



50th Anniversary Kick-off Event Guide

2 p.m. Eastern Time on November 3, 2003 is the suggested time for your event. This is just a suggestion, so plan your event whenever it makes most sense for your office.

Your gathering can be as low-key or festive as you see fit, but each location should plan to view the video and to set aside a few minutes to enjoy the "surprise" for employees (sorry, but we're not going to give away the secret just yet!)

On November 3rd, the Agricultural Research Service will celebrate a very important milestone—its 50th anniversary as an agency—and we want every location to join in the festivities! This guide is meant to help you plan the event at your location or office.

In mid-October, every location will receive a special packet containing a video plus another "surprise" for all employees. The video will have a 50th-anniversary message from Dr. Knipling, Acting Administrator, and will also feature other ARS employees with important things to say about our agency's past...and its future. Running time on the video should be about six minutes.

The packet will also contain other materials designed to support what is presented in the video.

We're asking that each ARS location gather its employees together to view the video and start a year-long commemoration of our 50th anniversary.

Locations are encouraged to form an Anniversary Committee to come up with specific additional activities for that site's November 3rd celebration, in addition to the core elements of the video and the surprise. To get the ball rolling, this guide contains some suggested activities that locations might want to consider for their Nov. 3 celebration or adapt to other anniversary events during the coming year.

Who Should Attend?

Consider inviting employees' families to the event. Since the Nov. 3 celebration is as much about celebrating ARS' future as its past, it would be appropriate to have the younger generation—employees' children or grandchildren—help celebrate!

Each location could also invite its oldest employee (not "oldest" in chronological years, but in terms of length of service with ARS) to reminisce briefly about the "old days" in ARS, and exciting developments and high points of the agency that have occurred during the course of their career. In fact, all local retirees may be a welcome addition to your celebration.

Consider inviting stakeholders, customers, and friends of ARS to the event. However, locations will also be encouraged to continue the celebration throughout the anniversary year by having a field day, open house or other public event to which shareholders and customers should be invited (you will hear about this in the video on November 3rd), and it's possible that customers and clients won't want to attend two events at the lab during the course of a single year. But take a chance and invite them anyway—they might surprise you!

The item you choose for the ARS time capsule should be relatively small (think of smaller than the size of a 12 inch cube) and should be labeled with a description of the item and its significance.

As mentioned above, this guide contains suggestions only! Locations can use any, all, or none of them. The key point is for each location to come up with a memorable way to celebrate this important milestone in ARS history.

What Are Some Activities We Could Include?

Work on a location time capsule. Each MU at the location could offer one item that best symbolizes that MU's research. At the event, attendees could look over the selection of suggested items and choose the one that they think best symbolizes the work of that location. That item, or any items you choose in a different manner if you choose not to do this at the event, should be forwarded to Sharon Drumm in the Administrator's Office. Your item will be included in an ARS time capsule that will be buried at headquarters and dug up in 2053. What happens to the items that aren't chosen at your event? Those could be included in the location's own time capsule.

Have someone from each MU give a brief (2-3 minutes) presentation about "what's new and exciting about our research." This isn't meant to be a scientific presentation with posters and slides and PowerPoint, but simply a friendly "neighbor-to-neighbor" chat about the exciting new developments in that MU's work and how those developments will impact on the people who are joining in the day's celebration— families, friends and neighbors. In preparing their presentations, the speakers should focus on "Here's our research—and here's what's in it for you!"

At some point in the location's celebration, all participants in the celebration could be gathered together for a group photo to commemorate the event. Please send the photo to headquarters via the anniversary website (digital photos) or via mail (hard-copy photos) where it will be included in a special section of the 50th Anniversary website.

Each location could round up historic photographs pertaining to their location, including facility shots, photos of former employees or any other photos of interest, and assemble them in a PowerPoint slide show that could be displayed on a wall or screen (without narration) during the festivities. ARS 50th Anniversary PowerPoint templates will be available for use for this purpose, and also for speeches and presentations that ARS employees might make during the course of the anniversary year.

Feeling especially festive? Locations might consider adding a costume element to their event, with employees coming to the festivities dressed to represent some aspect of their research or their role in ARS. (This should yield some really interesting group photos!)

What Are Resources are Available?

The 50th Anniversary website will have artwork pertaining to the anniversary, templates, letterhead, and other resources. Locations can download and use this artwork on banners or other items commemorating the anniversary. The website will be available soon via a logo off the ARS web site www.ars.usda.gov.