

From: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#)
To: [Summers, Bruce - AMS](#)
Subject: 5-Rating Official Narrative Template mcevoy, miles_2015
Date: Thursday, October 29, 2015 11:40:02 AM
Attachments: [5-Rating Official Narrative Template mcevoy, miles_2015.docx](#)

SES Performance Management System
Rating Official Narrative
Appraisal Period FY 2015



Executive Name and Title: McEvoy, Miles Deputy Administrator, National Organic Program

Rating Official Name and Title: Rex Barnes, Associate Administrator

Part 6: Summary Rating Narrative (Mandatory)

Critical Element 1. Leading Change

Weight: 15%

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

A written justification is optional for the individual elements; however, it is **required** for any critical element that is rated Level 5 or below Level 3. If providing a justification, please check the appropriate level in the below boxes. How to do that: Double click on the box. A window pops up entitled "Check Box Form Field Options". Click the radio button that says "Checked" under the "Default value" area then click "OK". An "X" will appear in the box.

Critical Element Rating – Leading Change	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
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Critical Element 2. Leading People

Weight: 30%

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

Critical Element Rating – Leading People	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
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Critical Element 3. Business Acumen

Weight: 10%

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

Critical Element Rating – Business Acumen	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
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Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions

Weight: 10%

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

Critical Element Rating – Building Coalitions	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
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Critical Element 5. Results Driven

Weight: 35%

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

Critical Element Rating – Results Driven	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
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**SES/SL/ST/SSTS Performance Management System
Performance-Based Award and Pay Adjustment Proposal
Appraisal Period FY 2015**



IMPORTANT! DO NOT DISCUSS YOUR PROPOSALS UNTIL APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY

Executive Name and Title: McEvoy, Miles, Deputy Administrator

Rating Official Name and Title: Rex Barnes, Associate Administrator

Summary Rating	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5 Outstanding	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 Exceeds Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 Minimally Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 Unsatisfactory
Performance-Based Pay Adjustment	Salary Prior to Pay Adjustment:	Pay Adjustment %	Pay Adjustment Amount (\$):	Salary After Pay Adjustment:	
Performance-Based Award	Performance Award %		Performance Award Amount (\$)		
Total Compensation Package	Total Compensation %		Total Compensation Amount (\$)		

From: [Walker, Natosha - AMS](#)
To: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#)
Subject: 2015 Mid-Year - Jimenez, Coale, McEvoy, Morris, Neal, Parrott
Date: Tuesday, April 21, 2015 3:49:58 PM
Attachments: [Jimenez, S. SES 2015 Mid Year.pdf](#)
[Coale, D. SES 2015 Mid Year.pdf](#)
[McEvoy, M. SES 2015 Mid Year.pdf](#)
[Morris, C. SES 2015 Mid Year.pdf](#)
[Neal, A. SES 2015 Mid Year.pdf](#)
[Parrott, C. SES 2015 Mid Year.pdf](#)

Hi Erin,

Please see attached.

Thank you,

Natosha Walker
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service
Room 3069-S
Phone: (b) (6)
Fax: 202-260-9191
NatoshaL.Walker@ams.usda.gov

**SES Performance Management System
Executive Performance Agreement**

AMS Only



Part 1. Consultation. *I have reviewed this plan and have been consulted on its development.*

Executive's Name (Last, First, MI): McEvoy, Miles, V	Appraisal Pd: 10/01/14 –9/30/15
Executive's Signature:	Date: 11/14/2014
Title: Associate Administrator	Organization:
Rating Official's Name (Last, First, MI):	CA <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> LT/LE <input type="checkbox"/>
Rating Official's Signature:	Date: 11/14/14

Part 2. Progress Review

Executive's Signature:	Date: 4/8/15
Rating Official's Signature:	Date: 4/8/15
Reviewing Official's Signature (Optional):	Date:

Part 3. Summary Rating

<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5 Outstanding	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 Exceeds Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 Minimally Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 Unsatisfactory
Initial Summary Rating				
Rating Official's Name (Last, First, MI):				
Rating Official's Signature:			Date:	
Executive's Signature:			Date:	
Reviewing Official's Signature (Second-Level Official's Concurrence):			Date:	

Higher Level Review (if applicable)

<input type="checkbox"/> I request a higher level review. Executive's Initials:	Date:
Higher Level Review Completed <input type="checkbox"/>	Date:
Higher Level Reviewer Signature:	

Performance Review Board Recommendation

<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
PRB Chair Signature:				Date:
<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
Appointing Authority Signature:				Date:

Part 4. Derivation Formula and Calculation of Annual Summary Rating

Critical Element	Element Rating		Weight	Score		Summary Level Ranges
	Initial	Final (if changed)		Initial	Final (if changed)	
1. Leading Change			15%			475-500 = Level 5 400-474 = Level 4 300-399 = Level 3 200-299 = Level 2 Any CE rated Level 1 = Level 1
2. Leading People			30%			
3. Business Acumen			10%			
4. Building Coalitions			10%			
5. Results Driven			35%			
Total			100%			

From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#); [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#)
Subject: Accomplishments version 2
Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2015 6:35:30 PM
Attachments: [SES 2015 Accomp - McEvoy v2.docx](#)

Based on your comments on Monday I've made some adjustments to my accomplishments report.
Thanks.

Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

FY 2015 Senior Executive Service (SES) Accomplishment Report
Miles McEvoy - Deputy Administrator, AMS National Organic Program

Critical Element 1. Leading Change

Weight:
15%

(b) (6)

Critical Element 2. Leading People

Weight:
30%

(b) (6)

Critical Element 3. Business Acumen

Weight:
10%

(b) (6)

Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions

**Weight:
10%**

(b) (6)

Critical Element 5. Results Driven – Performance Requirements

**Weight:
35%**

Performance Requirement 1: Working Across AMS Programs:

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 2: Cultural Transformation

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

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[Redacted content]

Performance Requirement 3: Protect the Integrity of Organic Products

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

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[Redacted content]

Performance Requirement 4: Support Organic Market Development

(b) (6)

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(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 5: Information Technology

(b) (6)

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(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 6: Support AMS Signature Process Improvements

(b) (6)

-
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-

(b) (6)

From: [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: Award Docs
Date: Tuesday, January 27, 2015 4:56:45 PM
Attachments: [Flemming-Awards-McEvoy-2.pdf](#)
[Flemming-Nomination-McEvoy.docx](#)

Miles - As discussed, please review Wed AM if possible.
Jenny

2014 Arthur S. Flemming Awards Nomination Form

PLEASE SUBMIT ONE COPY ON 8 1/2" X 11" PAPER OR VIA E-MAIL

Award to be considered for:

