

5. U.S. Department of Agriculture

USDA is the third-largest civilian Department of the U. S. Government, overseeing a variety of agencies, Government corporations, and other entities that employ more than 100,000 people at over 15,000 locations in all 50 States and 80 countries.

The Department has undergone a historic reorganization to improve coordination among its broad range of programs and agencies. This reorganization, which affects headquarters and field structures, was authorized by the Federal Crop Insurance Reform and Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (P.L. 103-354), signed into law in October 1994.

The reorganization focused the Department's work under the following seven mission areas, which are described in chapters 6-12 of this Agriculture Fact Book:

- Rural Development,
- Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services,
- Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services,
- Food Safety,
- Natural Resources and Environment,
- Research, Education, and Economics, and
- Marketing and Regulatory Programs.

Some programs serve the entire Department of Agriculture, including all mission areas. Among these are the Assistant Secretary for Administration (Departmental Administration), Office of the Chief Economist, Office of Inspector General, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, and Office of the Chief Information Officer, all of which report directly to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Director of Native American Programs also works with all mission areas in the role of liaison with Indian tribes and their members.

■ Office of the Chief Economist

The Office of the Chief Economist advises the Secretary of Agriculture on policies and programs affecting U.S. agriculture and rural areas. This advice includes assessments of USDA program proposals, legislative proposals, and economic developments of importance to agriculture and rural areas. In addition, the Office of the Chief Economist is responsible for four programs, described below, that coordinate activities across USDA agencies.

The WorldWide Web address for the Office of the Chief Economist is:

<http://www.usda.gov/oce/>

World Agricultural Outlook Board

The World Agricultural Outlook Board is USDA's focal point for forecasts and projections of global commodity markets. Each month the Board brings together interagency committees of experts to forecast the supply, use, and prices of major commodities in the United States and abroad. The committees also clear agricultural forecasts published by other USDA agencies. This teamwork assures that USDA forecasts are objective and consistent.

Because the weather is vital to crop forecasts, specialists from the Board work side-by-side with weather forecasters from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to monitor the weather and assess its effect on crops. Their work provides timely information on potential changes in global production. In related work, the Board also coordinates department-wide activity on long-term economic projections, remote sensing, and climate.

The WorldWide Web address for the World Agricultural Outlook Board is:
<http://www.usda.gov/oce/waob/waob.htm>

Office of Risk Assessment and Cost-Benefit Analysis

This office is responsible for coordinating, reviewing, and approving all risk assessments and cost-benefit analyses of mitigation measures associated with major regulations of the Department. Major regulations are economically significant (with an impact of at least \$100 million each year) and have a primary effect on human health, human safety, or the environment. The office provides direction to USDA agencies on appropriate methods for these analyses and serves as a focal point on matters relating to risk assessment in interagency reviews.

The WorldWide Web address for the Office of Risk Assessment and Cost Benefit Analysis is : *<http://www.usda.gov/oce/oracba/oracba.htm>*

Agricultural Labor Affairs

The coordinator of agricultural labor affairs is a focal point for agricultural labor policy in USDA. Areas of concern include immigration, the H-2A temporary agricultural worker program, worker protection standards for pesticide use, farm labor supply, and agricultural employment issues.

