in table. Section 3.1 Page 18 Removed specific references to specific browsers. Section 3.4.2 Page 26 Resolved unclear statement in Disabling Forms Control.
Rev. 1.2	5/16/2008	N/A	Section 3.9.1 Page 35 Updated last paragraph on handling browsers with JavaScript turned off. Section 3.9.2 Page 36 Restrictions on the usage of JavaScript.
Rev. 1.2.1	12/2008	David Stropes Kevin Fitzpatrick	Section 1,1 Page 7 Added new introductory material to address the usage and precedent policy regarding the FSA Web Style Guide versus the USDA Web Style Guide.
			Section 2.4 Page 14 Footer Components, "Accessibility" in version 1.2 changed to "Accessibility Statement," "FirstGov" in version 1.2 changed to "USA.gov."
			Section 2.4 Page 14 Footer Figure 2-6 updated to reflect footer component changes.
			Section 2.4 Page 15 Corrected the Site Map link to https://www.fsa.usda.gov/help/site-map
			Section 4.14 has been added illustrating the criteria for updating this document regarding the title and channels of authority necessary for approval.
Rev 1.2.2	7/29/2010	Susan English	Section 2.2, update link to Handbooks, 3.3.2, update the link to the Acronym list.
Rev. 1.2.3	2/24/2011	Baker Haasis	Updated references to AJAX to align with IB revision that loosened restriction
Rev. 1.2.3-1	10/29/2013	John DiLeo	Updated URLs for header and footer links
Rev 1.2.4	3/8/2015	Matthew Stropes	Updated URL changes caused by migration from Oracle UCM to Percussion.

Project References

References used in support of the preparation of this document include:

Document	Date
USDA Web Style Guide Version 2.0†	09/30/2005
FSA Web GUI Standards, Addendum to USDA CBA eGovernment Initiative Task 2.A: Standards for Common Look and Feel – *Superseded by USDA Web Style Guide*	09/24/2003
ADPO Information Bulletin IB-0080 FSA Web Page Template - FSA Web Template Based on USDA Style Guide†	09/29/2004
USDA Departmental Regulation DR3430-001 Web Site Development and Maintenance†	05/19/2004
Guidelines for Section 508 Development and Testing Accessibility on the Web†	04/10/2003

†Document found on FSA SDLC Web Site

Points of Contact

The following table provides a list of organizational points of contact (POC) for the *FSA Interactive Web Application Style Guide*.

FSA Web Application Contacts		
Name	**Telephone**	**Email**
Cheryl Vukas	(816)926-1520	Cheryl.Vukas@kcc.usda.gov
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1.0 Introduction

1.0   Introduction

The purpose of the *FSA Interactive Web Application Style Guide* is to provide user interface (UI) design architects, application design architects, developers, and other individuals responsible for presentation layer development with a standard layout, design composition, and set of common page components to build and implement a consistent user interface. It serves as a primary reference tool for creating screens and defines the graphic elements and common page templates that are integral to the successful implementation of FSA application modules.

This style guide serves as a blueprint for building FSA Web applications. While it is not possible to plan for every contingency, you should find all the resources and framework needed to make informed decisions in your development efforts. The guide provides detailed information on the following:

- Page structure and layout.
- Specifications for overall information display to ensure that a consistent look and feel is maintained throughout all applications.
- Reusable user interface Web page components to ensure that a consistent behavior and functionality is maintained throughout all applications.

As an evolving document, this guide will be updated based on feedback from users and key stakeholders, and guidance from USDA, as FSA projects continue to evolve.

1.1 Note Regarding FSA Style Guide Policy

The FSA Style Guide both acknowledges and supplements the USDA Style Guide. Only when the guides are contradictory should the agency branding mandate the ultimate style guide adhered to. The FSA Style Guide is the authoritative guide when FSA branding is required. Likewise, the USDA Style Guide is authoritative when USDA branding is required. Neither guide should be used to negate the foundations of the other, and both shall support and adhere to Section 508.

The purpose of the FSA Web Application Style Guide is to provide User Interface (UI) design artifacts, application design architects, developers, and other individuals responsible for the presentation layer development with a standard layout, design composition, and set of common page components to build and implement a consistent User Interface. It augments the USDA Style Guide and serves as a primary reference tool for creating screens and defines the graphic elements and common page templates that are integral to the successful implementation of FSA application modules.

2.0 Page Construct

2.0 Page Construct

The FSA page construct (Figure 2-1) contains the following regions: masthead, top navigation bar, left navigation column, right navigation column[1], footer, and content region. All regions remain in the same area on the page when displayed within an application. Specifications for designing and developing each of these sections are outlined in the subsequent sub-sections.
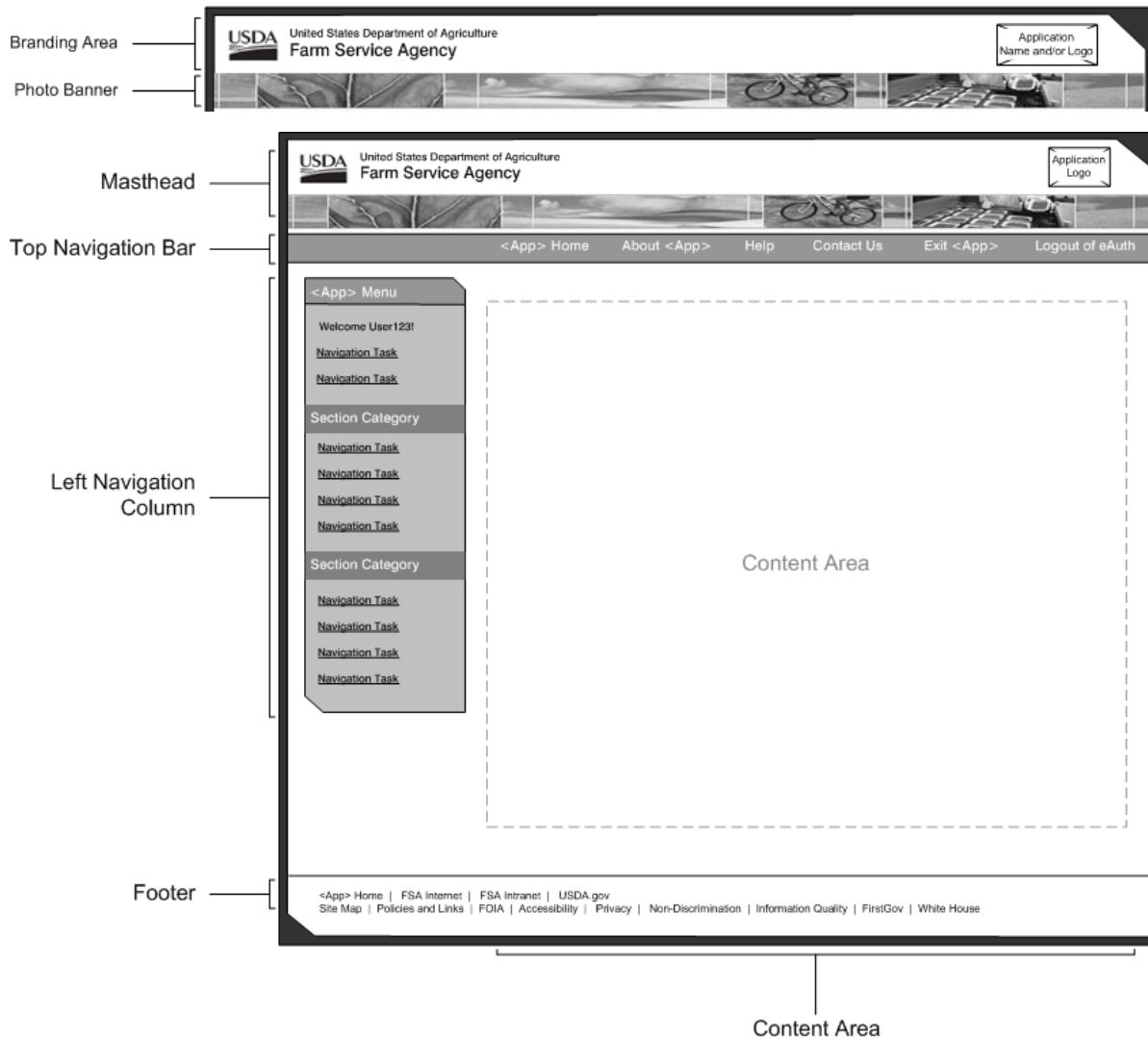

Figure 2-1. Page Construct

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[1] Note that the *USDA Web Style Guide* also makes use of an optional right navigation column for complementary and supplementary links, based on the page user is on. (*USDA Web Style Guide*, pp. 13-14.) This option will not be immediately available for FSA and is not referenced in this guide.

2.1 Masthead

The masthead (Figure 2-2) is the main branding area for interactive Web application pages and must appear on every page. It consists of the branding area and photo banner. Below is the option for handling the masthead component for FSA application pages.

Figure 2-2. Masthead

2.1.1 Branding Area

This is the area at the top of the masthead where the USDA logo image, United States Department of Agriculture, and Farm Service Agency appear within the top left region. Following masthead option 1b from the *USDA Web Style Guide,* the FSA application name and/or logo may appear in the top right region. The size, position and placement of these branding area elements can not be altered.

Guidelines

USDA Logo Image	Clicking on the USDA logo image will generate a new browser window and take users to the USDA homepage at http://www.usda.gov.
Farm Service Agency	Clicking on Farm Service Agency will generate a new browser window and take users to the FSA Internet homepage at http://www.fsa.usda.gov.
Application Name/Logo	Remain as image or text treatment and is not clickable.

2.1.2 Photo Banner

The photo banner is a series of images that represent the FSA and is only mandatory on the application homepage. The masthead options in the *USDA Web Style Guide* are still options that applications may use and not superseded by this guideline. However, it should be consistent with other images displayed on the FSA Internet and directly relevant to FSA application subject matter.

2.2 Top Navigation Bar

The top navigation bar (Figure 2-3) must appear on every page within FSA applications. It contains information and support navigation that are global to the application. Navigation links within the top navigation bar should attempt to keep users within the application. It is critical to balance the need to link to helpful tools and supplemental information versus unexpectedly taking users away from the application after they have logged in and are working within a transaction.

There is flexibility in determining which top navigation topics are appropriate for an application. However, the following topics are always included in the top navigation bar and available to all

users: *<Application Name>* Home, About *<Application Name>*, Help, Contact Us, Exit *<Application Name>*, and Logout of eAuth.

| FSA Home | About FSA | Help | Contact Us | Exit FSA | Logout of eAuth |

Employee and Customer View

| FSA Home | About FSA | Handbooks | Help | Contact Us | Exit FSA | Logout of eAuth |
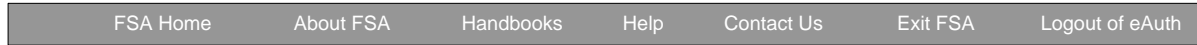
Employee View with Handbooks as an Option

| FSA Home | About FSA | Fact Sheets | Help | Contact Us | Exit FSA | Logout of eAuth |

Customer View with Fact Sheets as an Option

Figure 2-3. Top Navigation Bar Options

Guidelines

For detailed examples of top navigation links, refer to Appendix A 1.

<Application Name> Home	Links to the application homepage within the same browser window.
About <Application Name>	Links to a page about the specific application within the same browser window.
Help	Launches the general Help page in a new browser window so users may keep their place with an application page and view help at the same time. This differs from the Help icon on transaction level pages, which generates context sensitive help in a new browser window.
Contact Us	Links to a page with a guided form that helps better direct user questions, comments or issues to the appropriate recipient. Users may also see contact information for their local county office above the form. Contact Us opens within the same browser window.
Exit <Application Name>	Allows users to exit out of the system, but still remain logged into eAuthentication. Clicking on Exit *<Application Name>* will take users back to the application entry page.
Logout of eAuth	Allows users to both exit out of the system AND logout of eAuthentication. Clicking on Logout of eAuth will take users

back to the common eAuthentication logged out page.

Handbooks[*]   Optional and recommended for use in the employee view. Clicking on Handbooks will open the handbooks online Web site in a new browser window. The current link to the handbooks online is https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/laws-and-regulations/index.

Fact Sheets   Optional and recommended for use in the customer view. Clicking on Fact Sheets will open the fact sheets page on the FSA Internet in a new browser window. The current link to fact sheets page is https://www.fsa.usda.gov/news-room/fact-sheets/index.

2.3 Left Navigation Column

The left navigation column (Figure 2-4) holds local navigation, specific to an application. The topics within the left navigation are role-based and reflect key system tasks that help users achieve a particular goal. For application modules with many tasks, section headings may be used to visually categorize those tasks. The left navigation column may also include sub-levels of information (secondary and tertiary levels).
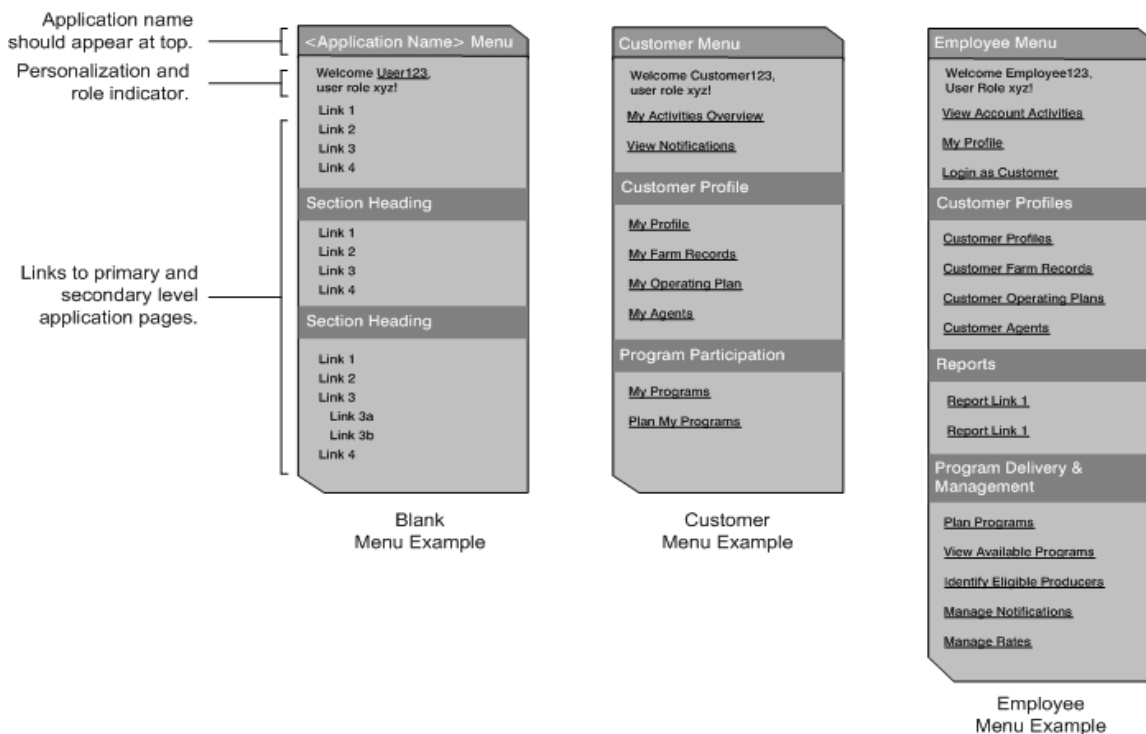
* Note: In the future, information similar to Handbooks and Fact Sheets may need to be added to the top navigation. If so, a more generic category such as Resources might be created that would take the user to a page with links to such information.