- Leadership and/or Management
 Legal Achievement
 Social Science, Clinical Trials, and Translational Research
 Applied Science and Engineering
 Basic Science

Checklist

- Completed Nomination Form
 Authorized Signature
 Citation of Government Service
 Federal Employment History
 Professional Accomplishments
 Awards and Publications
 Social Equity Support
 Additional Attachments (e.g., Notification of facts *not* to be released to the media)

PLEASE TYPE ALL INFORMATION

Full Name of Nominee Miles Ventura McEvoy

E-mail Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov

Total Years of Federal Service 5 years, 3 months (civilian service)
(Please distinguish between military and civilian)

Present Home Address (b) (6)

Telephone: Home (b) (6) Work (202) 720-3252

Employing Agency/Department USDA Agricultural Marketing Service - National Organic Program

Agency/Department Mailing Address 1400 Independence Ave, Stop 0268; Washington DC 20250

Title of Current Position Deputy Administrator, National Organic Program

Education (Institution, Degrees, Dates) _____

Evergreen State University, BS/BA, 1985

Cornell University, MS (Entomology), 1988

Point of Contact at Agency/Department Melissa Tharp, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service

Telephone (202) 690-3247 E-mail Melissa.Tharp@ams.usda.gov

The nomination **must** include a paragraph between 125 and 175 words in length, giving a concise description of the nominee's accomplishment(s). If the nominee is selected for the award, this paragraph will be used by the George Washington University for immediate publication and will also be incorporated in the commemorative brochure and in the awards program. A nomination that fails to include this paragraph will be considered incomplete.

THE NOMINATION MUST BE SUBMITTED BY, AND HAVE THE APPROVAL OF, THE AGENCY/DEPARTMENT HEAD OR ACTING HEAD OF THE AGENCY/DEPARTMENT, WHOSE PERSONAL SIGNATURE IS REQUESTED BELOW.

I attest to all facts contained on this nomination form and give permission for the facts to be used for publication.

Date

Signature (Head/Acting Head of Agency/Department)

Anne L. Alonzo

Please Type Name

Administrator

Title

USDA Agricultural Marketing Service

Agency or Department Name

Return to:

Arthur S. Flemming Awards Program
Attn: Julia Holtemeyer
FlemmingAwards@gwu.edu
The George Washington University
805 21st Street, NW, Suite 601
Washington, DC 20052

Arthur Flemming 2014 Awards Nomination
Category: Leadership and Management

Nominee

Miles V. McEvoy, Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program
Agricultural Marketing Service
United States Department of Agriculture

Citation of Government Service

This award celebrates Mr. Miles V. McEvoy's exemplary leadership as Deputy Administrator for the Agricultural Marketing Service, National Organic Program. Mr. McEvoy leads the team that protects the integrity of the organic food industry, one of the fastest growing agricultural sectors in the United States. His leadership has led to increased industry and community collaboration, increased growth opportunities for organic farms and business, and increased consumer confidence in the USDA organic seal. Mr. McEvoy oversees a public-private network of organizations that certify organic farms and businesses around the world, and his leadership has facilitated new organic equivalency agreements that increase trade opportunities for United States producers. Mr. McEvoy is widely respected by industry members, advocacy groups, other agency leaders, and his program team for his collaborative and transparent style, his deep technical expertise and insight, and his passion for the principles and values of organic agriculture. Under Mr. McEvoy's leadership, the National Organic Program has established a vision of organic integrity, and through his leadership, this vision is being realized for organic businesses and consumers.

Federal Employment History

Miles McEvoy has served as the Deputy Administrator for the Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), National Organic Program since joining the Federal government in October 2009. Mr. McEvoy began his service at the same time the National Organic Program was elevated to be its own program within the agency. At that time, the program had only 14 people overseeing the diverse range of regulatory activities associated with organic agriculture.

In his five years of Federal service, Mr. McEvoy has effectively led the program as it has expanded to 50 people across three Divisions, with an appropriated budget of \$9.04-million in FY 2014. The program is responsible for the full range of activities associated with establishing, overseeing, and enforcing the USDA organic regulations and standards. Today, the program oversees 82 third-party organic certifying agents worldwide, 25,000 certified organic operations in over 120 countries, and organic equivalency agreements with Canada, the European Union, Japan, and Korea.

Professional Accomplishments

Mr. McEvoy is responsible for protecting the integrity of the organic food industry, one of the fastest growing agricultural sectors in the United States. As the leader of the National Organic Program, Mr. McEvoy manages a team with diverse expertise in organic agriculture, policy analysis and development, accreditation management, materials, compliance and enforcement, auditing, and public sector management and administration.

United States consumer sales of organic products grew to over \$35-billion in 2013. Effectively overseeing this industry's growth and maintaining consumer trust in the USDA organic seal requires exceptional leadership and management skills. Mr. McEvoy has effectively led the teams that develop and interpret the organic standards; enforce organic production, handling, and labeling rules; and accredit, audit, and train organic certifying organizations.

Mr. McEvoy has been a key leader in international activities related to organic agriculture. He was a leading member of the USDA team that negotiated the United States-European Union Equivalency Arrangement announced in June 2012, which opened up a \$24 billion dollar market to U.S. organic producers and handlers. He continued that success by playing a leadership role in the negotiation of organic equivalency agreements with both Japan and Korea in 2014. Mr. McEvoy has also overseen the ongoing implementation of the United States - Canadian organic equivalency arrangement, and oversees organic recognition agreements with India, Israel, and New Zealand.

Organic certification is a public-private partnership that depends upon the work of 82 USDA-accredited organic certifying agents. These agents certify organic farms and businesses around the world, and include small businesses, large businesses, non-profits, and State departments of agriculture. Mr. McEvoy manages the USDA-certifier partnership in a way that supports the power of local knowledge, while also ensuring fairness and consistency across the certification landscape.

Mr. McEvoy has also brought together diverse and often conflicting industry and community stakeholders to collaborate on shared national standards for organic food; and has facilitated transparent and public processes that have allowed voices from across the organic sector to be heard. Mr. McEvoy has successfully led the development and publication of rules that have clarified expectations for organic producers and built consumer confidence that rules are being interpreted and applied evenly and fairly. Mr. McEvoy also led the program's first Handbook that present guidance, instructions, and policies in one complete document to facilitate community understanding and action. In all of this work, Mr. McEvoy has built strong and sustained relationships with other USDA agencies, and leaders at the Environmental Protection Agency and the Food and Drug Administration.