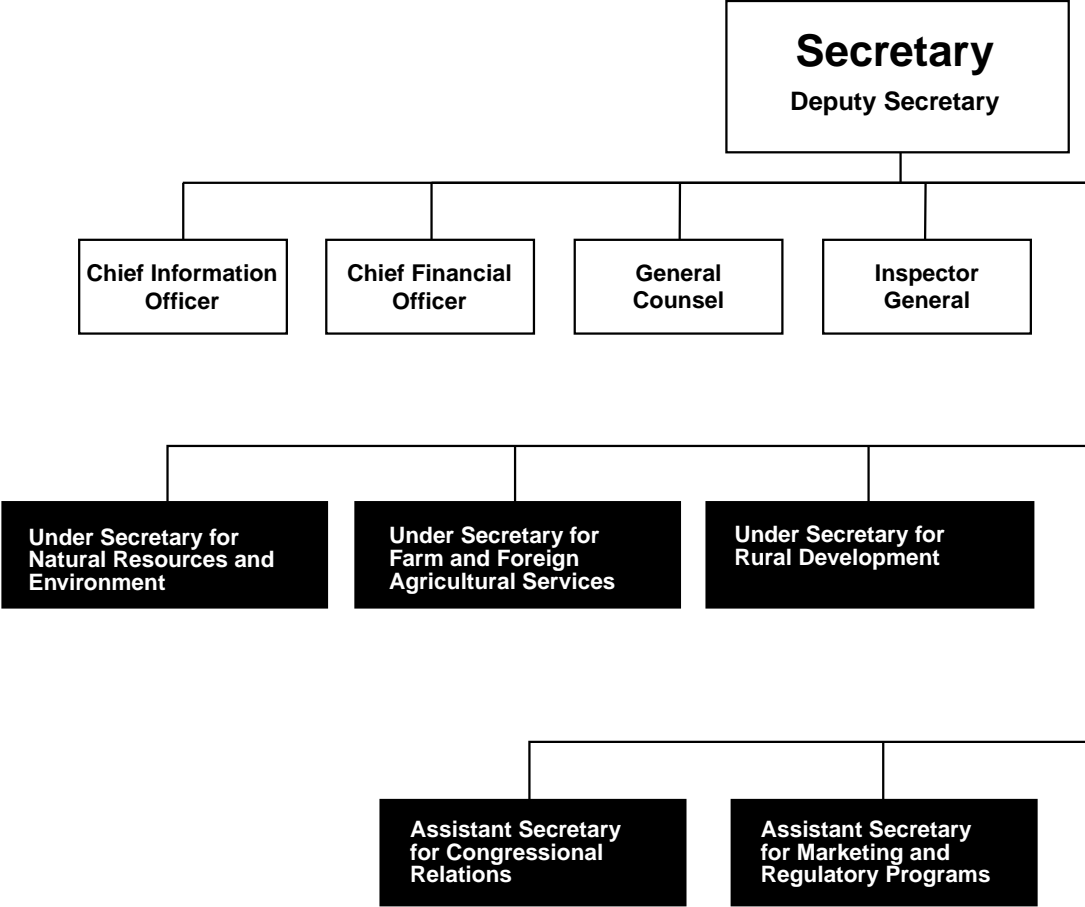
The World Wide Web address for this office is:
<http://www.usda.gov/oce/oce/labor-affairs/affairs.htm>