Figure 2-4. Left Navigation

The left navigation is mandatory on all FSA application pages, with the following exceptions:

- For the customer view, the left navigation persists throughout all pages in the system, except for transaction level pages.

- For the employee view, the left navigation is not displayed on multi-step, transaction level pages. It is optional for single form transactions.

- For both the customer and employee views, the left navigation may be considered optional if there is a requirement to display extensive summary or report information.

Removing the left navigation at the transaction level will prevent users from inadvertently leaving a transaction. It is similar to commercial Web sites where the task-based navigation disappears if users select to "checkout" or "pay a bill". Lastly, removing the left navigation within a transaction shifts the visual focus on the screen to a single task, rather than displaying page components that are not immediately relevant.

Single Form Transaction Level Page

Homepage

Information/Initiate Level Page

Multi-Step Transaction Level Page
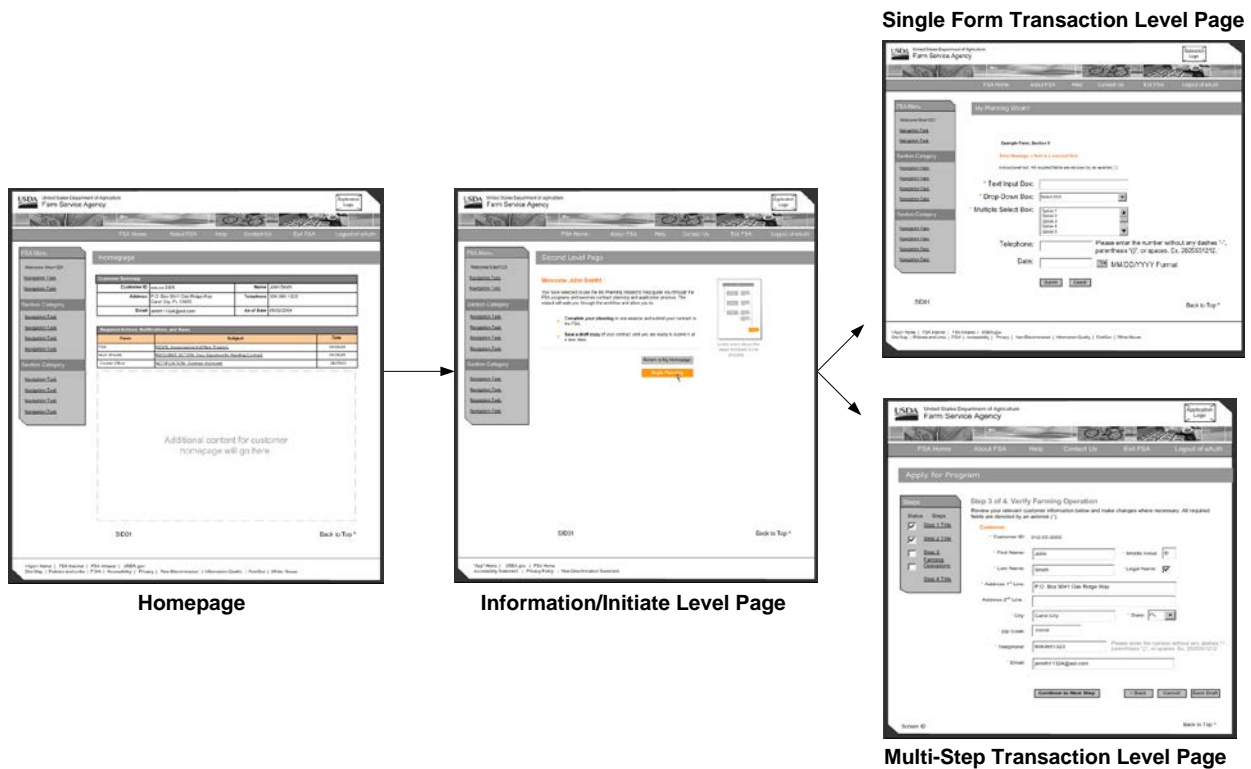
Figure 2-5. Optional Use of Left Navigation for Transaction Level Pages

Guidelines

<Application Name> Menu	The application name or acronym should always appear at the top of the left navigation, followed by the word "Menu".
Personalization	A welcome <user name> is listed above the navigation links. It may or may not be linked to a page where users may set personal preferences. The role of users (optional) may also be displayed after the user name. For example, Welcome Patricia Wilson. You have access to FSA as a

core user.

Section Headings	Section headings are available as static text to help visually group navigation. Section headings are not clickable.
Navigation Topics	Topics within the left navigation should reflect key system tasks and always link to a page within the application. If users are unable to access a particular navigation topic, that topic is not displayed. The recommended number of links is 10 or fewer and the total number of links should not exceed 15.
Optional Use	For the customer view, the left navigation is required on all pages except for transaction level screens. For the employee view, the left navigation is not required on multi-step transactions and is optional for single transaction forms.

2.4 Footer

The footer (Figure 2-6) contains hyperlinks to agency related Web sites and policies. It consists of HTML links on two lines and is required on all pages of the application except for transaction level screens. The required links on the first line are application specific and include: *<Application Name>* Home, FSA Internet, FSA Intranet, and USDA.gov. The second line may not be changed and must include links to the following pages on the USDA.gov Web site: Site Map, Policies and Links, FOIA, Accessibility Statement, Privacy, Non-Discrimination, Information Quality, USAgov, and White House.

<Application Name> Home | FSA Internet | FSA Intranet | USDA.gov
Site Map | Policies and Links | FOIA | Accessibility Statement | Privacy | Non-Discrimination | Information Quality | USA.gov | White House
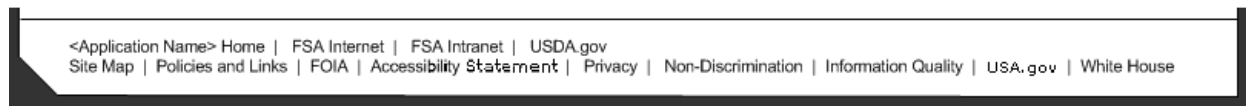
Figure 2-6. Footer

Guidelines[≠]

<Application Name> Home	Links to the application homepage and opens within the same browser window.
FSA Internet	Links to the FSA Internet homepage at http://www.fsa.usda.gov and opens within the same browser window.
FSA Intranet	For employee view only. Links to the FSA Intranet homepage at http://intranet.fsa.usda.gov and opens within the same browser window.

[≠] Note: Footer links may change due to changes made at the Department and Agency levels.

USDA.gov	Links to the USDA homepage at http://www.usda.gov and opens within the same browser window.
Site Map	Links to the application site map and opens within the same browser window. For an example of a site map, refer to the FSA Internet site map at: https://www.fsa.usda.gov/help/site-map
Policies and Links	Links to the USDA Policies and Links page at https://www.fsa.usda.gov/help/policies-and-links and opens within the same browser window.
FOIA	Links to the USDA Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) page at https://www.fsa.usda.gov/news-room/efoia/index and opens within the same browser window.
Accessibility Statement	Links to the USDA Accessibility Statement page at https://www.fsa.usda.gov/help/accessibility-statement and opens within the same browser window.
Privacy	Links to the USDA Privacy Policy page at https://www.fsa.usda.gov/help/privacy-policy and opens within the same browser window.
Non-Discrimination	Links to the USDA Non-Discrimination page at https://www.fsa.usda.gov/help/nondiscrimination-statement and opens within the same browser window.
Information Quality	Links to the USDA Information Quality page at https://www.fsa.usda.gov/help/information-quality and opens within the same browser window. This link is required as referenced in USDA Departmental Regulation DR3430-001 Web Site Development and Maintenance.
USA.gov	Links to the USA.gov Web site at http://www.usa.gov/ and opens within a new browser window.
White House	Links to the White House Web site at http://www.whitehouse.gov and opens within a new browser window.

2.5 Content Area

The center portion of the page is devoted to content (Figure 2-7). Elements that may appear within the content area include: title bars, headline bars, instructional text, summary information, error messages, forms, data tables, multi-step transactions, and other functional page components. The content area extends across the width of the page to make maximum use of horizontal display space. For detailed information on common components, please see Section 4.0.
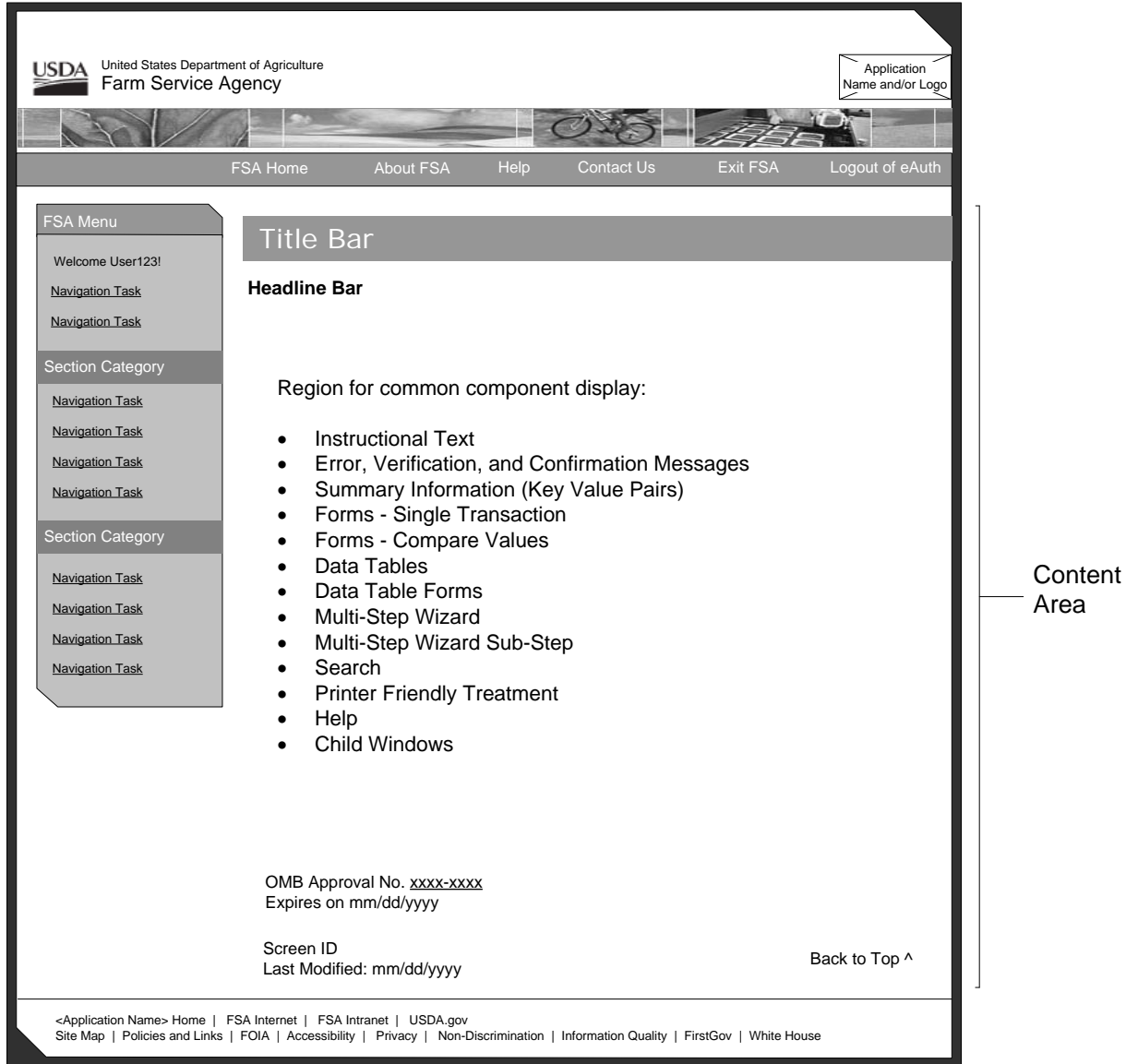
Figure 2-7. Content Area

Guidelines

Title Bars	Title treatment for pages. Every page should have a title bar to help orient users to the overall content category for that page. The title in the title bar should match the topic or section of the application users are within (Topic in top or left navigation bar).
Headline Bars	Designates a section of content on a screen using logical HTML heading levels and may be applied multiple times on a page.
Common Component Display	Depending on screen requirements, may include one or more of the following: Instructional Text, Error, Verification and Confirmation Messages, Summary Information (Key Value Pairs), Forms - Single Transaction, Forms - Compare Values, Data Tables , Data Table

Forms, Multi-Step Wizard, Multi-Step Wizard Sub-Step, Search, Printer Friendly Treatment, Help, and Child Window Display.

OMB Approval No. and Expiration Date	Required <u>only if there is a need</u> for OMB approval. The approval number may link to a child window that displays the public reporting burden language around the collection of information and an expiration date for the approval.
	This applies only if an Information Collection Package is required and needs OMB approval. There are additional, general OMB guidelines for any department or agency information as documented in the *USDA Web Style Guide*, Section 11.
Screen IDs	A unique screen ID assigned to each screen. This serves as a reference for help desk support, when users contact the help desk with an issue or problem. The format for the screen ID is Program + Program Year (If Applicable) + Process + Number. Example: MILC06Apply01.
Back to Top ^	Anchor link at the bottom of each screen that allows users to "jump" back to the top of the page. Required for pages that scroll vertically.
Last Modified:	Date stamp for the homepage and other application pages that display more static, informational content. The date should show users that the content is current, that it has been reviewed within the past 12 months, or that it is a historical document.

3.0 Overall Application Style Guidelines

3.0   Overall Application Style Guidelines

Stylistic standards related to the formatting of font, forms, tables, and other common Web page content display are identified in this section. As such, these standards must be followed when creating application screens.