Leading the National Organic Program in an "Age of Enforcement," Mr. McEvoy built a high-performing Compliance and Enforcement team, launching new policies to streamline the investigation, enforcement, and appeals process; improving complaint handling to significantly

decrease processing time; and reviewing and approving hundreds of case closures. Enforcement actions have dramatically increased under his guidance, and Mr. McEvoy also guided a project to improve the timeliness of appeals, reducing in half the average time required to issue appeal decisions. Mr. McEvoy's team has also supported the Department of Justice in its investigations of high profile organic fraud cases, and has developed an excellent relationship with the Office of Inspector General's Investigative Division to address Hotline complaints and criminal investigations.

Mr. McEvoy manages a myriad of other activities associated with leading the National Organic Program. He led the development of the National Organic Program's first strategic plan, which received wide praise from the organic community. He managed a \$22 million organic certification cost share program, helping reimburse organic producers and handlers for costs associated with organic certification. Mr. McEvoy also guides the work of the National Organic Standards Board, a citizen advisory committee that provides advice to the National Organic Program.

Communication and outreach has also been a priority for Mr. McEvoy. One of his early accomplishments with USDA was improving program communication and transparency, through website improvements, by publishing a regular newsletter, and by communicating through the program's Organic Insider email service. In just two years, this electronic email service grew to more than 14,000 subscribers. Externally, Mr. McEvoy is a frequent invited speaker at organic conferences, engages in listening sessions, and conducts training events both domestically and internationally. This outreach has led to a better understanding of the National Organic Program, increased consumer confidence, and greater compliance with the regulations.

Since 2009, Mr. McEvoy has led the expansion and development of the National Organic Program, building and coaching a leadership team of diverse professionals from a variety of backgrounds, and developing a team of specialists with deep policy and technical expertise. Mr. McEvoy is widely respected by industry members, advocacy groups, organic certifying agents, other agency leaders, and his program team for his collaborative and transparent style, his deep technical expertise and insight, and his passion for the principles and values of organic agriculture.

Under Mr. McEvoy's leadership, the National Organic Program established a vision of "Organic Integrity from Farm to Table; Consumers Trust the Organic Label," and under his leadership, this vision is being realized for organic businesses and consumers.

Awards and Publications

In 2014, two teams directly overseen by Mr. McEvoy received Agricultural Marketing Service Administrator's Awards. One team completed a National Organic Program appeals business process reengineering project; the other team completed a USDA-wide outreach and education program related to organic agriculture.

In 2013, Mr. McEvoy was part of the USDA-wide team that won a USDA Honor Award for establishing the landmark organic trade partnership between the United States and European Union, streamlining trade between the two largest organic markets in the world.

In 2010, Mr. McEvoy received the Outstanding Cross-Agency Team Award from the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, for his leadership facilitating USDA international trade agreement projects.

In 2009, Mr. McEvoy received an honorary award from the Washington State Department of Agriculture, in appreciation for his outstanding service to the Citizens of Washington State from 1988 to 2009.

In 2004, Mr. McEvoy received an honorary award from Tilth Producers of Washington at its 30th Anniversary Conference, with a citation celebrating his "commitment to a new vision of Agriculture, and his leadership to develop an Organic Certification Program that embodies integrity and cooperation."

Social Equity Support

Prior to his appointment in AMS, Mr. McEvoy established and then led the Washington State Department of Agriculture's (WSDA) Organic Food Program, one of the nation's first state organic certification programs. In 2001, he helped establish the WSDA Small Farm and Direct Marketing Program. From 1993 to 1995, Mr. McEvoy was the founding Director of The Food Alliance, a program that blends sustainable farming practices and social welfare components into an eco-label program. In 1998, he helped establish the National Association of State Organic Programs and served as President from 2001-2004 and 2007-2009.

From: [The Cornucopia Institute](#)
To: Miles.McEvoy@usda.gov
Bcc: [McEvoy_Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: COMMENTARY: Orwell Would Be Proud: Animal Farm Becomes Organic
Date: Thursday, May 22, 2014 4:06:09 PM

Share     

Cornucopia Institute

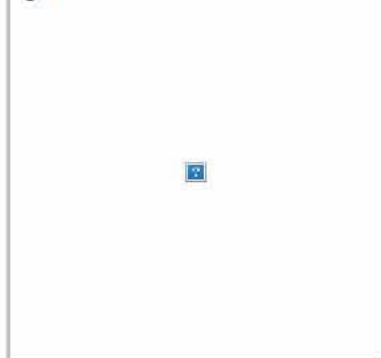
MAY
 22,
 2014

Mr. Orwell Would Be Proud: Animal Farm Becomes Certified Organic

<http://www.cornucopia.org/2014/05/22/mr-orwell-proud-animal-farm-becomes-certified-organic/>

In a move truly deserving of the comment "You can't make this stuff up," illustrating the widening divide in the organic community the USDA's National Organic Program announced this week that they would require public interest groups, educators, and the public to get their blessing before using the USDA organic logo in media coverage.

Organic Seal



Maybe this edict isn't entirely Orwellian, and maybe it's not Stalinistic, but it sure smacks of how the press operates under Premier Vladimir Putin.

After months of pointed criticism, and press coverage, of a series of allegedly illegal power grabs by the USDA, stripping authority Congress vested in the advisory panel it created, the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB), the USDA has figured out a way to resolve the dispute — control the message.

Their quarterly newsletter, distributed this week, recapped the recent NOSB meeting in San Antonio, Texas. It was one of the most contentious meetings in the history of the organic movement. It included a protest that initially shut down the proceedings and a parliamentary challenge to the illegal power grab by NOP staff director Miles McEvoy.

The protest ended after police came in for an arrest and the challenge, under Roberts Rules of Order, endorsed by a number of board members, only ended after a long adjournment where Mr. McEvoy conferred with his staff (and superiors and lawyers in Washington by phone) and subsequently threatened to shut the entire meeting down and send everyone home if the parliamentary motion challenging his authority wasn't withdrawn.

But if you read the USDA's *Organic Integrity Quarterly* you might question the "accuracy" of their story. There's not a word of any dispute at the meeting even though, besides the protests, numerous citizens and public interest groups, in formal written and oral testimony, condemned the USDA's actions.

And this meeting came on the heels of [a letter](#) written to USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack by the two primary authors of the Organic Foods Production Act, the law that gave the USDA the authority to establish the NOP in the first place. Senator Patrick Leahy and Representative Peter DeFazio clearly stated that the USDA moves were a violation of congressional intent and requested their immediate reversal.

Not a word about any of this in the USDA's quarterly organic newsletter.