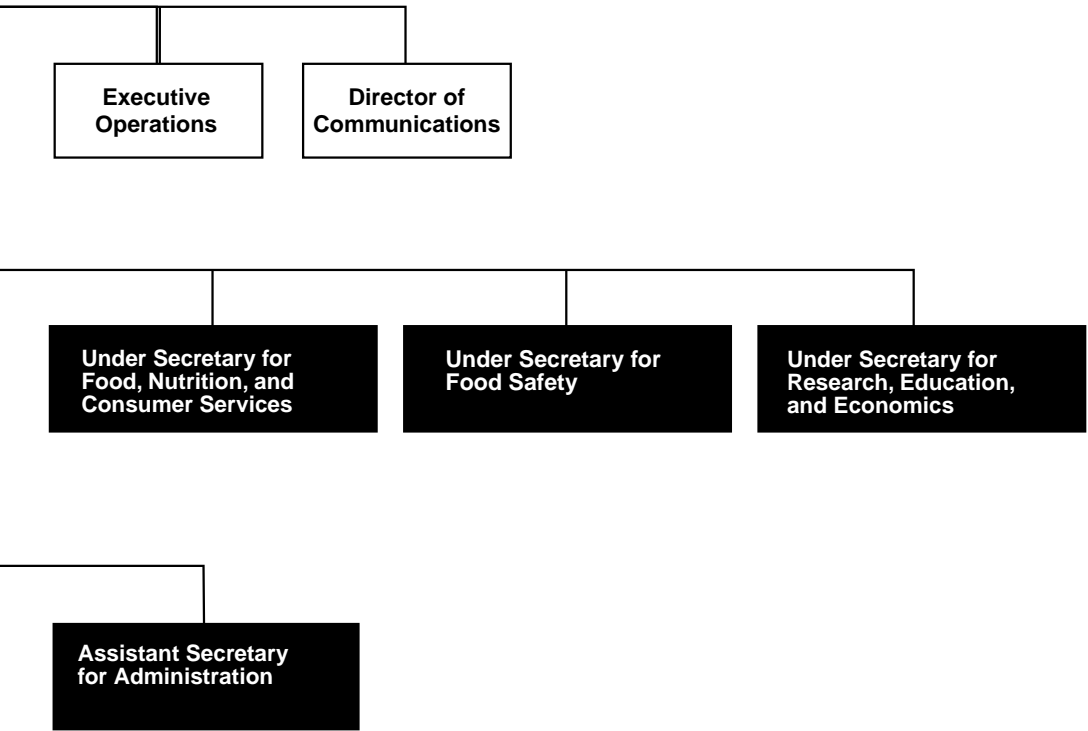
Sustainable Development

The director of sustainable development coordinates USDA policies and programs in sustainable development, including sustainable agriculture, forestry, and rural communities. The director chairs a sustainable development council within USDA and serves as a liaison for Federal sustainable development activities.

The World Wide Web address for this office is:
<http://www.usda.gov/oce/oce/sustainable-development/sustain.htm>

U.S. Department of Agriculture Headquarters Organization





■ Office of Inspector General

USDA's Office of Inspector General (OIG), the first civilian OIG in the Federal Government, was established in 1962 and became fully operational in 1963. It was created after a well-knit agricultural fraud scheme showed that better coordination between audit and investigative organizations was needed, and it has evolved into its current structure through successive changes in legislation and leadership.

OIG conducts and supervises audits and investigations relating to USDA's programs and operations. It provides leadership and coordination and recommends policies for activities that will prevent and detect fraud and abuse and promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in USDA programs and operations. Furthermore, OIG keeps the Secretary and Congress fully informed of problems and deficiencies relating to administration of USDA programs and operations, and the actions designed to correct such problems and deficiencies.

During the period April 1, 1996, through March 31, 1997, audit and investigative efforts resulted in approximately \$101.5 million in recoveries, collections, fines, restitutions, claims established, administrative penalties, and costs avoided. Management agreed to put an additional \$278.2 million to better use. OIG also identified \$935 million in questioned costs that cannot be recovered. Investigative efforts resulted in 846 indictments and 753 convictions.

■ Office of Chief Financial Officer

The Chief Financial Officer has responsibility for oversight of all financial management activities relating to USDA programs and operations. The Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) directs, manages, provides policy guidance, and coordinates financial management activities and operations. It ensures compliance throughout the Department with applicable accounting standards and principles, and ensures adequate controls over asset management, including cash management operations, real property, equipment, and inventories.

OCFO is responsible for developing and maintaining an integrated departmental accounting and financial management system which provides complete, reliable, consistent, and timely financial information that is responsive to the needs of program managers. OCFO is also responsible for ensuring auditable financial statements.

OCFO operates the largest automated administrative servicing operation in the Federal Government—the National Finance Center (NFC) in New Orleans, LA. The NFC processes salary and benefit payments for more than 450,000 Federal employees, performs administrative services for more than 100 Federal departments and agencies, and acts as recordkeeper for the Federal Government's Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). The TSP currently services a \$46 billion account for 2.3 million Federal employees and retiree members.

■ Office of the Chief Information Officer

Effective August 1996, the Information Technology Management Reform Act (ITMRA) of 1996, subsequently renamed the Clinger-Cohen Act, required that each executive agency designate a Chief Information Officer (CIO) who reports directly to the head of the Agency and who has information resources management duties as the official's primary duty.

In compliance with Clinger-Cohen requirements, the Secretary of Agriculture designated a CIO and established the supporting organizational structure, the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) at USDA. The OCIO is independent of any other Agency. The CIO has primary responsibility for supervising and coordinating the design, acquisition, maintenance, use, and disposal of information technology by USDA agencies, and for monitoring the performance of USDA's information programs and activities.