3.1 Minimum Platforms

At minimum, all application pages must meet the following requirements:

Web Browsers	- All FSA Web Sites and Applications must use valid markup - (X)HTML, CSS, JavaScript, etc. - If the application is to be accessed by internal users, it must be functional and adhere to the FSA look and feel in CCE core-loaded browsers. - If the application is to be accessed by external users, it must be functional and adhere to the FSA look and feel in the most-used browsers.
Coding Standards	The XHTML 1.0 Transitional W3C standards should be adhered to when designing pages. (Note that XHTML is case sensitive and requires that all HTML tags be displayed in lower case.) Users who are not using common browsers may experience minor differences in look and feel, since all browsers do not follow the W3C guidelines to exact specifications for HTML, XML, etc.
Color	The minimum color bit depth should be 16-bit (65,536 colors).
Resolution	All pages must be designed for 800 x 600 pixel screen resolution with consideration for Web browser navigational bar components (i.e., top header icons, status bar, and right side scrollbars).

3.2 Fonts

3.2.1   Font Style

Italics	The use of italics is discouraged. Usability studies have determined that text emphasized with italics is very difficult to read online.
Underline	Do not use an underline to emphasize text on your page. Users expect any underlined text to be a link. As a result, only links should be underlined.
Justification of Text	All text within the application pages should be top and left-justified at a table-cell level. Exceptions include numeric data (right-aligned) and dates (center-aligned) within a data table and form labels (right-aligned).
Bulleted Lists	All bulleted lists should be consistent in appearance. Bullets used in the center content area must be HTML bullets.

Color	Color changes should be kept to a minimum. In general try to avoid the following color combinations for text and background because these are colors that people may have problems reading: Red-Green, Green-Yellow, and Yellow-Blue.
Case	ALL CAPS should only be used for acronyms. Any other text should be displayed in title or sentence case depending on the content type.

3.3 Data Formatting

3.3.1 General

Grammatical	Web site is two words, with the word Web capitalized in all instances.
	'Homepage' is one word.
	The word 'e-mail' is always hyphenated.
Numerical	All numbers are displayed numerically on application pages. The only exception is on content-only pages, where all numbers between zero and nine should be spelled out in their entirety. Any number 10 and above should be displayed numerically.
Symbols, Read-Only Text	Numerical data types should contain the appropriate symbol followed by a space to either the left or right of the value. In data tables (Section 4.3), symbols should be repeated in each cell.

- Currency - Dollar sign "$" appears before the value. Example: $ 100.00
- Percentage - Percent sign "%" appears after the value. Example: 10.00 %
- Debit - Appears as a "DR" after the numeric value. Example: 300.00 DR
- Credit - Appears as a "CR" after the numeric value. Example: 300.00 CR
- Variance - Handled within parenthesis "( )".

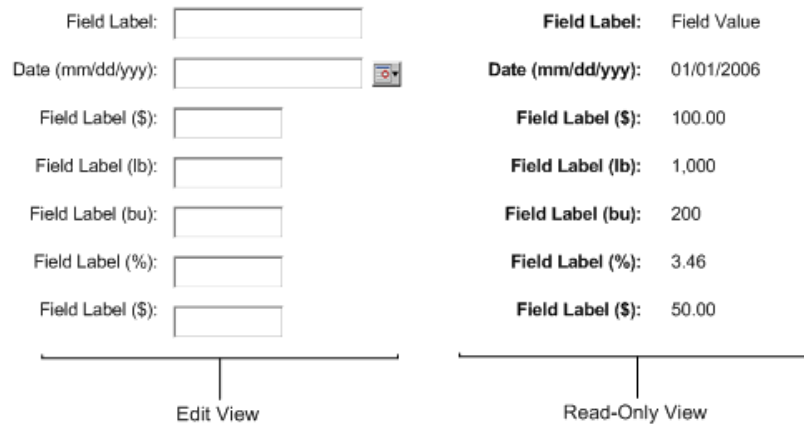| Symbols, Form Controls	Symbols should appear in parenthesis between the field label and colon for read-only and editable form display.

Figure 3-1. Data Formatting - Symbol Display

3.3.2 Acronyms

Standard Acronyms	Standard USDA acronyms may be used for Intranet Web applications, within data table and form displays where space is limited. Acronyms should be used wisely, especially for customer-facing pages. See the following link for a standard acronym list:. http://www.ars.usda.gov/SP2UserFiles/ad_hoc/54000000NPASAC/QuickReference Guide/AcronymsList.pdf
HTML Tag Treatment	The following HTML treatment should be used so users may hover over the acronym title to see the complete acronym meaning: <acronym title="Farm Service Agency">FSA</acronym>.
Content-Rich Pages	For content rich pages, such as learning about the details of a specific program, acronyms must spelled out for the first instance, followed by the acronym within parenthesis.
Navigation	Refrain from using acronyms in navigational components. Exceptions include agency, office, and application names that are widely-known.
Help and Glossary	If acronyms are used, a glossary is required for acronym definitions. This glossary should be linked from within application Help (Section 4.12).

3.3.3 Abbreviations

Standard Abbreviations	Abbreviations are not recommended unless necessary to conserve space, most notably in data table display.
HTML Tag Treatment	The following HTML treatment should be used so users may hover over the abbreviation to see the complete word: <abbrev title="Extension">Ext.</abbrev>.
Content-Rich Pages	For content rich pages, such as learning about the details of a specific program, abbreviations should not be used.
Navigation	Abbreviations should not be used in navigational components.

| Help and Glossary | If abbreviations are used, a Glossary is required. This glossary should be linked from within application Help (Section 4.12). |

3.3.4 Date Format

| Standard Format | Dates should be in MM/DD/YYYY format and include leading zeroes. If the day of the week is required, use the three character abbreviation of the day. Example: 10/10/2005, Sun 10/16/2005 |
| Form Control Display | For form control display, instructional text on date format should appear in parenthesis between the date label and colon. A single text input box may be followed by a calendar widget that displays a more visual view of the calendar. |

Date (mm/dd/yyyy): [_____] 🔧▾

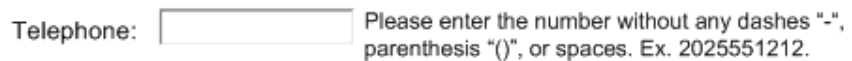**Figure 3-2. Data Formatting - Date Display**

3.3.5 Phone Numbers

Standard Format	All U.S. phone numbers should be listed in a standard format. Example: 202-720-0000.
Extensions	For phone extensions, use the extension abbreviation followed by the numeric extension. Example: 202-720-0000 Ext. 2323.
International	International phone numbers should begin with the country code, followed by the numeric phone number. Example: +91-11-26016821
Form Control Display	For form controls, a single text input box is used, followed by instructional text that instructs users to leave out parenthesis (), spaces, and dashes -.

Telephone: [_____] Please enter the number without any dashes "-", parenthesis "()", or spaces. Ex. 2025551212.

Figure 3-3. Data Formatting - Telephone Display

3.3.6 Time Values

| Standard Format | Time values are displayed in the following format: 01:30:45 p.m. ET. Seconds may not always be necessary. If the time is not 24 hour time, then "a.m." or "p.m." is included. Example: 04:00 p.m. ET. |
| Time Zone | If date stamp is displayed, it should reflect the time zone of the user. |

3.3.7   U.S. States

|	
Read-Only Text	For read-only pages and text display, U.S. states are abbreviated to help conserve space within data table display. Example: AL for Alabama.
Form Control Display	For form control display, U.S. states are spelled out in their entirety.

State: Kansas ▼
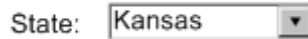
Figure 3-4. Data Formatting - State Display

3.4   Forms

3.4.1   Field Labels and Values

Style	Form fields labels should appear in title case and are followed by a colon ":" Example, First Name:
Font Weight	Field labels are bolded in read-only mode and unbolded when a form is in an editable state. If the form is a mixture of read-only and form controls, field labels are also unbolded.
Field Order	Must be organized in the order in which they should be filled out. When this is not possible, tab indexing (HTML) is required to ensure proper flow of the process. Tab order should follow a top-down and left-right pattern for all input fields, drop-down boxes, and buttons. Cursor focus will be on first field in a form page.
Alignment	Field labels are right-aligned on the page to the associated form control or value. Field labels that are in the form of a question (sentence) may be left-aligned.
Required Fields	Must be clearly noted using an asterisk "*" before the field label. Instructional text should appear before the form that indicates that fields with an asterisk are required. Example, * First Name:
Buttons	Buttons are left aligned to the form control or value column.
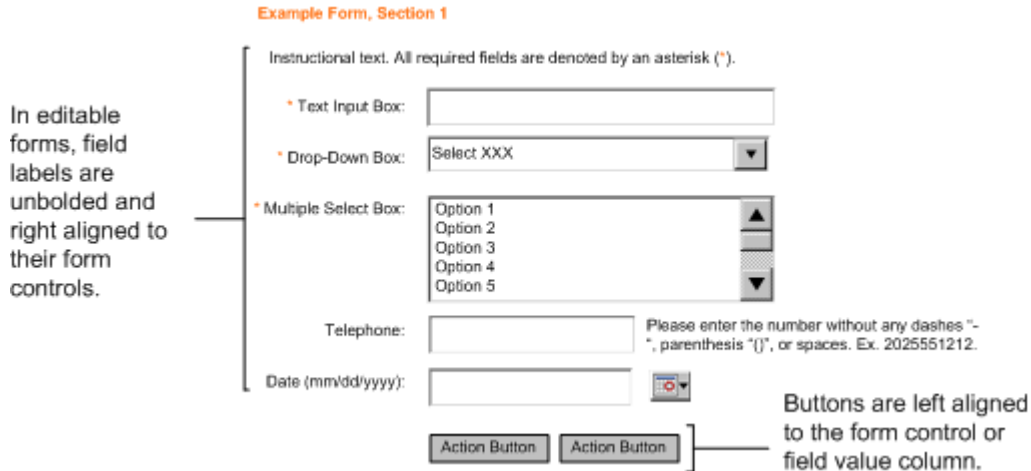
Figure 3-5. Field Label Style - Editable Form
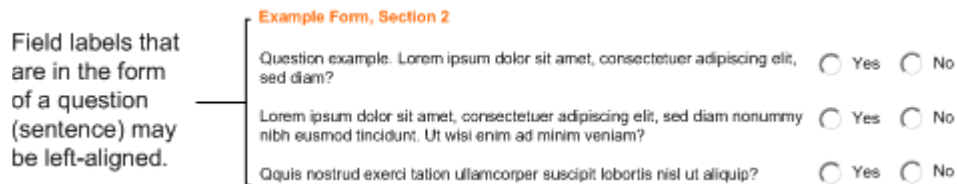
Figure 3-6. Field Label Style - Question Alignment
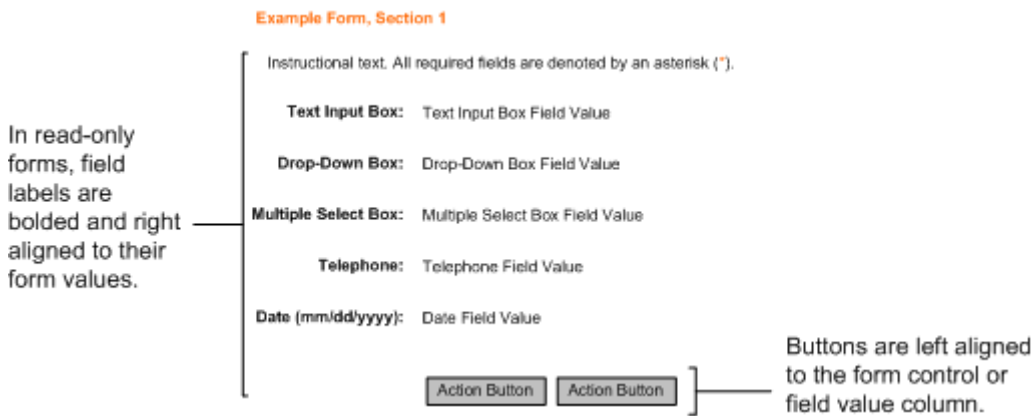
Figure 3-7. Field Label Style - Read Only Form

3.4.2 Form Controls

Radio Buttons

- Represents a mutually exclusive selection.
- May be presented as a list of two or three options which may or may not be selected by default.
- Selecting a new member of the list deselects the currently selected item.
- If the list of options exceeds three, a drop-down list should be used. This does not apply to record selection treatments in data tables (Section 4.3).

	• Radio buttons should not be used as an action button to initiate an action.
Check Boxes	• Represents a set of non-exclusive selections.
	• May be presented as a list two or more options which may or may not have default selections checked.
	• Users may check or uncheck options (turn on or off) without impacting other selections.
	• If the list of options exceeds four, a multiple select box should be used. This does not apply to record selection treatments in data tables (Section 4.3).
	• Select Page, Clear Page, Select All x and Clear All x may be used with check boxes in data tables.
Text Input Boxes	• Single-line field used for entering alphanumeric text.
	• May or may not have a pre-populated value, which is over writable by a user.
Drop-Down Lists	• Single-line box that is expanded by clicking on a downward arrow to view a list of choices.
	• Supports single-selection from a list of existing values for a field, which may or may not have a default selection. If a default value can not be determined, "<Select XXX >" should be used.
	• Drop-down lists may dictate the content of a subsequent drop-down list. For example, selecting a state from within a state drop-down list may impact what counties populate the county drop-down list.
	• Must always be used with an action button. (Should not automatically direct users to another page without clicking on an action button first.)
	• If the number of options is fewer than four, radio buttons should be used.
Multiple Select Boxes	• Multi-line box that scrolls by clicking on directional arrows to view a list of choices.
	• Supports multiple, independent selections from a list of existing values for a field.
	• Will have a default value of five viewable rows.
	• If the number of options is fewer than five, check boxes should be used.
	• Must always be used with an action button.

Text Area

- Multi-line field used for entering free form text.
- The text area should not cause the screen to scroll horizontally.
- Minimum recommended size: Width: Minimum of 25 characters or 26 columns; Height: Minimum of two rows.
- May or may not have a pre-populated value, which is editable by users.
- Should be used in forms ONLY and not as a way to view large amounts of read-only text within a content page.

Data Order

For drop-down and multiple select boxes the order of the items should be:

- Alphanumeric Text – Ascending order.
- Numeric Data – Ascending or descending order depending on requirement.
- Date – Ascending or descending order depending on requirement.
- Months – Sequential order.

Disabling Form Controls

- Form Controls that will never be accessible to the user should not be displayed;
- Form Controls that are not currently accessible, but may be accessible at a later time, should be displayed but disabled (grayed-out).

Figure 3-8. Form Control Display

3.5 Table Display

Tables in Web applications are used to display and select data that is organized in columns and rows. The layout and behavior of tables are controlled through the CSS. This includes cell borders and shading. The table may be displayed in any type of format (PDF, MS Word (RTF), MS Excel, HTML). Section 4.11 contains printing information.