But now the USDA wants to read anything The Cornucopia Institute, a corporate and governmental watchdog in the organic arena, or any other public interest group intends to publish if we want to use the USDA organic logo. This logo is owned by the citizens of the United States of America.

Now don't get me wrong. Their advice to commercial interests, to have their certifiers review labels where they might use the USDA seal, for compliance with the law, is sound. But stifling constitutionally protected free speech? No, that's a gross overstep of power.

Cornucopia's Board President, a third-generation certified organic farmer from Durand, Wisconsin, Helen Kees, after reading this newsletter instructed Cornucopia staff to "Give 'em hell" and included a referral to an experienced constitutional lawyer. We doubt it that will be necessary. Someone at the USDA will be wise enough to not kick that hornet's nest.

The former Soviet comic Yakov Smirnoff recently [appeared](#) on National Public Radio. He talked about how his standup routine was censored before he immigrated to the U.S. NPR's Bob Garfield said, "He wasn't making it up, well, except for the name, 'Department of Jokes,' which was actually the Humor Department of the Censorship Apparatus within the Soviet Ministry of Culture."

So I guess I should have submitted this commentary for Mr. McEvoy to refer to his "Department of Sanitation" within the USDA Ministry of Culture.

The divide between the corporate sector/USDA and traditional organic agriculturalists is actually no laughing matter.



USDA Secretary Vilsack addresses the Organic Trade Association's Policy Conference on May 21. Deputy Administrator McEvoy seated left-center. Source: OTA

In addition to Mr. Leahy and Mr. DeFazio, [virtually every public interest group](#), that monitors the organic industry, along with consumers and farmers, called for the reversal of the heavy-handed moves by the USDA alleging that they are going to undercut the credibility of the organic label. Only powerful industry interests are siding with the regulators.

And who is on the other side? The clout-heavy industry lobby group, Organic Trade Association, United Natural Foods Incorporated (the largest organic food distributor), Stonyfield and the nation's largest organic certifier, CCOF.

More recently, and disturbingly, the umbrella group for the nation's organic certifiers, the independent inspectors/auditors that act as agents of the USDA, overseeing farms and giant corporate processors alike, have chimed in, coming to the USDA's defense.

The certifiers are supposed to be the independent umpires. The only thing that assures that they will not be biased, in favor of their clients who write them their paychecks, is the judicious oversight of the USDA's accreditation and auditing of these entities. And now you have them buttering up Mr. McEvoy and helping in

his damage control campaign? How unseemly.

What makes it even more unseemly is the fact that the board of directors at two of the largest certifiers, CCOF and OCIA, say they never were informed by their staff of their organization's endorsement of the controversial moves at the USDA.

The organic movement has always been about transparent debate and the focal point has always been at the semi-annual meetings of the National Organic Standards Board. That board can no longer set its own work plan and agenda, and Mr. McEvoy has now effectively appointed himself co-chairman of the board.

All that would be bad enough but now he wants to control the news and censor dissent. Those of us who care deeply about the ethical precepts that the organic movement was founded upon will not let that happen.

Mark A. Kastel, Codirector
The Cornucopia Institute

Please help ramp-up the pressure on the USDA to reverse their "power grab" by [sharing this commentary on Facebook](#) - "[click here](#)."

HAVING TROUBLE VIEWING THIS? [CLICK HERE FOR A WEB VERSION](#).

The Cornucopia Institute

is a nonprofit organization engaged in research and educational activities supporting the ecological principles and economic wisdom underlying sustainable and organic agriculture. Through research and investigations on agricultural and food issues, The Cornucopia Institute provides needed information to family farmers, consumers, stakeholders involved in the good food movement, and the media.

P.O. Box 126 Cornucopia, Wisconsin 54827
TEL: 808-625-2000 | FAX: 866-861-2214 | www.cornucopia.org

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From: [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#)
To: [Summers, Bruce - AMS](#)
Subject: FW: 2015 accomplishments
Date: Monday, September 14, 2015 6:55:26 AM
Attachments: [SES 2015 Accomp - McEvoy.docx](#)

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Friday, September 11, 2015 6:37 PM
To: Morris, Erin - AMS; Barnes, Rex - AMS
Subject: 2015 accomplishments

Let me know if you need anything else.

Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

FY 2015 Senior Executive Service (SES) Accomplishment Report
Miles McEvoy - Deputy Administrator, AMS National Organic Program

Critical Element 1. Leading Change

Weight:
15%

- (b) (6)
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Critical Element 2. Leading People

Weight:
30%

- (b) (6)
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Critical Element 3. Business Acumen

Weight:
10%

- (b) (6)
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(b) (6)

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Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions

Weight:
10%

(b) (6)

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Critical Element 5. Results Driven – Performance Requirements

Weight:
35%

Performance Requirement 1: Working Across AMS Programs: (b) (6)

(b) (6)

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Performance Requirement 2: Cultural Transformation (b) (6)

- (b) (6)
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Performance Requirement 3: Protect the Integrity of Organic Products (b) (6)

- (b) (6)
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Performance Requirement 4: Support Organic Market Development (b) (6)

- (b) (6)
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(b) (6)

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Performance Requirement 5: Information Technology (b) (6)

(b) (6)

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Performance Requirement 6: Support AMS Signature Process Improvements (b) (6)

(b) (6)

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From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#); [Michael, Matthew - AMS](#)
Cc: [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Bailey, Melissa - AMS](#)
Subject: FW: Article: Horizon "Organic" Factory Farm Accused of Improprieties, Again | OpEdNews
Date: Monday, February 17, 2014 8:45:01 AM

Matthew is working on talking points. Please (b)(5) Deliberative. Thanks.

Miles V McEvoy
 Deputy Administrator
 National Organic Program

-----Original Message-----

From: Saghafi, Michelle
Sent: Sunday, February 16, 2014 6:03 PM
To: Lipson, Mark - OSEC; Morris, Erin - AMS; Jones, Samuel - AMS; McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Subject: Article: Horizon "Organic" Factory Farm Accused of Improprieties, Again | OpEdNews

http://www.opednews.com/populum/pagem.php?f=Horizon-Organic-Factory-by-Will-Fantle-Agribusiness_Consumer_Factory-Farms_Food-140216-599.html

Horizon "Organic" Factory Farm Accused of Improprieties, Again

By Will Fantle (about the author)

February 16, 2014 at 09:40:27

CORNUCOPIA, WIS: In an open letter published today and, addressed to USDA National Organic Program chief Miles McEvoy, The Cornucopia Institute accused the regulatory agency of abdicating its enforcement responsibilities. Cornucopia, an organic industry watchdog, charged that the USDA had allowed Dean Foods and its WhiteWave subsidiary to, allegedly, operate a giant factory farm dairy that has been illegally disadvantaging the nation's family-scale dairy producers.