The OCIO is composed of an information resources management (IRM) policy staff and an operations staff known as the National Information Technology Center (NITC). NITC provides information management and telecommunications services, technology, and expertise to support the mission and programs of USDA, its agencies, and a growing list of external customers. NITC systems supporting major USDA programs include the Dedicated Loan Origination Servicing System, National Data Bank for Food Stamps, Weather Information Management System, Timber Sales, and the Residue Violation Information System. NITC's centralized mainframe and client server computing facilities serve over 40,000 end users in more than 4,000 locations nationwide.

■ Departmental Administration

Civil Rights

The Office of Civil Rights provides overall leadership, oversight, direction, and coordination for USDA civil rights and equal employment opportunity programs. The goal of this office is to ensure equal opportunity for women, minorities, and persons with disabilities in the work force, and to ensure equal opportunity in the delivery of USDA programs and services to all customers without regard to race, sex, national origin, disability, and other protected bases dependent upon certain programs and activities.

This office is responsible for ensuring program delivery compliance and evaluation of USDA Agency programs and activities for civil rights concerns. This office has full responsibility for investigation, adjudication, and resolution of complaints of discrimination arising out of USDA employment activities or in the context of conducted or assisted programs, including complaints made by USDA employees, applicants for employment, and USDA program participants and customers.

The Office of Civil Rights proactively promotes civil rights at USDA, provides guidance and oversight to USDA agencies, and conducts compliance reviews and audits to ensure enforcement of all applicable civil rights laws, rules, and regulations.

Office of Human Resources Management

The Office of Human Resources Management, in Departmental Administration, provides leadership, consultation, policy, analysis, and coordination throughout the Department in the areas of human resource management, as well as safety and health management.

Table 5-1.

USDA staff year history

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of USDA employees*</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of USDA employees*</i>
1948.....	60,815	1973.....	104,104
1949.....	63,063	1974.....	101,430
1950.....	67,560	1975.....	103,779
1951.....	66,150	1976.....	109,276
1952.....	62,825	1977.....	113,085
1953.....	62,492	1978.....	118,563
1954.....	63,309	1979.....	122,809
1955.....	64,191	1980.....	125,185
1956.....	69,423	1981.....	117,440
1957.....	74,215	1982.....	111,853
1958.....	77,264	1983.....	109,773
1959.....	79,998	1984.....	108,598
1960.....	81,585	1985.....	106,665
1961.....	85,238	1986.....	102,997
1962.....	89,168	1987.....	102,579
1963.....	94,527	1988.....	106,552
1964.....	94,781	1989.....	109,567
1965.....	94,548	1990.....	110,754
1966.....	98,688	1991.....	110,357
1967.....	102,175	1992.....	113,405
1968.....	105,628	1993.....	112,457
1969.....	101,848	1994.....	108,132
1970.....	100,860	1995.....	108,620
1971.....	102,698	1996.....	106,272
1972.....	104,540	1997**.....	106,000

*Full-time equivalent (FTE). For example, two half-time employees would count as one FTE.

**Projections from USDA Streamlining Plan, February 1995.

■ *In 1996, USDA had nearly 1,100 employees with targeted disabilities in permanent full-time positions.*

Table 5-2.

Where do USDA Employees Work?

<i>State</i>	<i>Number of employees*</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Number of employees*</i>
Alabama	1,204	Montana	2,730
Alaska	1,002	Nebraska	1,370
Arkansas	1,942	Nevada	333
Arizona	1,691	New Hampshire	300
California	7,615	New Jersey	535
Colorado	2,587	New Mexico	1,366
Connecticut	165	New York	1,055
Delaware	208	North Carolina	1,853
District of Columbia	7,001	North Dakota	782
Florida	1,579	Ohio	836
Georgia	2,588	Oklahoma	930
Hawaii	416	Oregon	5,097
Idaho	2,720	Pennsylvania	1,535
Illinois	1,601	Rhode Island	38
Indiana	750	South Carolina	960
Iowa	1,805	South Dakota	823
Kansas	1,167	Tennessee	1,077
Kentucky	1,159	Texas	3,729
Louisiana	2,921	Utah	1,452
Maine	277	Vermont	249
Maryland	3,034	Virginia	2,141
Massachusetts	341	Washington	2,436
Michigan	1,242	West Virginia	707
Minnesota	1,650	Wisconsin	1,504
Mississippi	1,974	Wyoming	736
Missouri	3,708		