Style	Tables should have borders and border color with no cell padding or spacing.
Alignment	All table cells are left-justified and vertically aligned to the "top" by default. Exceptions include the following: • Numeric data is right justified. • Dates are centered, along with check-boxes and radio buttons used for record selection. • Single character or same value/repeatable data may be centered.
Table Label	Tables should make use of the summary tag and captions to describe the subject matter of the table.
Column Headers	Should have a shaded background color to help differentiate between column headers and cells. The default sort column header of a table will have a slightly darker background color and a sort icon indicator.
Numeric Data	Numeric symbols should be displayed within parenthesis in the column header to indicate data type. Symbols should be repeated within each cell, before or after the data value.
Buttons	Action buttons are left-aligned to the table.

Figure 3-9. Table Display

3.6 Buttons, Hyperlinks and Icons

Buttons, embedded hyperlinks and icons are used to perform an action or navigate between screens within the system. The button label, hyperlink title, and icon metaphor indicate the type of function that will be performed.

3.6.1 Buttons

Buttons are applied when users are asked to specify a command or initiate/conclude a process. They are used to address the primary means to take action on a page.

Button Order	Order by frequency of use from left to right. It is recommended that the most frequently used button is made the default action, i.e., that which is activated when users press the 'Enter' key.
Alignment	Must be left-aligned with the form control or field value on a page. For data tables, buttons are left-aligned to the table. Appears at the bottom of a form or table.
Button Text	Should be succinct and descriptive of the action. Where appropriate it may help to have the base action followed by the task. Example, 'Add Rate'.
Disabling Buttons	Buttons should never be disabled or grayed-out. Rather, if users do not have access to an action, the button should not be displayed.

Button Label	Alt Text	Description
Add or Add <what user is adding>	Alt=Add	Add information to the fields. And/or Adds record.
< Back	Alt=Back one page	Go one page back from the current location. Previous should be used for pagination of a record set.
Calculate	Alt=Calculate data	Calculate specified numeric values. May also appear as a hyperlink, if the action is secondary to a form.
Cancel	Alt=Cancel current action	Stop current action and go back to the previous function. Should prompt users to confirm they want to cancel. Returns users to the page where the action was initiated.
Clear	Alt=Clear fields	Clear fields of all values. This is different from Clear All hyperlink when selecting records in a data table.
Close or Close Window	Alt=Close window	Closes a child window.
Continue or Continue to Next Step	Alt=Continue to next step	Go to the next page in a multi-step process. See Next > under hyperlinks for pagination controls. Do not use Forward.
Delete or Delete <what user is deleting>	Alt=Delete from database	Delete selected information or record from application database. Always prompts users to confirm a delete of a particular record.
Download or Download <what user is downloading>	Alt=Download to device	Download an application file to a user's storage device.
Filter or Filter <what user is filtering>	Alt=Filter	Initiate a search on specific fields within an existing record set.

Modify	Alt=Modify information	Modify application information. May also appear as a hyperlink when used within the multi-step transaction sub step (Section 4.6).
OK	Alt=OK	Agree to take a particular action.
Reset	Alt=Reset fields	Reset fields to the original field values.
Save or Save Draft	Alt=Save data	Save data.
Search or Search <what user is searching>	Alt=Search <what user is searching>	Search within application for user-specified data.
Submit <what user is submitting> or <obvious description of the action plus what user is submitting>	Alt=Submit data and go to next function	Save data to the server and proceed to next function. Examples: Submit Form XYZ or Approve Form XYZ

Table 1. List of Recommended Buttons

3.6.2 Hyperlinks

Hyperlinks are used to link to another place in the same page or to an entirely different page. This includes hyperlinks to another page, anchor links, and navigating among record set results. To help differentiate between many actions that may carry different levels of importance, Hyperlinks may also be used for calling functions. Examples include sorting data in a column and selecting or clearing records within a data table.

Colors   HTML text links are always blue (#000099). The hover state of all HTML text links on the site is always underlined. Visited text links are always purple (#660099).

Underline   Always refrain from removing the underline on hyperlinks. Users expect underlined text to be links. (This does not apply to top and left navigation treatments within the design template.) Never make links blink or marquee.

Hyperlink Title	Title Text	Description
Next >	Title=Go to next page	For pagination record set controls, (Section 4.3) it appears as a hyperlink to allow users to navigate between record set results. Use "Continue to Next Step" button when navigating between pages within a multi-step transaction.

< Previous	Title=Go to previous page	For pagination record set controls, (Section 4.3), it appears as a hyperlink to allow users to navigate between record set results. "< Back" button would be used in a multi-step transaction.
Select Page or Select All *x*	Title=Select all records on page	Allows users to select a series of records through check boxes within a record set. Clicking on Select Page will check all check boxes on a single page of a record set. Clicking on Select All x will check all check boxes on all record set pages.
Clear Page or Clear All *x*	Title=Unselect all records on page	Allows users to de-select a series of records through check boxes within a record set. Clicking on Clear Page will uncheck all check boxes on a single page of a record set. Clicking on Clear All x will uncheck all check boxes on all record set pages.
<Look Up Name> Look Up >>	Title=Launch new lookup window	Launches a child look-up window that may allow users to search or view supplemental information to a page.
Modify	Title=Modify information	Used within the multi-step transaction sub step (Section 4.6).
Calculate	Title=Recalculate data on page.	Allows users to recalculate data on a page.

Table 2. List of Common Hyperlinks

3.6.3   Icons

Icons are used as a visual, graphic representation of an object, word, or concept. Within FSA applications, they are reserved for specific functions such as launching printer friendly or context sensitive help in a new browser window.

Icon	Alt Text	Description
Help	Title=Launch Help	Launches a new browser window with context sensitive Help content. (Section 4.12) Icon includes graphic and text.
Printer Friendly	Title=Launch Printer Friendly Page	Launches a new browser window with a printer friendly version of a page. (Section 4.11)

		Icon includes graphic and text.

Table 3. List of Icons

3.7 Other Guidance

3.7.1 Frames

Frames are not allowed in FSA Web applications. This includes creating printer friendly pages and other page treatments. Application pages should not be loaded into frames of other Web sites. A script should be provided to detect when and if this happens. The script will be responsible for breaking the page in question out of the confines of the frame.

3.7.2 Images

To minimize download times and keep graphics from affecting page performance, minimal use of graphics is recommended. Where images are used on a page, the height, width, and alt attributes of each HTML image tag must be specified. There are two possible types of imagery that may be displayed within FSA applications: photographical images and non-photographical images such as charts, graphs, and icons. For photographical images, the file format is JPEG. For non-photographical images, the file format is GIF. Image quality compression should be at medium level. The minimum dots per inch (dpi) requirement is 72. All colors should be in RGB, not CMYK. A one pixel border is required around all photographical images. Non-photographical images should have a one-pixel border where appropriate.

3.7.3 Alternative File Formats

For alternative file formats, all links to non-Web information that are application-dependent must display the file format name. If the size of the file is known, the file size should be displayed as well. Alternative file formats must open in a new browser window. Example: Link text (PDF; 1.3Mb). To meet accessibility requirements (Section 3.9.1), when a Web page requires a plug-in or that another application be present for users to access content, the page must provide a link to that particular plug-in or application.

3.8 Performance

From a presentation layer perspective, there are steps that should be considered to help improve overall application performance. These include not only page response times, but user satisfaction around logical access to key tasks and overall usability.

3.8.1 Response Times

The recommended guidelines, taking into consideration those factors that are within the control of application teams, for response times are:

- 3 to 5 seconds - Ideal response time. Users do not sense any interruption.
- 10 seconds - Maximum response time. The user experience is interrupted and users could potentially leave the application.

To help reduce response times and improve access to key system tasks, it is important to optimize Web page code and graphic content. For HTML code, omit redundant tags, attributes, and white space (spaces, tabs, and returns). To speed the rendering of tables, declare the

appropriate attributes for table and column widths. Page styles and formatting should be maintained within the cascading style sheet (CSS). All graphics should be reduced in size and contain height and width tags.

3.8.2 Three Click Rule

The three click rule is based on the principle that users should not be more than three clicks away from key application tasks, processes, or content. The primary starting point is often considered the application homepage, however primary navigation pages are also used to measure steps to access. The three click rule is not mandatory, but rather a useful guideline that helps define overall site navigation levels and minimize steps necessary to perform application tasks.

3.8.3 Usability

Usability is the overall measurement of the satisfaction of interactions users have with a Web site or application. It addresses how satisfied users might be upon using an application, based on how quickly tasks and goals are recognized or met. Usability impacts performance to the degree that users can easily navigate between pages and seamlessly interact with core application functionality. Questions to consider for usability:

- Ease of Learning - Can new users that have never seen the site, understand, navigate, and find information easily?
- Efficiency of Use - How fast can experienced users complete a task?
- Memorability - Can users revisit the site without having to "relearn" the site?
- Frequency of Errors – Do users make errors often? If so, can users recover from errors quickly?
- Improving the quality of the user experience, especially within Web-based applications, can provide users with a high level of satisfaction and control.

3.9 Accessibility Considerations

3.9.1 Section 508

Section 508, Accessibility Guidelines (amendments to the Federal Rehabilitation Act), implemented in June 2001, requires Federal agencies to make their Web sites accessible to people with disabilities. Section 508 contains 16 specific technical requirements for Web sites. These are outlined below with links to additional learning materials. See the 508 Accessibility Information Center web site at http://intranet.fsa.usda.gov/kcstl/508/guidelines.asp for more information on Section 508, including testing options. Note that frames are mentioned, however, frames are not allowed in FSA applications.

Below is a summary of § 1194.22 Web-based intranet and internet information and applications:

Alternative ("Alt") Text	(a) A text equivalent for every non-text element shall be provided (e.g., via "alt", "longdesc", or in element content).
	Provide a descriptive text equivalent for every non-text element (like images, audio clips, buttons, etc.).
	Example: HTML Source Code: <img src="art/logo-USDA.gif"

alt="USDA Logo">

Multimedia Presentations	(b) Equivalent alternatives for any multimedia presentation shall be synchronized with the presentation.
	Provide captions for audio/video presentations that are synchronized with the presentation so that the caption reader can associate body language with the speech.
Color and Meaning	(c) Web pages shall be designed so that all information conveyed with color is also available without color, for example from context or markup.
	Color should not be the only way that page elements and controls (for example, buttons that activate new windows) are identified. Provide "alt" text or other context-sensitive information along with the color cue.
Readability and Style Sheets	(d) Documents shall be organized so they are readable without requiring an associated style sheet.
	Organize documents so that they are readable without an associated style sheet.
Server-Side Image Maps	(e) Redundant text links shall be provided for each active region of a server-side image map.
	Server-side image maps are not accessible. For each active region of a server-side image map, provide redundant text links elsewhere on the page. If possible, replace any server-side maps with client-side ones (see next item).
Client-Side Image Maps	(f) Client-side image maps shall be provided instead of server-side image maps except where the regions can not be defined with an available geometric shape.
	Use client-side instead of server-side maps, because they are accessible if you provide "alt" text for each link that describes links within each active region of the map.
	Example: <map id="homemap"><area shape="rect" coords="65,10,10,48" href="http://www.usda.gov" alt="USDA logo link to usda.gov" title="USDA logo link to usda.gov"/></map>
Data Tables – Headers	(g) Row and column headers shall be identified for data tables.
	Identify all row and column headers in data tables.
Data Tables – Cells	(h) Markup shall be used to associate data cells and header cells for data tables that have two or more logical levels of row or column headers.
	Add extra attributes (summary, scope, and caption) to source code that associates the data within each cell to its corresponding

row and column headers.

Frames	(i) Frames shall be titled with text that facilitates frame identification and navigation.
	Provide titles for frames to facilitate frame identification and navigation. (Note in Section 3.7.1 that frames are not allowed in FSA applications.)
Screen Flicker	(j) Pages shall be designed to avoid causing the screen to flicker with a frequency greater than 2 Hz and lower than 55 Hz.
	Pages should not flicker, blink, or flash within certain high intensity frequencies. Screen flicker can trigger seizures for some people with photosensitive epilepsy.
Text-Only Pages	(k) A text-only page, with equivalent information or functionality, shall be provided to make a Web site comply with the provisions of this part, when compliance can not be accomplished in any other way. The content of the text-only page shall be updated whenever the primary page changes.
	Use a text-only page, with equivalent information and/or functions, only if there is no other way to comply with the Web accessibility requirements.
	Example: HTML source code: <div ID="textonly"> <p><a HREF="../textonly/default.asp">Text Only </p></div>
Readability and Scripts	(l) When pages utilize scripting languages to display content, or to create interface elements, the information provided by the script shall be identified with functional text that can be read by assistive technology.
	Developers who create scripts or programs – like JavaScript, Java, etc. -- to display Web page content or create an interface must include functional text within those scripts or programs that is accessible to assistive technology devices.
	An application must degrade gracefully when JavaScript is disabled. It is acceptable for an application to require the use of JavaScript, but it must be able to indicate this requirement.
Plugins	(m) When a Web page requires that an applet, plug-in or other application be present on the client system to interpret page content, the page must provide a link to a plug-in or applet that complies with §1194.21(a) through (l).
	For every page that contains downloadable content which can only be read using a plug-in (like a PDF that requires the Adobe Reader), include a link to the location of the plug-in. Additionally, confirm that the plug-in itself is accessible to people with

disabilities before using it.

Online Forms	(n) When electronic forms are designed to be completed on-line, the form shall allow people using assistive technology to access the information, field elements, and functionality required for completion and submission of the form, including all directions and cues.

Add extra attributes to source code that let users with assistive technology access all form information, fill in all fields, trigger all functions, and otherwise follow all directions and cues needed to complete and submit the form.

Use the <LABEL> Tag and Associated "FOR" Attribute to Tag Labels. Identify the exact words that you want to use as the label for the form element and enclose those words in a <LABEL> tag. Use the "FOR" attribute to uniquely identify that element. Use the "ID" Attribute in the Associated Form Element. Every form element supports the "ID" attribute. By setting this attribute to the identifier used in the "FOR" attribute of the associated <LABEL> tag, you "tie" that form element to its associated label.

Navigation Links	(o) A method shall be provided that permits users to skip repetitive navigation links.

Add extra attributes to source code that provide a way for users with assistive technology to skip repetitive navigation links (for example, a navigation bar that is used on every page) and jump directly to the main content areas of the page.

Timed Responses	(p) When a timed response is required, users shall be alerted and given sufficient time to indicate more time is required.

Sometimes, for security, pages that solicit information from customers are designed to expire within a certain timeframe if a response is not received. Add extra attributes to source code that alert users about the timed response and give them sufficient opportunity to indicate if they need more time to complete and submit their information.

3.9.2   JavaScript

The FSA has relaxed its stance on JavaScript usage. However, FSA's direction is controlled usage.

JavaScript shall not be used in a way that:
- compromises security
- violates Section 508
- violates the reference architecture (for example, no business logic in the JavaScript)

- replaces server-side validation in the Business layer. When JavaScript is disabled, the application must still be secure.