The Cornucopia Institute also filed, on February 10, its third formal legal complaint alleging Dean/WhiteWave's giant industrial dairy, located in Paul, Idaho has continued to operate illegally.

"We're hoping that third time's a charm," said Cornucopia's Senior Farm Policy Analyst, Mark Kastel.

Prior complaints by The Cornucopia Institute have resulted in the decertification and/or downsizing of a number of other certified organic Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) in the organic dairy sector, milking up to 10,000 cows each. Cornucopia has suggested that Dean Foods, with its heavy investment in federal election financing and strong lobbying presence in Washington, has "indemnified" the agribusiness giant from judicious enforcement.

"Just as we have banks that have become 'too big to fail,' in organics we see Dean Foods and WhiteWave (recently spun-off in 2013 through an IPO on Wall Street), one of the largest industry participants and the kingpin in the powerful Organic Trade Association, repeatedly and successfully flashing their 'get out of jail free card' purchased by influence peddlers in Washington," Kastel explained.

Originally managing over 8,000 head of cattle and thousands of acres of land in an arid region of Southern Idaho, Dean/WhiteWave's dairy -- providing milk for the Horizon Organic label -- was accused by Cornucopia, starting in 2005, of confining cattle in pens and buildings instead of providing access to pasture and grazing as federal organic law requires.

Cornucopia claims that their use of these allegedly illegal techniques resulted in millions of dollars of "ill-gotten gains" by catapulting the Horizon label into not only the largest brand in the organic dairy sector, but the largest brand, by dollar volume, in the entire organic industry.

Idaho Dairy

(image by The Cornucopia Institute)

Although the dairy in recent years reduced the number of cows it was managing, and added, for the first time, some amount of pasture, it also increased the number of times the cows were being milked from twice a day to three and even four times a day.

"Properly managing an organic dairy farm by moving the herd to fresh pasture after each twice-per-day milking becomes more and more difficult as herd size gets larger," said Kevin Engelbert, a certified organic dairy farmer from Nichols, New York. "If a farm gets to the point of milking thousands of cows, 24 hours a day, the logistics of getting the herd from the milking facility to fresh grass, legitimately grazing -- as required by law -- becomes impossible."

Recent interviews with dairy staff by Cornucopia investigators suggest that, to promote extremely high levels of milk production, the Horizon farm management prevented the cows from being put out on pasture between some of the milkings, and when they were out, made sure their bellies were already full of high-production rations (TMR feed) eaten in the barn.

Meanwhile, a select group of "fresh, high producing cows," being milked four times a day, were being entirely confined until their production levels dropped.

The reported level of milk production from the herd supplying Horizon Organics is seen on conventional CAFO dairies, but is very uncharacteristic of legitimate family-scale organic dairies.

"The cows were either prevented from going out and grazing, or if they did go out on pasture they probably didn't eat much fresh grass but instead lay down and chewed their cud, digesting the ration already eaten in the barn," Kastel surmised.

The federal regulations explicitly require all livestock to have access to the outdoors and, specifically, ruminants (including dairy and beef cattle, sheep and goats) to have access to high quality pasture.

Cornucopia's Kastel explained: "There are regulatory provisions allowing a farmer to 'temporarily' confine animals if letting them out on pasture would jeopardize their health or cause environmental problems. But nowhere in the standards do they allow confinement because moving thousands of cows back and forth to fresh grass would cut into milk production."

This past December, after WhiteWave announced to its shareholders a \$7.4 million write-down of the asset, it sold its corporate-owned industrial dairy to private investors in Idaho, although its Horizon brand continues to purchase its milk output.

"There is no statute of limitations in terms of enforcing federal organic standards," said Kastel. "We are asking the USDA to reopen our original complaints and fully investigate our new allegations that the cows on this dairy produced unreasonable amounts of milk based on skirting the requirement that they be fully grazed."

In 2008 the dairy publication The Milkweed published test results comparing brands of organic milk for nutritional compounds that make the milk healthier and are indicative of the amount of grazing time cattle are provided. The top-rated brand was Cedar Summit, distributing milk in Wisconsin and Minnesota. The lowest was Aurora Organic Dairy, an organization based in Colorado depending exclusively on factory farms and supplying private-label organic milk to Walmart, Costco, Target and other chains. One notch up from the bottom was the Horizon brand.

"WhiteWave continues to purchase milk from giant factory dairies in addition to many family farmers. WhiteWave's family farm suppliers are, we believe, just as ethical as the farmers supplying other brands," Kastel affirmed. "But the Horizon brand depends on giant CAFOs, milking thousands of cows each, for a large percentage

of their production and that impacts the quality and nutritional value of all their products."

"Small organic dairies nationwide have struggled with drought, flooding and oppressive heat. Still, we have pastured our cattle as required by the National Organic Program (NOP)," said Jim Goodman, who milks 45 cows near Wonewoc, Wisconsin. "We have provided a product that consumers expect when they buy organic and we make it work economically -- without cutting corners."

"If factory farm organic dairies are unwilling or unable to meet the NOP's pasture provisions," Goodman said, "then perhaps it is time they are notified that their continued noncompliance to the National Organic Standards has gone on too long and they should seek a non-organic market for their milk."

-30-

From: [Alonzo, Anne - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Rakola, Betsy - OSEC](#)
Cc: [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#); [Eckhouse, Sara - AMS](#)
Subject: FW: Briefing Memo Example
Date: Tuesday, May 19, 2015 5:20:25 PM
Attachments: [Sec Briefing - FSMA Assistance final 01.18.13.docx](#)

Miles/Betsy,

[Redacted] (b)(5) Deliberative

If so, attached is a (too long) sample of the format for S briefing papers.

[Redacted] (b)(5) Deliberative

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted] (b)(5) Deliberative

[Redacted] (b)(5) Deliberative

[Redacted]

Copying in Rex given its importance.

Anne

From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Holmes, Vella - AMS](#)
Cc: [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)
Subject: FW: Cease and Desist Letter
Date: Friday, August 14, 2015 1:04:05 PM

Hi Kay –

Please review and provide an update on this complaint. Thanks.