<i>Territory</i>	<i>Number of employees*</i>	<i>Territory</i>	<i>Number of employees*</i>
American Samoa	.6	Guam	.31
Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands	.7	Puerto Rico	.616
Federated States of Micronesia	.2	Marshall Island	.1
		U.S. Virgin Islands	.29

—continued

Table 5-2 continued.

Where do USDA Employees Work?

<i>Country</i>	<i>Number of employees*</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Number of employees*</i>
Argentina	.2	Korea, Republic of	.4
Australia	.3	Morocco	.1
Austria	.5	Mexico	.24
Bermuda	.1	Malaysia	.1
Belgium	.7	Nigeria	.1
Bahamas	.2	Netherlands	.3
Brazil	.4	Nicaragua	.4
Bulgaria	.2	New Zealand	.1
Canada	.3	Peru	.2
China	.7	Pakistan	.1
Chile	.3	Poland	.2
Colombia	.2	Panama	.2
Costa Rica	.5	Trust Territories of the Pacific	.3
Denmark	.1	Philippines	.3
Dominican Republic	.3	Russia	.5
Egypt	.2	Saudi Arabia	.1
Federated States of Micronesia	.10	South Africa	.3
France	.7	Singapore	.3
Germany	.4	Spain	.2
Greece	.1	Sweden	.1
Guatemala	.3	Switzerland	.4
Hong Kong	.1	United Arab Emirates	.1
Honduras	.1	Thailand	.2
Indonesia	.2	Tunisia	.1
India	.2	Turkey	.3
Italy	.5	United Kingdom	.3
Ivory Coast	.1	Venezuela	.2
Japan	.7	Vietnam	.1
Kenya	.3		

*Permanent, full-time employees in 1996

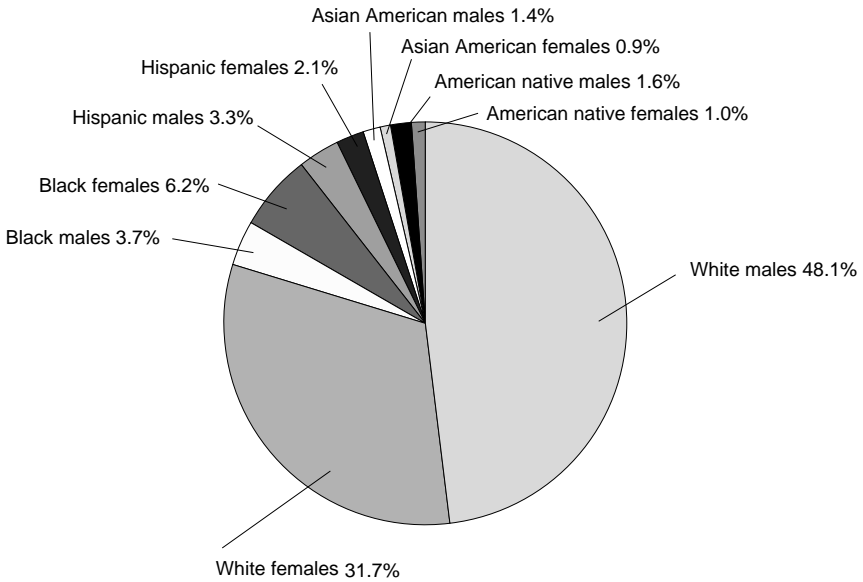
Modernization of Administrative Processes (MAP)

The Modernization of Administrative Processes (MAP) program is USDA's initiative to improve and streamline the processes and systems involved in the administrative functions of the Department. These functions include procurement, human resources management/civil rights, information resources management (IRM), property, and administrative leadership and management. MAP helps USDA fulfill its highest priorities in administrative improvements, carrying out its work through business modernization initiatives. Through these efforts, MAP plans to achieve at least \$250 million in cost savings/redistribution by 1999.