It is acceptable for an application to require the use of JavaScript, but the application shall make this requirement known. For example, the application shall detect when JavaScript is disabled and display an error message stating that requirement.

All uses of Asynchronous JavaScript and Extensible Markup Language (AJAX) shall be approved with an architectural decision signed by the FSA Enterprise Applications Architect. The architectural decision shall contain the approach for conformance to the following requirements.

- AJAX shall be Section 508 compliant.
- AJAX shall not create any additional vulnerability such as Cross-Site Scripting (XSS).
- The server side AJAX endpoint shall be protected by eAuth and Extensible Authorization System (EAS) at the same level as the Web page that utilizes it.

4.0 UE Common Page Elements

4.0   UE Common Page Elements

UE common components represent a baseline of reusable page components that populate the content region (Section 2.5) of FSA applications.

4.1 Forms – Single Transaction

Forms – single transaction are available for unidirectional processes where users must perform a specific action on a single record. It allows for the re-use of a single screen for creating and editing a record. Based on user inputs, a confirmation may appear that prompts users to confirm any data entry updates or new submissions.

Guidelines

Page Element	Form with field labels, form controls, and action buttons.
Task	Allows users to enter new, update existing, save, cancel, or submit data through a single form to the system.
Functionality	• Forms may have both read-only and editable states which are changed by an action.

- Form fields may or may not have required fields, which are designated by an asterisk *.
- Where possible, data in forms is pre-populated.
- Form controls within forms should follow recommendations listed in Section 3.4.2.
- If possible, forms should not be longer than 2 vertical scrolls.
- Forms may use a single column format (Attribute/Form Control) or two column format (Attribute/Form Control, Attribute/Form Control).
- Action buttons are used to initiate/conclude the process.
- Clicking on cancel takes users back to the page where the transaction was initiated and cancels any data entered.
- Error messages are displayed at the top of each form, based on validation and business rules.
- For forms that require a confirmation page, the confirmation page will present the read-only version of the form immediately after the editable version of the form.

Cycling Through Series of Forms

- If needed, users may have the ability to cycle through a series of records (selected from a data table) in order to apply different changes to each record.
- Record pagination is displayed when selecting multiple forms that read <Record Type> x of x.
- < Back, Continue to Next Record, Skip Record, and Cancel will appear as buttons when cycling through several forms.

- Clicking cancel when cycling through several forms, takes users back to the page where the transaction was initiated and cancels all changes to the selected records. Users should be prompted to confirm that they want to cancel and are notified that they will lose any changes made to the selected records.

Other

- The summary information component may appear above the form, to represent related key value pairs.

- Instructional text should appear before the form and provide a brief description of the form purpose.

- In some instances, users may wish to see updates to numerical data based on input to the form. A calculate or other descriptive action may be used to reload the data with an updated view.

- Form patterns should address instances where users may select the browser back button to leave and return to the form.

- Form patterns must follow Section 508 compliance rules.

The summary information component may appear above the form, to represent related key value pairs.

Instructional text should appear before the form and provide a brief description of the form purpose.

Form fields may or may not have required fields, which are designated by an asterisk *.

In pages where the form is the primary purpose of the page, the left navigation is optional.

Action buttons are used to initiate/conclude the process.

Figure 4-1. Form – Single Column

The summary information component may appear above the form, to represent related key value pairs.

Instructional text should appear before the form and provide a brief description of the form purpose.

Form fields may or may not have required fields, which are designated by an asterisk *.

In pages where the form is the primary purpose of the page, the left navigation is optional.

Action buttons are used to initiate/conclude the process.

Figure 4-2. Form - Two Columns

If needed, users may have the ability to cycle through a series of records (selected from a data table) in order to apply different changes to each record.

Action buttons are used to initiate/conclude the process. For multiple records selected, this include the ability to skip a record and navigate back and forward through records.

Figure 4-3. Form – Cycle Through

4.2 Forms – Compare Values

Forms – compare values allow users to view existing values in a record and enter new values in an adjacent column. In this instance, the form may have column headers to designate the existing from the new.

Guidelines

Page Element	Form with field labels, form controls, and action buttons.
Task	Allows users to view existing data while entering new, updating existing, saving, canceling, or submitting data through a single form to the system.
Functionality	• Inherits all the functionality of the forms-single transaction (4.1). • May have column headers to distinguish between the existing value (read-only) and new value (form control).
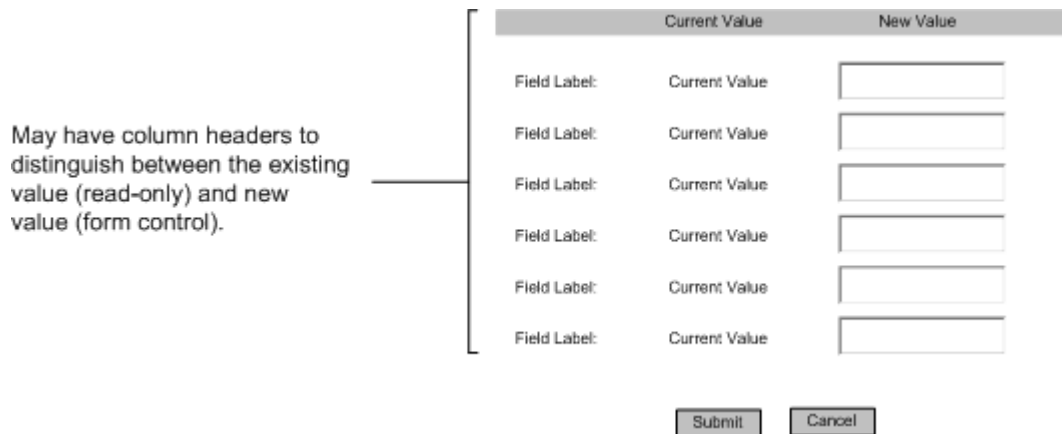
Figure 4-4. Form - Compare Values

4.3 Data Tables

A data table organizes and presents system data elements in columns and rows within tables, to allow users to make a decision or take an action on a particular data set. The base data table is a table with no functionality other than display. Depending on requirements, the data table may also have the following component functionality: pagination controls, sorting, filtering, and record selection controls/action buttons.

Guidelines

Page Element	Data table that may/may not have functionality to manipulate data display.
Task	Allows users to view data in a tabular format. Users may also have the ability to sort, filter, and select particular rows to take an action.
Functionality	• Consists of a table with columns and rows. • Data tables should have a caption or table title that describes the data within the table.

- Every data table should have a defined default sort.
- Column headers may never be hyperlinked to other records in the system.
- Data in table rows may be hyperlinked to other records in the system.
- Data in tables may have a subtotal and/or total row as the last row in the data table.
- It is recommended that all data within cells is text. Images may be used as an icon indicator (Alert) or to link to a GIS image.
- All data tables must follow guidelines for meeting Section 508 compliance.

Pagination Controls

- Used on data tables to control the length of the list.
- Automatic pagination based on the number of rows displayed.
- Appears above and below data tables.
- The total number of records is displayed at the top of the data table, with an indicator for the record set currently being viewed. Users have the option of selecting how many items appear in the record set using a drop-down in increments of 10, 25, 50, 75 and 100. Example: "1 to 10 of 30 Records Found" where 10 is selected within a drop-down.
- When navigating between record set pages, use < Previous and Next > with individual page links in between, recognizing that the individual page links may be in increments of 10. If the record set is fewer than 10, then all page links will be displayed. For the first or last page in a record set, the previous or next link will not be hyperlinked.
  Example: < Previous 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 Next >,
  < Previous 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 Next >

Sorting

- Allows users to sort text and numbers in either ascending or descending order within a data table column.
- Sortable data columns have hyperlinked column headers that, when clicked, re-sort an entire record set based on that particular column's criteria.
- A visual indicator or icon is applied to indicate whether the sort order is ascending or descending.
- The default sort column header cell background will use a darker shade of color to help indicate the default sort. Text above the table, inline with the pagination controls will also indicate the default sort. Example: Default Sort=County.
- Users sort selections should persist throughout all records. This is important if the results list is paginated. That means the sort will have to persist throughout multiple record sets.

Filtering

- Users can apply filters on columns of data to further narrow the results of a record set.
- Filters correspond to one or more columns of data in the data table and are represented by form controls above the data table in a form.
- A filter is initiated by an action button.
- Users must be provided with a means to return to the original result set.

Record Selection Controls/Action Buttons

- Check boxes or radio buttons may be associated with each row in a data table. These enables users to select, perform, a certain action on a particular row or set of rows.
- If check boxes or radio buttons are used for selection, they must always appear the first column of the list.
- Select Page, Clear Page, Select All x, and Clear All x are available for check box selections. They appear as hyperlinked text to differentiate functionality from that of action buttons. Example: Select Page | Clear Page | Select All 50 | Clear All 50
- Record set selections must be carried through record set pages.
- Action buttons may be associated with selected records that allow users to perform a particular task. These are left-aligned to the table.

Pagination controls are used to control the length of the data table.

Sortable data columns have hyperlinked column headers that, when clicked, re-sort an entire record set based on that particular column's criteria.

Record selection controls (check box or radio button) and action buttons enable users to select and perform a certain action on a particular row or set of rows.

Section Heading

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetuer adipiscing elit, sed diam. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetuer adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volputate. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam,

Show [10 ▼] of 50 Records Found   Default Sort: Column Name   < Previous 1 2 3 4 5 Next >

Data Table Title					
Select	Default Sort ▲▼	Header ($)	Header	Header	Header (%)	Header
☐	Value	$ 0.00	Value	Mon 09/01/2005	00.00 %	Value
☐	Value	$ 0.00	Value	Tue 10/25/2005	00.00 %	Value
☐	Value	$ 0.00	Value	Wed 08/30/2005	00.00 %	Value
☐	Value	$ 0.00	Value	Thu 11/25/2005	00.00 %	Value
☐	Value	$ 0.00	Value	Fri 12/03/2005	00.00 %	Value
☐	Value	$ 0.00	Value	Sat 01/31/2006	00.00 %	Value
☐	Value	$ 0.00	Value	Sun 04/28/2006	00.00 %	Value
☐	Value	$ 0.00	Value	Mon 10/10/2005	00.00 %	Value
☐	Value	$ 0.00	Value	Tue 11/11/1006	00.00 %	Value
☐	Value	$ 0.00	Value	Wed 12/25/2006	00.00 %	Value

Select Page | Clear Page | Select All 50 | Clear All 50   < Previous 1 2 3 4 5 Next >

[Action Button]

Figure 4-5. Data Table with Pagination & Record Set Controls

4.4 Data Table Forms

Data table forms are application data tables that support data input within specified cells. This form organizes and presents both readable and writable system data elements in columns and rows within tables that allow users to make a decision or take an action on a particular data set.

Guidelines

Page Element   Data table display with form controls for changing data.

Task   Allows users to view editable data in a tabular format.

Functionality
- Consists of a table with columns and rows.
- Data table forms should have a caption or table title that describes the data within the table.
- Every data table form should have a defined default sort.
- Column headers are never hyperlinked to other records in the system.
- Data in data table rows may be hyperlinked to other records in the system.
- The following form controls (Section 3.4.2) may be used in a data table form: radio button, check box, drop-down, multiple select box, text input, and text area.
- Data table forms are not sortable or filterable.
- There are no pagination controls for data table forms.
- In some instances, users may wish to see updates to numerical data based on input to the list form. A calculate or other descriptive action may be used to reload the data with an updated view.
- All data table forms must follow guidelines for meeting Section 508 compliance.

Figure 4-6. Data Table Form

4.5 Multi-Step Wizard

The multi-step wizard serves as a visual framework whereby several components (forms and data tables) are applied to a process that requires users to navigate through multiple screens to complete a task.

Guidelines

Page Element	Data tables and forms with field labels, form controls, and action buttons.
Task	Allows users to navigate through a more complex series of forms in a manageable set of steps to complete a business process.
Functionality	- The multi-step wizard page uses a visual treatment to highlight the steps involved in the process. - Steps within the multi-step wizard are displayed vertically in the left column of the screen. - The step treatment may act as a local navigation for the transaction process. Steps and sub steps may be hyperlinked within the step treatment to allow users to navigate freely through steps. If needed, the status of the step (whether it is complete or incomplete) is indicated in the step visual treatment. - Important items in the multi-step process include the visual step indicator, instructional text to let users know what step they are on out of x steps, and proper/consistent use of buttons. - The following button navigation guidelines should be applied: **Continue to Next Step -** Takes users to the next step in the process. < **Back -** Takes users to the prior step. **Cancel -** Cancels transaction and takes users back to the page where the action was initiated. **Save Draft** - Saves draft of the transaction. **<Submit>** - Appears on last or final step in process. Should use button text that provides an obvious description of the action plus what users are submitting. - Multi-step wizards should address instances where users may select the browser back button to navigate between steps or leave and return to a step in the transaction. - Considerations on validation and navigation should be made for sequential vs. non-sequential processes.
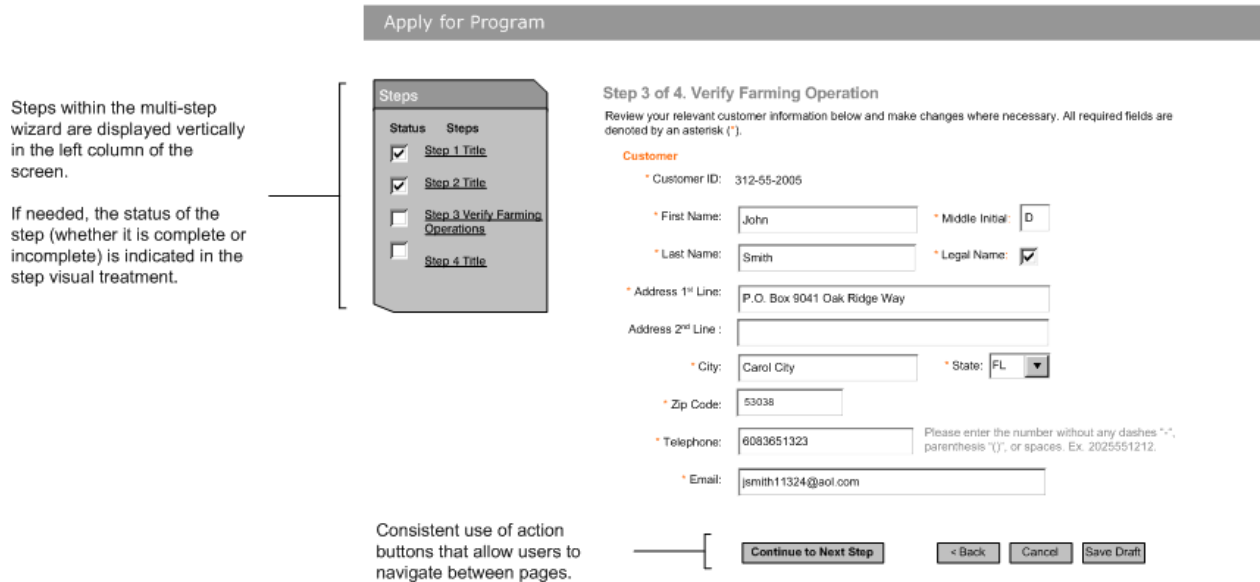
Figure 4-7. Multi-Step Wizard

4.6 Multi-Step Wizard Sub-Step

The multi-step wizard sub-step provides the ability for users to add, edit, or remove data from a series of like data within a transaction.

