

# Report on the External Quality Assessment Review

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October 4, 2016

**The Honorable Phyllis K. Fong  
Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Inspector General  
Room 117-W Jamie Whitten Building  
1400 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20250**

**Subject: Report on the Quality Assessment Review of the Investigative Operations of the Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Agriculture**

Dear Inspector General Fong:

We have reviewed the system of internal safeguards and management procedures for the investigative operations of the Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA OIG) in effect for the period ended March 1, 2016. Our review was conducted in conformity with the Quality Standards for Investigations and the Quality Assessment Review (QAR) Guidelines established by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE), and the Attorney General's Guidelines for Office of Inspectors General with Statutory Law Enforcement Authority, as applicable.

Subsequent to the on-site portion of the QAR, we had discussions with USDA OIG and CIGIE. As a result of those discussions, we concluded that based on the fact that USDA OIG and four other IGs are provided law enforcement authority through laws outside of the Inspector General Act, the Attorney General's Guidelines for Office of Inspectors General with Statutory Law Enforcement Authority would not be applied as part of our review.

We reviewed compliance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's system of internal policies and procedures to the extent we considered appropriate. The review was conducted at the headquarters office in Washington, DC, and four satellite/field locations. Additionally, we sampled 30 case files for investigations closed during the previous 12-month period, as well as seven closed digital forensic examinations.

In our opinion, the system of internal safeguards and management procedures for the investigative function of the U.S. Department of Agriculture OIG in effect for the year ending March 1, 2016, is in compliance with the quality standards established by the CIGIE.

**These safeguards and procedures provide reasonable assurance of conforming to professional standards in the planning, execution and reporting of its investigations.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David A. Montoya". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**David A. Montoya  
Inspector General**