MAP has six major ongoing initiatives. In the area of procurement, these involve purchase card and convenience checking as well as procurement systems modernization. In human resources management/civil rights, one initiative is on time and atten-

Figure 5-1.

USDA Workforce Profile by Race and Gender Group



dance and the other is on human resources management analysis. One IRM initiative is on redesigning telecommunications services, and another is on analysis of the IRM business processes.

Hazardous Waste Management Group

The Hazardous Waste Management Group, in Departmental Administration, manages the USDA Hazardous Waste Central Account, conducts environmental management and compliance oversight reviews at USDA facilities, represents USDA on the National Response Team, and provides advice and guidance on hazardous waste and pollution prevention issues.

American Indian and Alaska Native Programs

The Director of Native American Programs, located in the Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations, is USDA's primary contact with tribal governments and their members. The director serves as the principal adviser and representative on all matters related to USDA policy and programs which benefit and affect American Indians and Alaska Natives. The director also chairs USDA's Native American Working Group, which reports to the Secretary and provides advice, sup-

port, and other assistance to the director. In 1992, USDA adopted an American Indian and Alaska Native policy which guides USDA's interactions with Native Americans.

USDA provides a wide range of services to American Indian and Alaska Native communities. In recent years, the Department has reached out to advise American Indians and Alaska Natives about USDA services available to them, to deliver programs more effectively to Indian tribes, and to initiate new programs in response to the needs of tribes. Following are highlights of recent agency activities and programs in USDA mission areas which serve Indian tribes and their members.

Natural Resources and Environment

Several USDA agencies—including the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) as the lead agency, the Farm Service Agency (FSA), the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), and the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)—are implementing an extensive 2-year joint outreach effort with the Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC) to heighten awareness of USDA services available to American Indian and Alaska Native communities. With 65 member tribes, the IAC is a nonprofit corporation devoted to improving agriculture as a source of economic development for Indian people. NRCS has designated a full-time American Indian Liaison in order to work more closely with the IAC. NRCS has worked with the IAC to help tribes establish 33 full-time and 73 part time NRCS offices at tribal headquarters and 15 American Indian Conservation Districts under tribal law, with an additional 2 Districts in the development phase. NRCS has conducted 20 “Working Effectively with American Indians” workshops which focus on historical, legal, and cultural issues that are significant for effective program delivery to Native Americans.

The Forest Service has an American Indian and Alaska Native policy referred to as Forest Service American Indian/Alaska Native Policy—Friends and Partners. The Forest Service has also published a national tribal resource book entitled *Forest Service National Resource Book on American Indian and Alaska Native Relations* to promote cooperative relations with Indian tribes and Alaska Natives. The Forest Service works with Indian tribes to coordinate the management of National Forest lands and resources with adjacent Indian tribes; to honor Indian water rights and reserved rights to hunt, fish, gather, and graze on present-day National Forests through consultation and agreement with affected Indian tribes; to engage in ongoing consultation with tribes to accommodate traditional, cultural sites on public lands; and to provide research, technology transfer, and technical assistance to tribes.

Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services

Much of the 54 million acres of Indian land is cropland and grazing land that the U.S. Government holds in trust for Indian people. USDA is working more aggressively to help tribes and individual Indian farmers realize the agricultural potential of their landholdings. In order to increase farm services to tribes, FSA is conducting a formal outreach campaign with other USDA agencies and the IAC to host meetings and presentations at reservation sites. The communication campaign helps tribal staff and Indian farmers become more familiar with the current array of farm crop, conservation, financial credit, and crop insurance programs, as well as the farm program

changes resulting from the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (the 1996 Act).

FSA also provides services at suboffices established on reservations. FSA is cooperating with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) to increase tribal participation in USDA farm programs. In 1996, USDA and the BIA worked together to ensure that Indian lands had the full opportunity to be enrolled in production flexibility contracts authorized by the 1996 Act. The two agencies are continuing to help tribes establish conservation practices on reservation land and resolve the credit problems of individual Indian farmers. FSA also administers the Indian Tribal Land Acquisition Program, which provides long term loans to Indian Tribes to acquire land within their reservations.