Guidelines

Page Element	Data tables and forms with field labels, form controls, and action buttons.
Task	Allows users to add, edit, or delete specific data within a step in the multi-step process.
Functionality	• A form-single transaction or data table form appears above the related data to allow users to Add or Modify data.
	• The related data is displayed within a data table.
	• Each row in the data table provides users with the option to Modify or Delete a row of data. The Modify and Delete options always appear in the last column of the data table and appear in Title Case.
	• Clicking on a Modify hyperlink within the data table, pre-populates the related form and allows users to make changes.
	• Clicking on Delete prompts users to confirm the removal of that data from the transaction.
	• Users complete the form above the data table to Add a new row of data to the record set.
	• The default action buttons associated with the form include Add and Reset. The Add button changes to Modify when users select to modify a row of data.
	• All forms and data tables must follow guidelines for meeting

Section 508 compliance.

Figure 4-8. Sub-Step – Add

Figure 4-9. Sub-Step – Modify

4.7 Search

Guidelines

Page Element	Form with action buttons and data table with results data.
Task	Allows users to search on a specific data set by entering data into two or more form fields, submit a query using an action button, and browse a list of results.
Functionality	Search Form
	• The advanced search component consists of a search form with

two or more searchable attributes and "Search" and "Clear" action buttons.

- Shorter search forms should use a single column format (Attribute/Form Control). Longer search pages may apply a two column format (Attribute/Form Control, Attribute/Form Control).
- If the search query returns no results, a message is displayed at the top of the search form that relays such information.
- If the search query returns a single result, users are taken to the details of that record rather than the results list.
- If the search query returns two or more results, users are taken to the results list.
- A limit is set on the number of results returned for a query that prompts users to refine their search.

Results List

- A hyperlink is available above the results list that allows users to navigate back to the search form to execute a new search.
- The search query appears at the top of the results list. For multiple queries, the last or relevant query to the list is displayed. Some queries may be too long.
- See data table pattern (Section 4.3) for all attributes associated with a data table list, including pagination controls, sorting, filtering, and record selection functionality.
- All forms and data tables must follow guidelines for meeting Section 508 compliance.

Select the Type of Rates Detailed Listing to View

Choose from the options below to create a detailed listing of rates:

State: Kansas

County: Barton

SSAID:

MUSYM:

Search   Clear

Figure 4-10. Search Form

Browse Rates

Below is a detailed listing of rates from the State and County you selected.

Your Request: State = Kansas, County=Barton, SSAID=KS009, MUSYM=All

New Rate Search

Show 10 ▼ of 30 Records Found   Default Sort: Column Name   < Previous 1 2 3 Next >

Data Table Title

Select	Default Sort ▼	Header ($)	Header	Header	Header (%)	Header
☐	Value	$ 0.00	Value	Mon 09/01/2005	00.00 %	Value
☐	Value	$ 0.00	Value	Tue 10/25/2005	00.00 %	Value
☐	Value	$ 0.00	Value	Wed 08/30/2005	00.00 %	Value
☐	Value	$ 0.00	Value	Thu 11/25/2005	00.00 %	Value
☐	Value	$ 0.00	Value	Fri 12/03/2005	00.00 %	Value
☐	Value	$ 0.00	Value	Mon 09/01/2005	00.00 %	Value
☐	Value	$ 0.00	Value	Tue 10/25/2005	00.00 %	Value
☐	Value	$ 0.00	Value	Wed 08/30/2005	00.00 %	Value
☐	Value	$ 0.00	Value	Thu 11/25/2005	00.00 %	Value
☐	Value	$ 0.00	Value	Fri 12/03/2005	00.00 %	Value

Select Page | Clear Page | Select All 30 | Clear All 30   < Previous 1 2 3 Next >

[Action Button]

Figure 4-11. Search Results

4.8 Summary Information (Key Value Pairs)

Summary information addresses customer, land, or other key value pair (field label/value) information that precedes data on a page. It is often used in cases where the same information is displayed to users over a series of related pages.

Guidelines

Page Element	Table that displays key value pairs.
Task	Allows users to visually orient themselves to a particular account or record via summary data.
Functionality	• Summary information is displayed using a table with a border only (no cell borders). • The table should have a caption or table title that describes the type of summary information that is within the table. • Tables may display up to three key value pairs within a row. (Attribute/Value Attribute/Value Attribute/Value) • Content within the summary component is grouped logically, top-down and left-right. • Summary labels and associated values inherit form label read-only display features. Labels are right-aligned to their values, bold, and end with a colon ":". • Summary information may persist throughout one or more application screens.

Figure 4-12. Summary Information

4.9 Instructional Text

Instructional text provides additional guidance and instruction to users on system screens. It should support the goal or guide users on "What to Do" for a particular page.

Guidelines

Page Element	Content
Task	Provides users with guidance on completing a task.
Functionality	• Instructional text appears below the summary information or page title (if there is no summary) and above a form or data table. • Unlike error and verification/confirmation messages, instructional text is embedded in the page and will not be called from a message catalog. • Instructional text may follow two styles: 1) Informative or 2) Interview Style.

Figure 4-13. Instructional Text – Informative

Other Farming Interests

Does the individual, individual's spouse, or individual's minor children have any interest in a farming operation that is conducted under any name?

○ Yes

    ☐ Individual has other farming interests.

    ☐ Individual's spouse has other farming interests.

    ☐ One or more of the individual's minor children has other farming interests.

○ **No** Individual, including spouse and minor children, do not have other farming interests.

Figure 4-14. Instructional Text - Interview Style

4.10 Error, Verification, and Confirmation Messages

Error, verification, and confirmation messages are used to provide consistent and effective messages, feedback, and guidance to users. They should be dynamically delivered through the system interface and defined in a common message catalog.

Guidelines

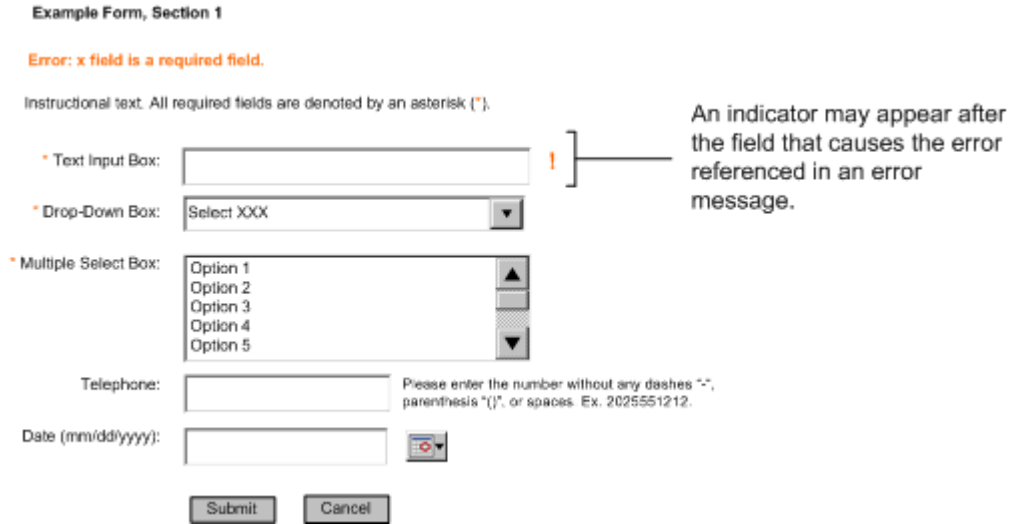| Page Element	Content
Task	Provide consistent and effective messages, feedback, and guidance to users.
Behavior	- Messages appear as an inline message at the top of a page. - Common message types include error, warning, informational, and confirmation. The message type should appear before the message, followed by a colon. For example, Error: Please enter your name. - Color may be used to differentiate message type. Error and warning messages should appear in red, while informational and confirmation messages should appear in blue. - Messages must be informative, explicit, and understandable by users. For error messages, avoid technical jargon and system-generated error codes. - Field-level error messages may also have a corresponding exclamation point indicator that appears after the form control of the field that is causing an error. - If more than one error message is displayed at the same time, only the first one is required to include "Error:" at the beginning. - Severe errors (HTTP), such as a network failure, should forward users to a custom error page.

Example Form, Section 1

Error: x field is a required field.

Instructional text. All required fields are denoted by an asterisk (*).

* Text Input Box:

* Drop-Down Box: Select XXX

* Multiple Select Box: Option 1 / Option 2 / Option 3 / Option 4 / Option 5

Telephone: Please enter the number without any dashes "-", parenthesis "()", or spaces. Ex. 2025551212.

Date (mm/dd/yyyy):

Submit   Cancel

An indicator may appear after the field that causes the error referenced in an error message.

Figure 4-15. Error Display

4.11 Printing

Guidelines

Page Element	Icon, Content
Task	Allows users to print a printer-friendly version of content.
Functionality	• Print functionality allows users to print "Printer-Friendly" pages from their Web browser.
	• Users may click on a visual indicator or icon (Table 3) to print a printer friendly page.
	• The printer-friendly page will open in a child window with limited tool bar functionality.
	• Pages in printer-friendly format should not include any elements within the page construct (2.0).
	• The generated printer-friendly page should not use frames (Section 3.7.1).
	• If possible, printer-friendly formats should have a one inch margin all around. Exceptions include extensive summary or report pages.
	• Printing format may be PDF, MS Word (RTF), MS Excel, HTML

United States Department of Agriculture
Farm Service Agency

Application Logo

| FSA Home | About FSA | Help | Contact Us | Exit FSA | Logout of eAuth |

FSA Menu

Welcome User123!

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

Section Category

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

Section Category

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

Page Title

Printer Friendly

Confirmation Message: You transaction was successfully submitted and assigned transaction ID 12345. Please print a copy of your transaction for your records.

Section Title

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Section Title

Lorem ipsum dolor sit ut laoreet dolore magn tation ullamcorper sus iriure dolor in hendreri facilisis at vero eros et augue duis dolore te f

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Users may click on a visual indicator or icon to print a printer friendly page.

Pop-Up Window Title

Section Title

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetuer adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh eusmod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volputate. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exerci tation ullamcorper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis autem vel eum iriure dolor in hendrerit in vulputate velit esse molestie consequat, vel illum dolore eu feugiat nulla facilisis at vero eros et accumsan et iusto odio dignissim qui blandit praesent luptatum zzril delenit augue duis dolore te feugait facilisi.

Section Title

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Section Title

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Figure 4-16. Printer Friendly Pages

4.12 Help

Guidelines

|	
Page Element	Icon, Content
Task	Allows users to access general or context sensitive system help.
Functionality	• Multiple help functions exist in the application: general and context sensitive help.

General Help

- Clicking on Help in the top navigation bar (Figure 4-17) links to a page within the application that contains general information on Help.

- Help is launched in a new browser window, so users can read help and keep their place within the system.

- The Help browser window has a complementary color schema to the main application template and limited toolbar functionality.

- The Help browser window inherits the application masthead and has a persistent navigation treatment for Help related topics such as links to acronyms, glossary, user guide, and common questions.

- Pages within the Help browser window may also contain a secondary navigation level treatment and content area. A footer is not required for Help.

Context Sensitive Help

- Clicking on a Help icon (Table 3) within the transactional pages of the system generates context sensitive Help for the particular page or section (Figure 4-18).

- Context sensitive Help will use the same window as general Help (inherit all specified functionality), but open within the context of the page users are on.