Miles

From: Chick Coate [mailto: (b) (6) .com]
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2015 10:52 AM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS; secretary.ross@cdfa.ca.gov; AMS - NOPACAAverseActions; Erickson, Dan - RMA; Simoes, Jesse - FSA, Elk Grove, CA; jensenj@swaccounty.net; kriger@saccounty.net; sbruce@arnt.com
Cc: Scott Lawrence; danny.lee@cdfa.ca.gov; Richard@CDFA Estes; Deborah Anderluh; Colleen Scherer; Jerome Rigot
Subject: Fw: Cease and Desist Letter

Here is the "Cease & Desist" and threatening email I received from Mr. Romito at SCS Global Services. And my response to Mr. Romito. I have not heard from Mr. Romito since.

Mr. McEvoy:

1. Did SCS/Mr. Romito ever send NOP my July emails to Mr. Nauman, as I requested him?
2. As I am sure you are aware, I sent the NOP Compliance & Enforcement Branch numerous documents regarding (b) (6), including (b) (6) selling conventional crops as organic. NOP never responded.
3. When I never received any response from NOP, I called your office three different times to confirm that NOP had received the documents and to inquire status of your actions. Three different times I was told that someone (including you) would call me back. No one from your office ever called me back.

Mr. Lee advised me that he/CDFAs was going to notify and forward Scott's and my complaint to the NOP ... specifically as it involved issues outside of California. I asked Mr. Lee about the status of his doing so, but, as usual, Mr. Lee did not respond.

In addition to what was included in my response to Mr. Romito, I am confused by the following statements from Mr. Romito.

1. "... your filing a complaint related to our assessment of (b) (6) ...". As repeatedly pointed out, Scott's and my complaint was about (b) (6) selling conventional crops as organic ... specifically (b) (6) selling Scott's 2013 300-acre/1,200 ton conventional corn crop as organic.
2. "... our role as third party auditors ...". What exactly is Mr. Romito saying ... "as third party auditors"? Mr. Nauman has stated that SCS began their investigation when they received our October 2014 document. I assume that this means that they began their investigation before CDFAs assigned them the investigation role/task. I have asked Mr. Lee when CDFAs assigned SCS the investigation task and CDFAs's exact wording to SCS in doing so, but, again, as usual, Mr. Lee has not responded back to me.
3. "... pursued the matter to its conclusion." Mr. Romito has got to be kidding, right?! Not according to Scott's and my assessment! Take a look at the emails I have sent to Mr. Nauman and Mr. Lee. I have clearly established and demonstrated that the June 18 SCS investigation report was incomplete, inaccurate, false, did not address our complaint that (b) (6) sold Scott's 2013 conventional corn crop as organic, contained outright lies and was deliberately skewed in such a manner as to protect SCS's vested interests and possible wrong-doings! Mr. Nauman has failed to respond to numerous emails containing questions and issues regarding his/SCS investigation of our complaint. What does that tell you?!

At this point in time, based on the emails I have sent you, it should be very clear that:

1. Somebody is trying to hide something!
2. Somebody is not doing their job!
3. Somebody is knowingly aiding and abetting criminal activity!
4. Somebody is hurting and giving the agriculture industry, the farming community and the organic sector a bad reputation/image while allowing criminals to rip-off ag-related businesses, further-processed food manufacturers, government agencies, consumers and taxpayers!
5. Somebody needs to be brought to justice: taken to court, fined, appropriately punished and put in prison!
6. Based on this situation alone, it appears that the organic product positioning and story could be one big hoax and sham. How many other people like (b) (6) and organic certification agencies like SCS are doing what we have complained about? And then there are the various organizations like CDFA and NOP who are supposed to enforce the organic regulations and laws! Further processed organic food manufacturers, organic consumers and taxpayers are being hood-winked and scammed! But that is nothing new for (b) (6) ... just look at what Scott and I communicated in our October 2014 document and our subsequent communications!

Ms. Ross: Since Mr. Lee does not respond to my emails and questions, please tell Scott and me if the CDFA will investigate our complaint that (b) (6) sold Scott's 2013 300-acre/1,200 ton conventional corn crop as organic and, depending on its findings, take the appropriate punitive actions.

Isn't it time for someone to step-up to the plate and take responsibility for and take action about this situation?! Isn't this your job?! As previously communicated, if you/your agency can't do it by yourself, then form a task force with the appropriate agriculture and law enforcement agencies to get the job done! And if you are unwilling to do the job for which you are being paid to do, then submit your resignation and close your operation! Immediately!

Please let Scott or me know if you have any questions, etc. Thank you.

Chick Coate

Phone: (b) (6)
E-Mail: (b) (6).com

Scott Larence

Phone: (b) (6)
E-Mail: (b) (6)il.com

cc: Governor Jerry Brown

On Monday, July 27, 2015 6:16 PM, Chick Coate <(b) (6).com> wrote:

I just received your "Cease and Desist Letter". The following responds to same.

1. I suggest you get your facts straight before you send me any more correspondence.
2. My last name is "Coate" and not "Coates". One would think if I have sent the amount of communication to one of your employees as you indicated that you would have seen how to spell my last name correctly as I included it in my communication to your employee.
3. I was not harassing one of your employees and I had no intent of doing so. I assume you are referring to Brandon Nauman? I was only asking questions about his investigation report regarding CDFA Complaint 367-14, of which Scott Lawrence and I were the two reporting parties. And I was trying to get Mr. Nauman to respond to our questions/issues in a more prompt manner while it was still current/"fresh" as Scott and I have many issues with the information he reported in his investigation report (b) (6). Mr. Nauman has not been responding to numerous emails requesting more information about his investigation efforts and investigation report. As a result, I was attempting to generate a response from Mr. Nauman and allow/encourage him to respond to his July 9 email to me, my emails to him and my issues with his June 18 investigation report.

2. I was not "cyberbullying" one of your employees and I had no intent of doing so. Again, I assume you are referring to Brandon Nauman? Again, please see my explanation in #2 above. As one of two of the reporting parties of the criminal activities reported in CDFA Complaint 367-14, I thought I was entitled and had the right to question what Mr. Nauman reported in his investigation report. (b) (6)

3. I am not an employee of SCS Global Services. I have no idea about your policies. I did not even know you had any. As a result, how was I even aware that I was violating any of SCS's policies? Consequently, this requests you forward me the policies you addressed/referred to in order that I may better understand and abide by them. Please send them to my physical mailing address. Do they apply to outside individuals such as myself and Scott or only to SCS employees?