Rural Development

USDA's Rural Development programs are administered through three rural development services: the Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS), the Rural Housing Service (RHS), and the Rural Utilities Service (RUS). The eligibility requirements vary according to each program.

Increased emphasis has been placed on economic and rural development activities and programs on reservations. RBS, RHS, and RUS have increased their investments in tribal water and waste, community facilities, and business projects. Rural Development has established Native American Program Coordinators in most of the States with significant American Indian populations.

RHS is striving to expand its role in financing needed housing on tribal lands. In conjunction with the President's Home Ownership Initiative, RHS identified barriers to delivery of the Section 502 Direct Single Family Housing Loan Program on reservation trust lands and developed recommendations to resolve these barriers and increase home ownership of tribal members living on trust lands. The RHS Native American pilot loan program was designed to meet the home ownership needs of Native Americans residing on trust lands. Under the pilot, 25 tribes will work in partnership with USDA and Fannie Mae to assist tribal members to obtain guaranteed Section 502 housing loans for homes on these reservations.

RHS developed a handbook for Rural Development staff regarding lending on tribal lands in order to better serve tribal customers.

Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services

The Food and Consumer Service (FCS) administers the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), which is offered in lieu of food stamps. In FY 1996, an estimated 120,000 American Indian and Alaska Native participants received FDPIR food packages, and FCS distributed food valued at an estimated \$51.3 million to Native American households through FDPIR. About 125,000 other Native American households receive food stamps each month. FCS is undertaking a FDPIR food package review, in full partnership with Indian cooperators. FCS has established a pilot project under which fresh produce is made available to tribes participating in FDPIR. The FCS Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) developed a new packet of materials to increase awareness of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) among American Indians and Alaska Natives.

Research, Education, and Economics

The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) administers the Extension Indian Reservation Program, which provides extension agents to selected Indian tribes. The extension agents conduct education programs on reservations in response to tribally identified needs. CSREES also has an endowment fund for the 29 Tribal Colleges designated as 1994 land-grant institutions under P.L. 103-382. Interest earned is distributed to these institutions to facilitate teaching programs in the food and agricultural sciences. The Tribal Colleges Education Equity Grants Program provides a \$50,000 award to each of the 29 designated 1994 land-grant institutions to strengthen instruction programs in the food and agricultural sciences.

The Extension Services at the 1994 Institutions program provide competitive grants to address a wide range of agricultural issues, including crop and animal production, farm business management, marketing techniques, decisionmaking skills, and environmental considerations. This program can also be used to enhance community resource and economic development; family development and resource management; 4-H and youth development; leadership and volunteer development; natural resources and environment; and nutrition, diet, and health.

Since 1991 the Children, Youth, and Families at Risk Initiative, supported by CSREES, has provided funding and technical support to Native American and other underserved populations for a broad spectrum of prevention-oriented education programs to strengthen individuals and families with children, prenatal to late teens. The goal of this national initiative is to empower the whole family to enable those at risk to develop necessary life skills and become strong, productive adults.

Marketing and Regulatory Programs

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has ongoing programs with Indian tribes that generally focus on agricultural, natural resource, facility, or human health and safety protection. Examples include the vaccination of dogs and livestock on reservations by Veterinary Services, control of noxious weeds and grasshoppers on several reservations, and protection of sheep and cattle from excessive loss to predators. As mentioned above, APHIS has joined other USDA agencies to fund an outreach program with the Intertribal Agriculture Council to tribes. APHIS has chartered a Native American Working Group within the Agency and has a World Wide Web page on this topic. The address is <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/anawg/amerind.html>

Food Safety

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), in coordination with the Intertribal Basin Council and USDA's Rural Business-Cooperative Service, provides design expertise, approval, and funding for mobile livestock slaughtering units to be used on reservations. In addition, the Emergency Programs Office offers expertise in planning and training for Tribal and State Radiological Emergency Preparedness programs.

For More Information

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