- The Help treatment may be a visual indicator or icon (Table 3) that will be inline with the section header for that page.
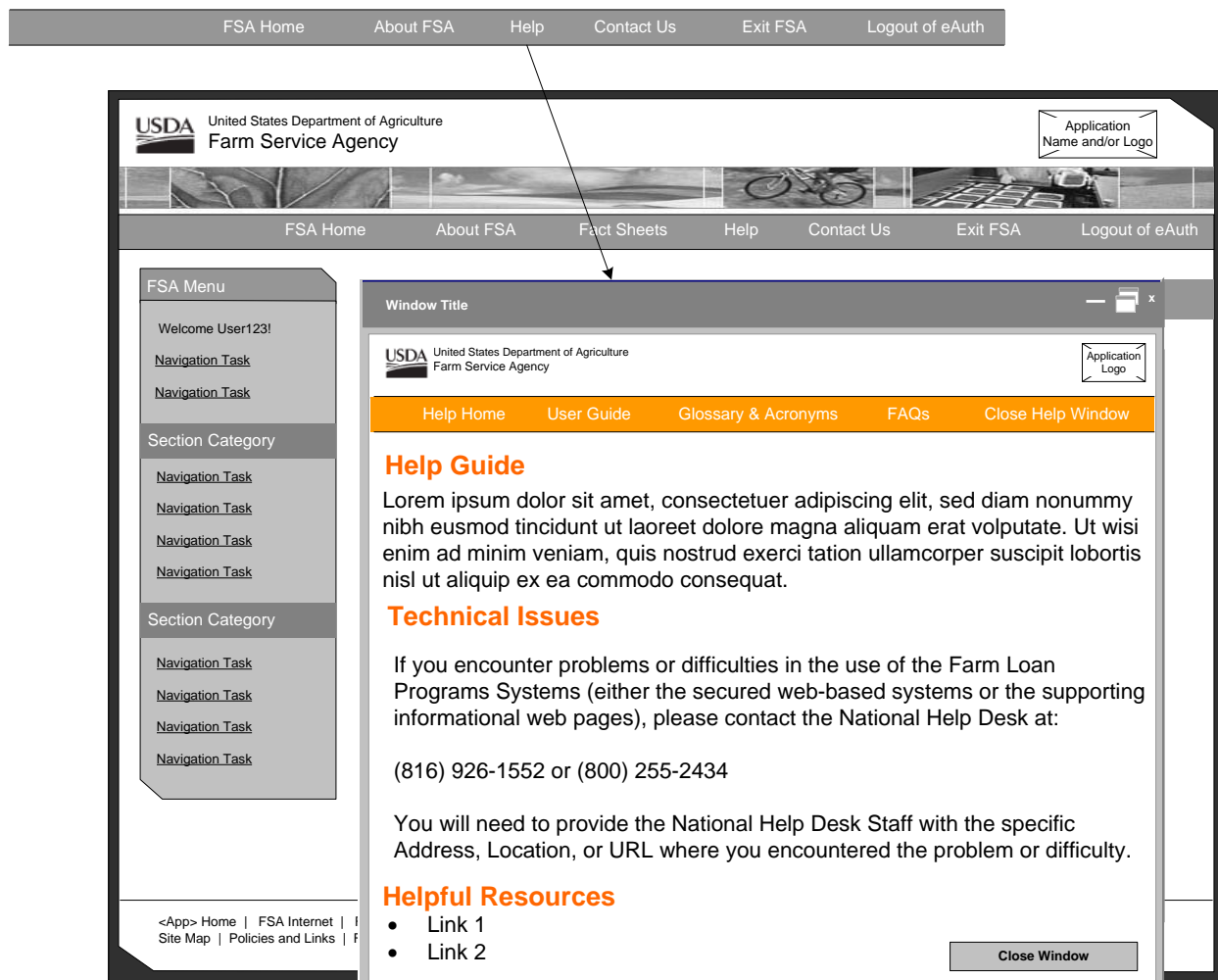
Figure 4-17. General Help
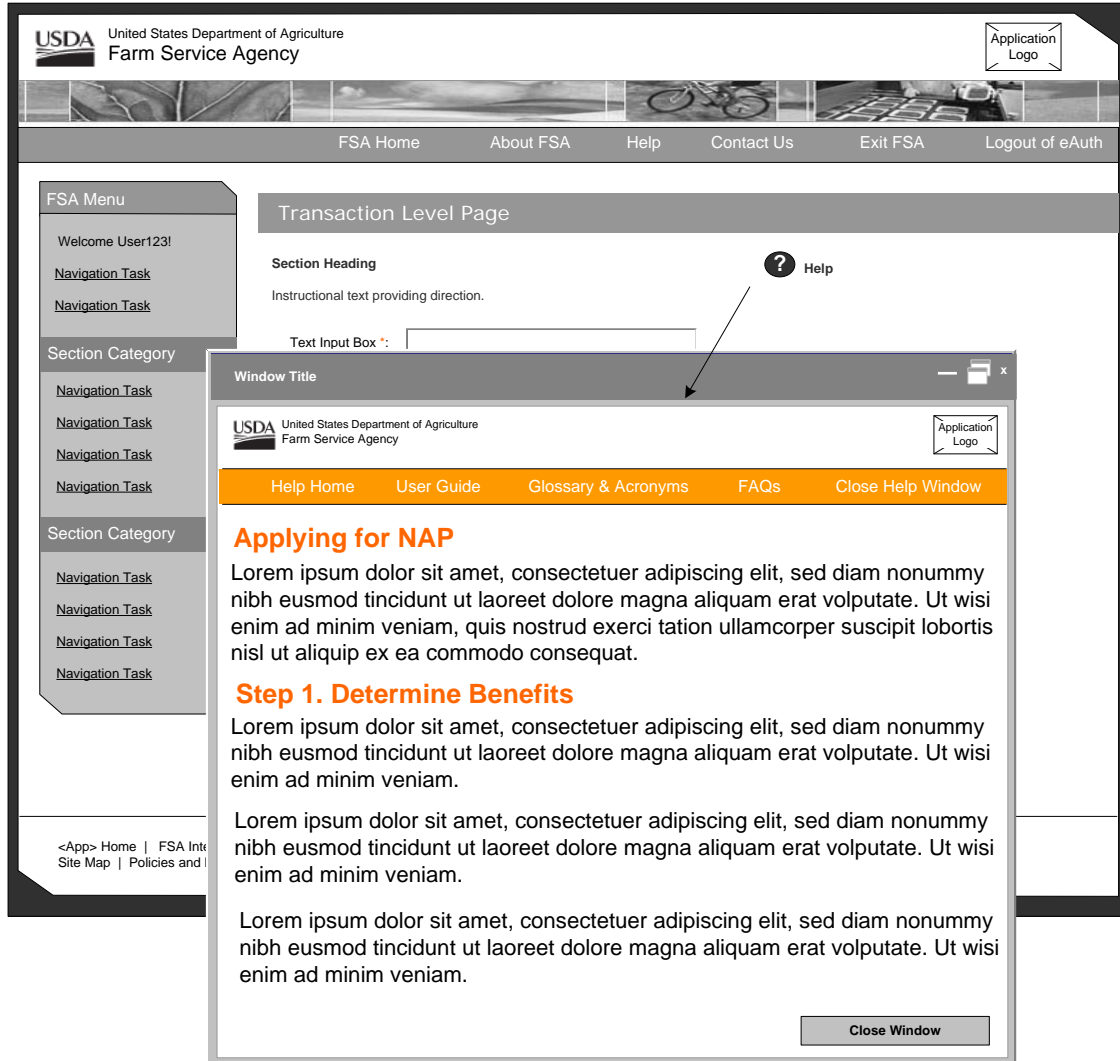
Figure 4-18. Context Sensitive Help

4.13 Child Windows

Child windows are secondary windows used to provide supplemental information or interaction to a primary parent window. They are used to display help, printer friendly, and other supplemental information system pages. Child windows may also be used for the display of large images and geospatial data.

Guidelines

Page Element   New Browser Window

Task   Allows users to browse supplemental information.

Functionality
- Used to display help, printer-friendly, and other supplemental information system pages.
- The child browser window should display limited toolbar functionality.

- The child window inherits the application masthead only and must never contain navigation topics that live within the context of the parent application. This includes parent application top and left navigation bar topics.

- Child windows can not spawn additional child windows.

- When launched, these types of windows will display at the upper left-hand corner of the screen.

- Child windows should be smaller than the parent window. The recommended size of a child window is 618 by 485 pixels. Users should have the ability to resize a child window.

- A child window should always have a "Close Window" button at the bottom-right corner of the window, with the exception of printer-friendly pages. For child windows that vertically scroll, the "Close Window" button should also appear in the top-right corner.

Child windows are secondary windows used to provide supplemental information or interaction to a primary parent window. They may also be used to display geospatial data.

To differentiate from the parent window, the child window will not have the default browser toolbars. The child window will have a smaller version of the FSA masthead.

All child windows will also have "Close Window" controls.

Child windows may be launched from a hyperlink or button. (Look-ups, Help, Images)

Figure 4-19. Child Window

4.14 Updating This Document

Update Type	Update Criteria/Examples	Necessary Approval
Minor Revision	Typos, mistakes, clarifications, defects in the document, etc.	AMC
Minor Amendment	Changes that effect	AMC, ADC, OTC, Geospatial, and

	content/work practices.	ITSD
Major Revision	Departures from the USDA Web Style Guide	AMC, ADC, OTC, Geospatial, ITSD, and the USDA Webmaster

Appendix

Appendix A. Top Navigation Behavior

<Application Name> Home

- Home link in the top navigation bar should read *<Application Name>* Home and link to the homepage of the application.
- Always opens within the same browser window.

| FSA Home | About FSA | Help | Contact Us | Exit FSA | Logout of eAuth |

United States Department of Agriculture
USDA Farm Service Agency

Application Logo

| FSA Home | About FSA | Fact Sheets | Help | Contact Us | Exit FSA | Logout of eAuth |

FSA Menu

Welcome User123!

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

Section Category

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

Section Category

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

FSA Homepage

Homepage Content

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Appendix A 1. *<Application>* Home

About <Application Name>

- About *<Application Name>* in the top navigation bar will take users to a page within the application that provides general information on the system.
- Always opens within the same browser window.

| FSA Home | About FSA | Help | Contact Us | Exit FSA | Logout of eAuth |

USDA United States Department of Agriculture
Farm Service Agency

Application Logo

| FSA Home | About FSA | Help | Contact Us | Exit FSA | Logout of eAuth |

FSA Menu

Welcome User123!

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

Section Category

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

Section Category

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

About FSA

Doing Business with FSA Made Easy

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Improving Program Benefits

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Helpful Resources

- FSA FAQs
- Ask FSA
- Fact Sheets
- Notices

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Appendix A 2. About *<Application Name>*

Help

- Multiple help functions will exist in the application. This includes general and context sensitive help.

- Clicking on Help in the top navigation bar will link to a page within the application that contains general information on Help.

- Help will be launched in a new browser window, so users can read help and keep their place within the system.

- The Help window will have its own navigation, color schema, and limited toolbar functionality.
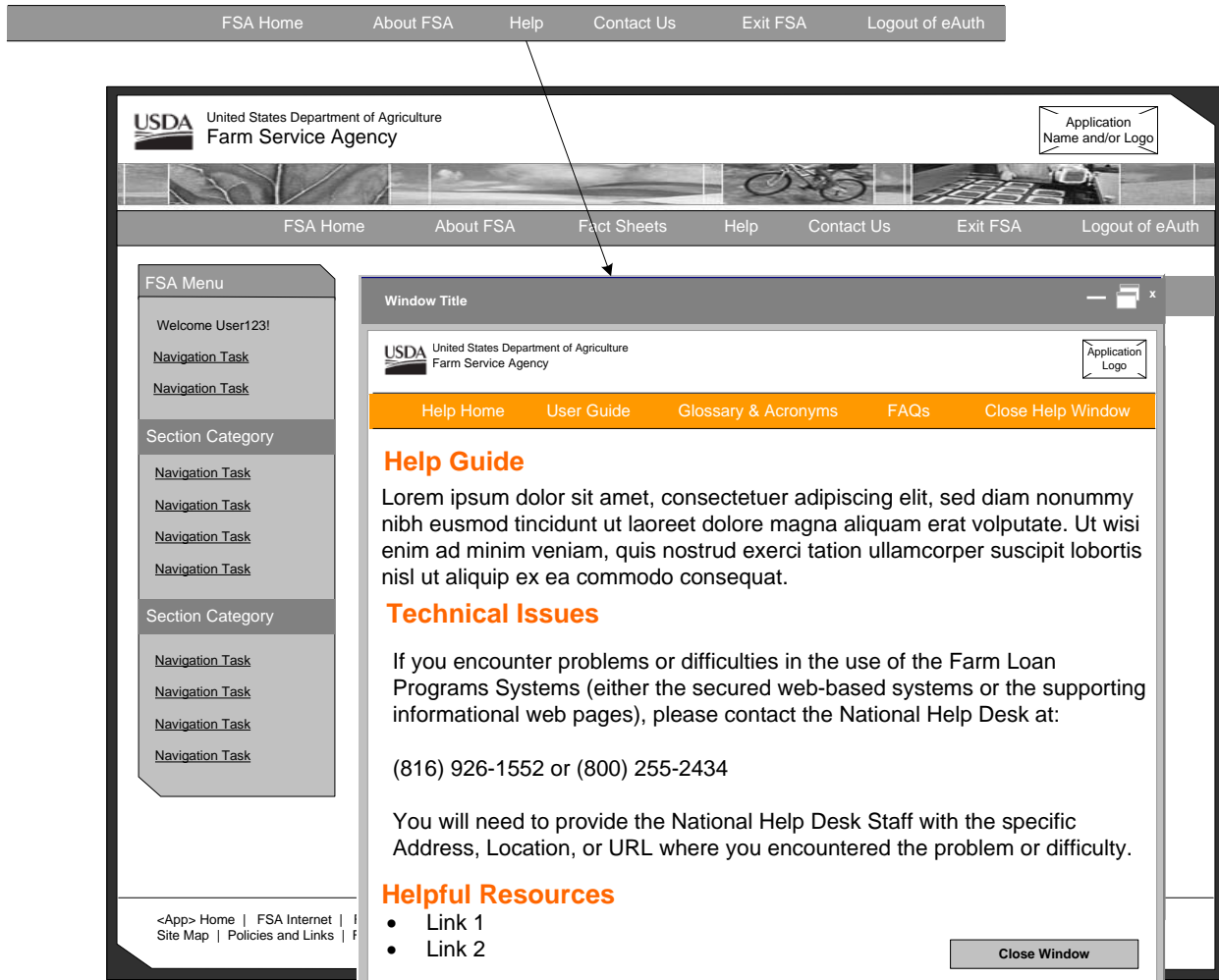
Appendix A 3. Help – General

Context Sensitive Help

- Clicking on a Help icon within the transactional pages of the system will generate context sensitive Help.

- Context sensitive Help will use the same window as general Help (inherit all specified functionality), but open within the context of the page that users are on.
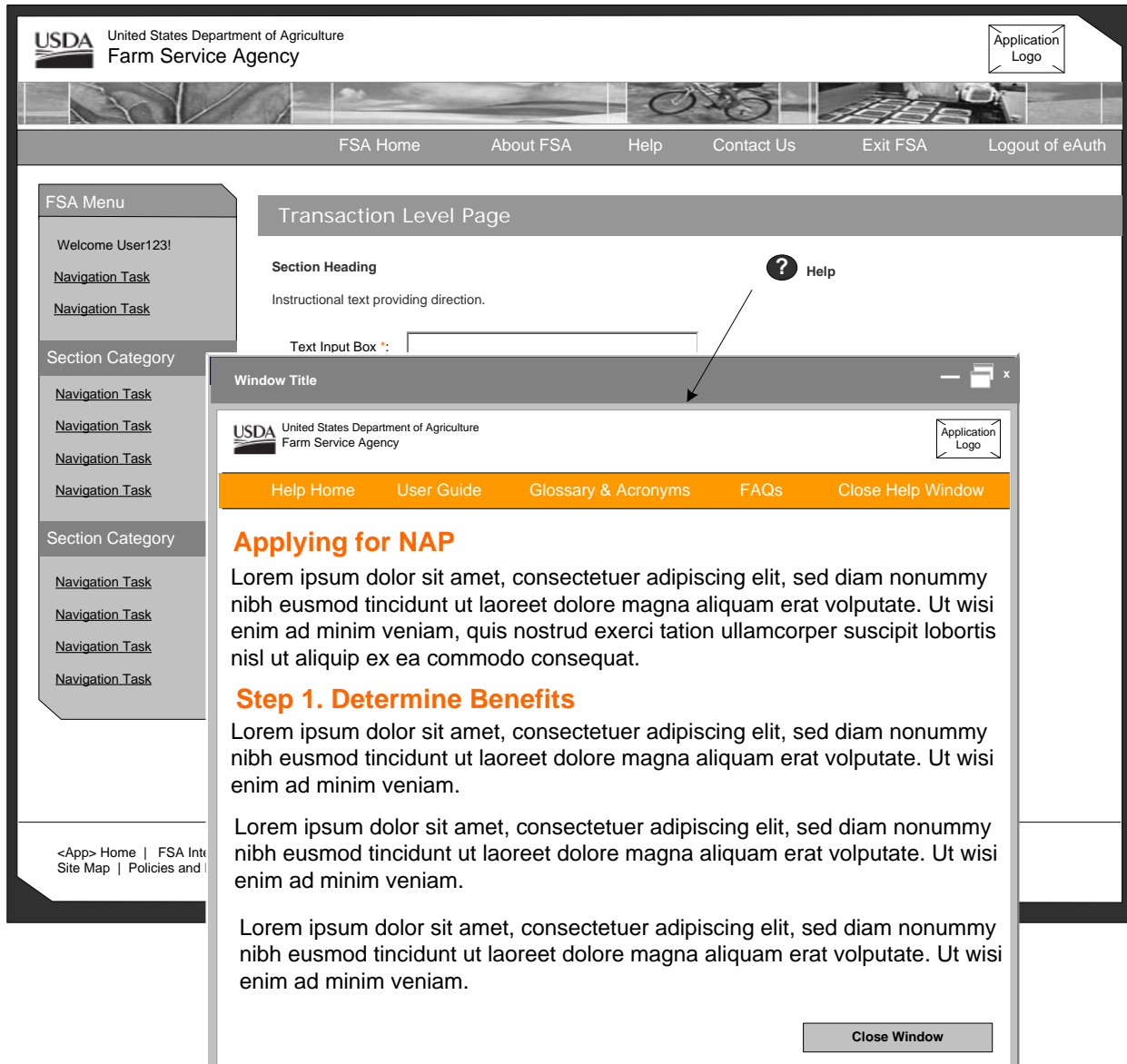
Appendix A 4. Context Sensitive Help

Contact Us

- Contact Us consists of a guided form that helps better direct user questions, comments, or issues to the appropriate recipient.
- Always opens within the same browser window.

| FSA Home | About FSA | Help | Contact Us | Exit FSA | Logout of eAuth |

USDA United States Department of Agriculture
Farm Service Agency

Application Logo

| FSA Home | About FSA | Help | Contact Us | Exit FSA | Logout of eAuth |

FSA Menu

Welcome User123!