4. Scott's and my complaint was not against/directed/requesting an assessment of (b) (6). The crux and at the forefront of our complaint was that (b) (6) was selling conventional crops as organic ... targeting (b) (6) selling Scott's 2013 conventional corn crop as organic. I believe that was made very clear in my communication to Brandon Nauman and I have been trying to help him understand that fact relative (b) (6)

5. Mr. Nauman never contacted me in requesting that I stop my communication to him. Never. Not once. How was I to know that he was not welcoming my input into his investigation efforts and critique of his investigation report? All Mr. Nauman had to do was contact me and ask me to quit communicating to him and I would have. But he did not. How did I know if he did not tell me? I am not a mind reader. Since Mr. Nauman has asked you to fight what he considers his battles/problems and appears unable to speak for himself, perhaps you can tell me why Mr. Nauman didn't contact me and ask me to stop communicating to him? That would have been very simple. It was not my intent to upset Mr. Nauman or cause him any emotional duress. I hope Mr. Nauman didn't have a breakdown or cry as a result of my communication to him. I was only asking Mr. Nauman legitimate questions and bringing up valid issues regarding his investigation efforts and investigation report.

6. Mr. Nauman accused me of not being cooperative in his June 18 investigation report. And now Mr. Nauman is complaining about my communication to him? That is just too funny!

7. (b) (6) His June 18 investigation report had a major impact on the CDFA case direction regarding Complaint 367-14. And now you are saying that I do not have the right to bring Mr. Nauman to task about what he has reported?! That is totally absurd! And one has to wonder what type of operation SCS is conducting!

8. Are you aware that Mr. Nauman has previously aske me to let him know if I have any questions, need clarification, etc.? Are you aware that Mr. Nauman has previously directed me to put anything in writing to him that I want to communicate to him? And now Mr. Nauman is complaining about my communication to him?

9. FYI, I have contacted the NOP about this situation. Per this email, I am requesting you to forward my July emails to the NOP for their evaluation. I hope they initiate an investigation into SCS Global Services, it certainly appears that it is needed and warranted. Your email to me only indicates that SCS might be derelict and negligent in doing the job they are supposed to and perhaps be hiding something or things.

10. I guess it is safe to assume that Mr. Nauman is not going to respond to my various July emails in answering my questions and addressing the issues contained within? What a shame! Speaks volumes about Mr. Nauman, his investigation into Complaint 367-14 and the type operation SCS runs.

No problem regarding your request, Mr. Romito. I will no longer communicate with SCS or its employees. Even if Scott's and my continued investigation into (b) (6) selling Scott's 2013 conventional corn crop as organic reveals pertinent information relative to Mr. Nauman's/SCS's June 18 investigation report and your SCS certification regarding any of the (b) (6), as it is apparent that SCS does not want to know. I think I have already made my point. I also believe I have established and demonstrated that SCS's investigation

into Complaint 367-14 was bogus.

Please let me know if you have any questions, etc.

Chick Coate

Phone: (b) (6)

E-Mail (b) (6)@.com

On Monday, July 27, 2015 2:52 PM, Scott Romito <SRomito@scsglobalservices.com> wrote:

Dear Mr. Coates,

It has come to my attention that you have repeatedly attempted to engage one of our employees through emails which have increased in frequency of late. Per your filing of a complaint related to our assessment of (b) (6), we initiated an investigation pursuant to scheme rules and pursued the matter to its conclusion. Please note that we have explained to you our role as third party auditors, our responsibilities and the limits of our authority thereunder, and the results of our investigation of your complaint. These aforementioned results have been approved and agreed to by the National Organic Program (NOP), and any further inquiries should be directed exclusively to them.

Your continued and escalated email campaign and cyberbullying directed toward one of our employees has become increasingly aggressive and harassing and as such is in violation of our harassment and anti-bullying policies. I am therefore sending you this letter of insistence that you CEASE AND DESIST all communication with SCS Global Services and its staff. This will be our final communication to you and the next step, which I trust will not be necessary, would be to implement a restraining order via outside counsel.

Sincerely,

Scott Romito | *Chief Financial Officer and General Counsel*

SCS Global Services

2000 Powell Street, Ste. 600, Emeryville, CA 94608 USA

+1 (b) (6)

sromito@SCSglobalservices.com

www.SCSglobalservices.com

Setting the Standard for Sustainability™

The SCS Kingfisher certification mark signifies products and services that deliver proven environmental, social and quality benefits.

From: [Brown Rosen, Emily - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Arsenault, Michelle - AMS](#); [Brines, Lisa - AMS](#); [Lewis, Paul I - AMS](#)
Subject: FW: feedback
Date: Friday, October 23, 2015 11:14:52 AM

fyi

From: Harriet Behar [mailto:harriet@mosesorganic.org]
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2015 12:40 PM
To: Brown Rosen, Emily - AMS
Subject: feedback

I thought you might like to see that there are starting to be numerous folks who think Cornucopia has gone too far, maybe this will make folks be a little more skeptical on what cornie says in the future? I am not sure if you see ODAIRY or not, these comments were taken from there..... I especially like Joel Johnson's comment (I don't know him). And I even agree mostly with what Mark Keating has to say, although maybe you have a different perspective on that.

See you soon!

Harriet

From: Organic Dairy Producers [mailto:ODAIRY@LISTSERV.NODPA.COM] **On Behalf Of** joel johnson
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2015 11:00 AM
To: ODAIRY@LISTSERV.NODPA.COM
Subject: Re: [NODPA-ODAIRY] FW: [COMFOOD:] Organic Administrator Faces Backlash [who owns the organic label ... we all do]

Really appreciate this honest and meaningful perspective. So, Cornucopia know that much of what they are upset about is outside Miles' control. Yet they attack his character and integrity? Why?

Because it's good headlines and they are fundamentally dishonest. Too much time believing that the ends justify the means has resulted in Cornucopia getting in the way of far more issues than they help solve.

Joel Johnson

On Oct 22, 2015, at 11:40 AM, Mark Keating (b) (6) [.NET](#)> wrote:

I don't want to fuel the hype around this thread, but I have a few points to make. It's my opinion based after working in organic agriculture for almost thirty years including eight years in Washington, DC. I served in the NOP on two occasions for a total of three and a half years and another two years right next door for the office assisting farmers markets. I have known every one of the

seven public servants to have lead the NOP since its inception and worked quite closely with most of them.

The attacks on Miles McEvoy are completely unwarranted. Furthermore, they reflect a fundamental misreading of how things work in DC and as such, they cannot play a constructive role in moving the interests of the organic community forward. Having seen it firsthand, I always marveled at how powerful the organic community felt whoever was at the helm of the NOP was, when in fact that person had very limited capacity to affect change. It's probably the number one reason why that job has frustrated many of those who have held it: the organic community expects the world of you, but you are at most a welterweight in a building full of middleweights and true heavyweights.