Navigation Task

Navigation Task

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Navigation Task

Navigation Task

Contact Us

Local USDA Service Center

For program related questions, please contact your local USDA Service Center Office listed below. Your local Service Center Office will gladly answer all of your questions related to program policies and procedures.

Rogers County Farm Service Agency
1900 Will Rogers Circle
Claremore, OK 74017-1315
Email: info@ok.usda.gov
Phone: 918-341-3276
Fax: 918-341-1885

Locate another office >>

Complete Our Contact Form

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetuer adipiscing elit, sed diam nonummy nibh euismod tincidunt.

Name: Prepopulated with name

Telephone: Prepopulated

Email: Prepopulated

State: Select State

County: Select County

Subject: Select Subject

Description:

Submit

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Appendix A 5. Contact Us

Exit <Application Name>

- Exit *<Application Name>* allows users to exit out of the system but still remain logged into eAuthentication.

| FSA Home | About FSA | Help | Contact Us | Exit FSA | Logout of eAuth |

United States Department of Agriculture
Farm Service Agency

Application Logo

| FSA Home | Contact Us | Login |

FSA

Section Title

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Section Title

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I Want To...

Get a Login

Access Application Service

Locate a USDA Service Center

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Appendix A 6. Exit <Application Name>

Logout of eAuth

- Logout of eAuth allows the users to both exit out of the system AND logout of eAuthentication.
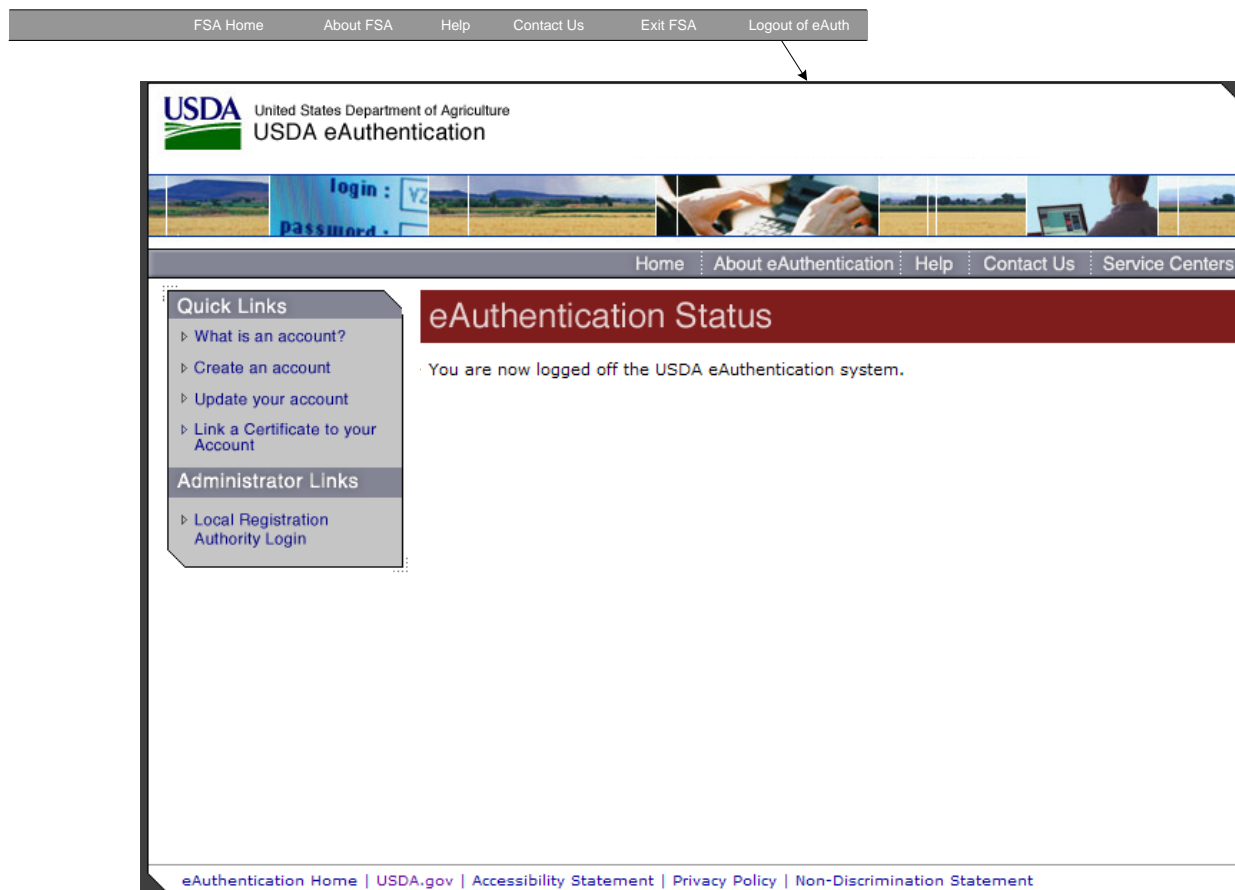
Appendix A 7. Logout of eAuth

Handbooks

- Handbooks is a proposed link within the employee view. It would link to the Handbooks online web site.

- The Handbooks link would open in a new browser window.

- Other options include linking to Handbooks from general Help or creating a section in the left navigation for helpful tools and resources.
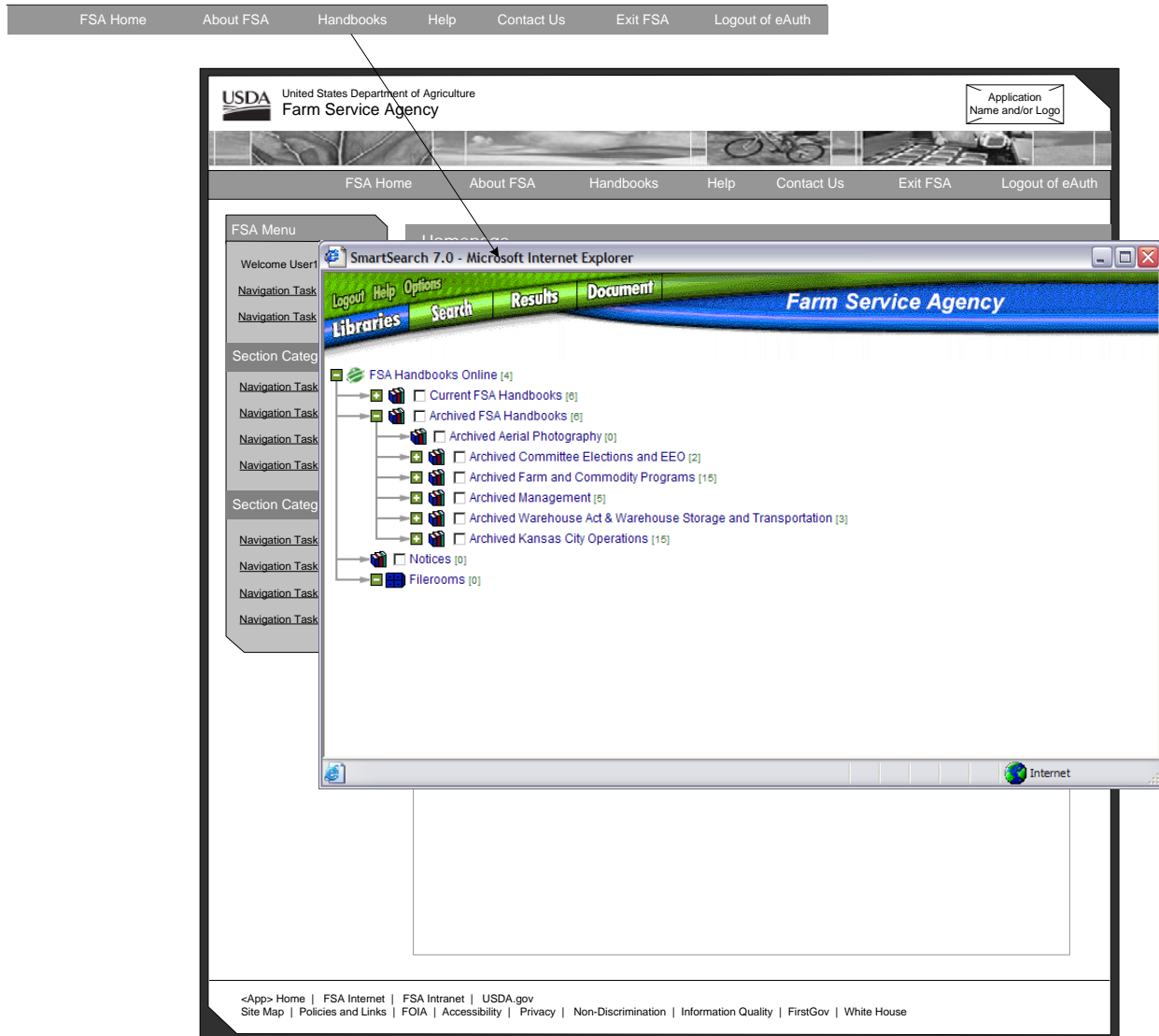
Appendix A 8. Handbooks for Employee View Handbooks

Fact Sheets Handbooks

- Fact Sheets is a proposed link within the customer view. It would link to the fact sheets on the FSA Internet.
- The Fact Sheets link would open in a new browser window.
- Possible Issue arises over desire to link to notices as well. Top navigation space limited.
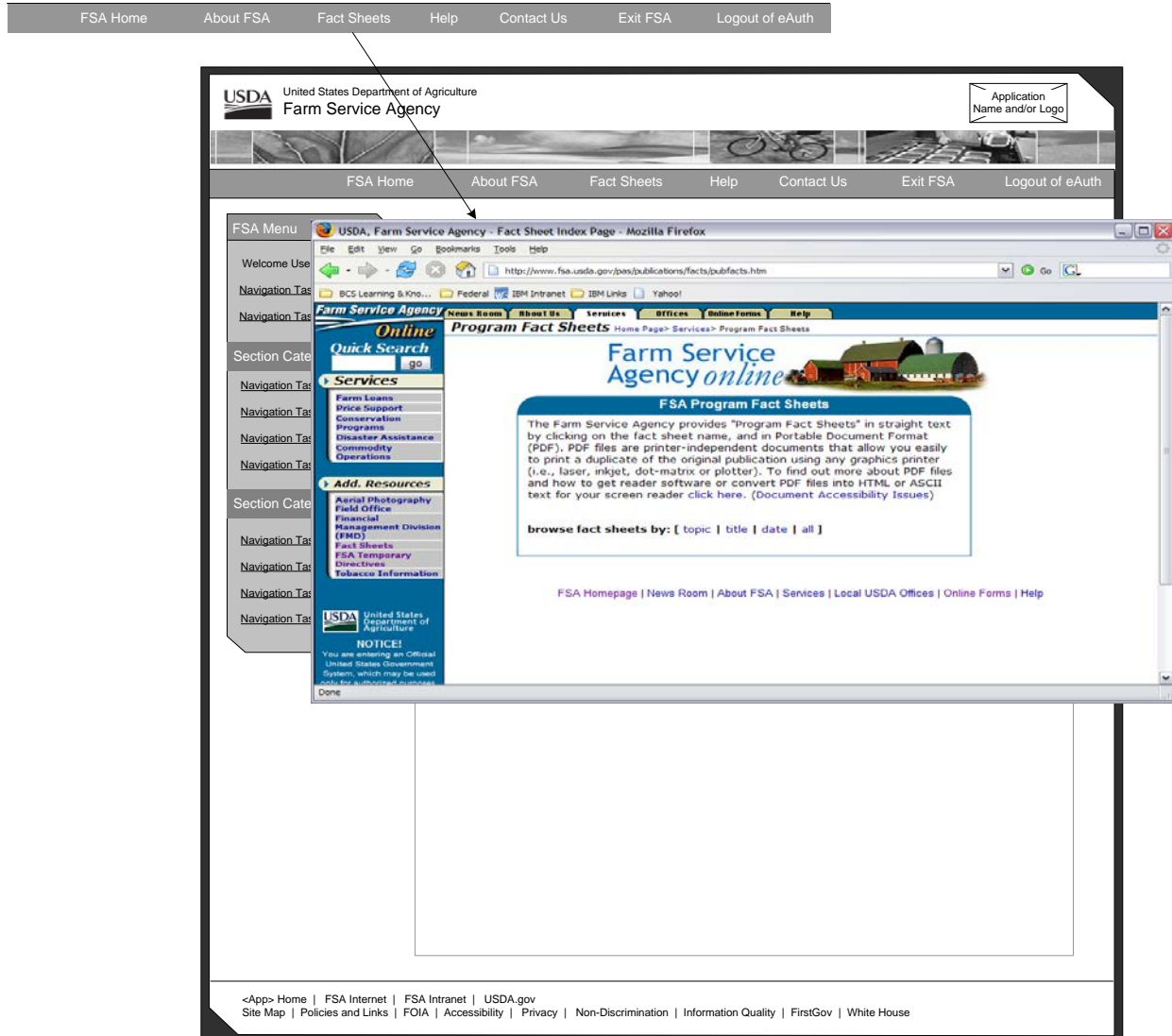
Appendix A 9. Fact Sheets for Customer View

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