Nobody running the NOP ever has or ever will make regulatory changes to the organic standards such as the Sunset revisions or dairy herd replacement. If something shows up in the Federal Register, it is because the Secretary of Agriculture 1) understands what it means and 2) wants it to mean that. Please stop attributing responsibility and subsequently blame to Miles McEvoy for decisions that without a doubt have been thoroughly reviewed and settled by the Secretary of Agriculture. I am sure that everybody from Mr. McEvoy's immediate supervisor - the Administrator of the Agricultural Marketing Service - through the several additional layers of control leading to the Secretary's desk value Miles' input because he's got experience and credibility, and he has delivered on the tough assignments that keep landing on his desk. That being said, and you can totally trust me on this one, the political leadership at USDA are hard charging, highly opinionated people with a very clear understanding of what they want to do and why. They have called all the shots for which Cornucopia -who are savvy enough to know better - insist on blaming Miles for. This makes no sense to me, can only muddy the waters and generate ripples of doubt and confusion that will undermine the general public's trust in the organic seal. That's a poor return on investment, don't ya think?

It's a moot point to ask whether Miles McEvoy is the best leader the NOP has ever had since the nature of the job was completely different for the people who preceded him. Both before and after the brief window between 1998 and 2000, the leader of the NOP was a near-invisible middle-level staff person who was lucky if the AMS Administrator would take his/her phone call. Let's just say they were kinda lonely inside the building, although the organic community was always there to keep them company! Miles has overseen the NOP as it about quadrupled in staff and budget - you have to be a really good manager to oversee that and keep (most) people happy. And again, let's assign responsibility where it belongs - Dr. Kathleen Merrigan expressly introduced the Age of Enforcement theme - once again, it's the political people, not the bureaucrats who set policy. Capitol Hill has poured extraordinary resources into all sectors of organic agriculture - certification, research, NRCS, foreign ag - and the Secretary expected results. There are many, many examples of the NOP providing quality, timely service over the past five years and catalyzing broader interest and support for organic agriculture across the USDA. Mr. McEvoy certainly deserves a lot of credit - and thanks - for very capably handling these activities which were indeed within his pay grade.

I work with about one hundred certified farmers across the entire country every

year and an equal number of agricultural professionals who are deeply invested in organic certification, some for decades and some just jumping in. We can be very, very proud of the organic movement and we need to keep working hard to effect the positive change that is DEFINITELY changing the entire agricultural landscape. There should be no place for vitriolic personal attacks within our community.

Two more folks who deserve mention in "best ever NOP chief" thread. Keith Jones was a remarkably astute and flexible guy who was really committed to hard work and good process and never got too hung up over outcomes. Kind of like the dryland farmer he grew up being. He was great manager who trusted and respected his staff. He did a fantastic job as the point person between 1997 and publication of the Final Rule. Keith is so smart, he knew to ditch the thankless job leading the NOP! Secondly, Richard Mathews is a guy who really grew over time and gained a genuine understanding about how the organic process works and what makes it special. Nobody ever worked harder than Richard and nobody ever tried harder to get the details right. He was a little "my way or the highway" when he started, but I'm glad that he has found a permanent home serving our community.

-----Original Message-----

From: Ed Maltby

Sent: Oct 22, 2015 6:26 AM

To: ODAIRY@LISTSERV.NODPA.COM

Subject: [NODPA-ODAIRY] FW: [COMFOOD:] Organic Administrator Faces Backlash [who owns the organic label ... we all do]

Capital Press



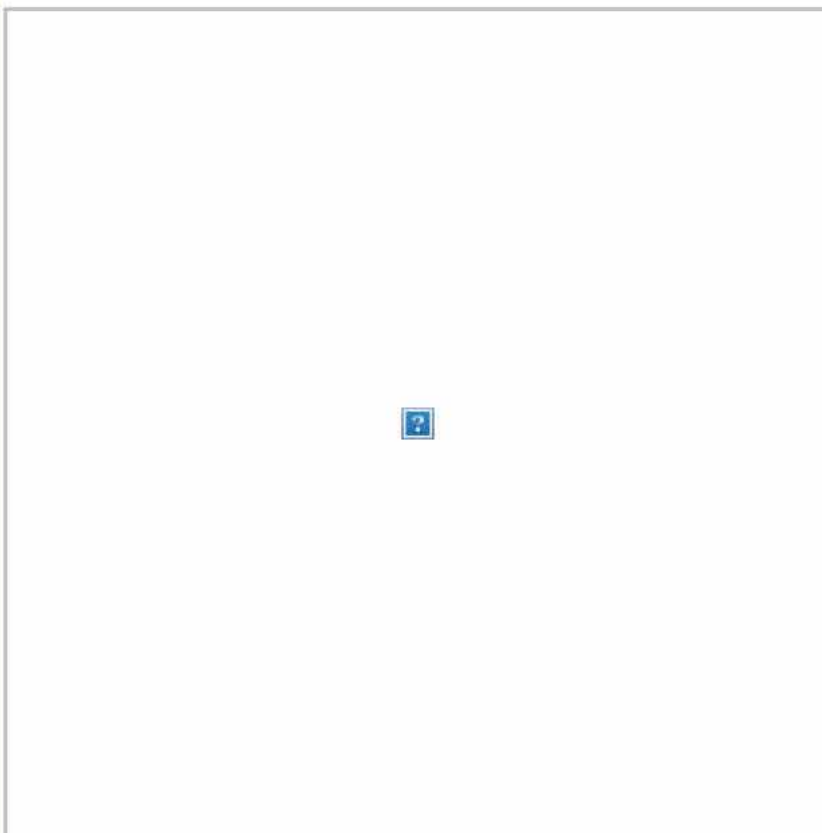
Organic Administrator Faces Backlash

[Mateusz Perkowski](#)

Capital Press

Published: October 21, 2015 11:16AM

Last changed: October 21, 2015 11:22AM



Miles McEvoy

Many organic groups that once praised USDA deputy administrator Miles McEvoy are now fighting his policies in federal court.

When Miles McEvoy was put in charge of the USDA's National Organic Program in 2009, the appointment was strongly applauded by organic and environmental groups.

Six years later, some of those same organizations are facing off against McEvoy in federal court over his administration of the program.

While the criticisms of his policies are numerous, most boil down to the allegation that McEvoy has weakened independent oversight of the program to make life easier for large agribusiness firms.

"There is a decisive split in the organic community and McEvoy is right in the middle of it," said Mark Kastel, co-founder of the Cornucopia Institute, an organic watchdog group, who once praised the deputy administrator as "a true believer, not a PR figurehead."

Prior to joining USDA, McEvoy was instrumental in shaping the organic inspection program at the Washington State Department of Agriculture and was involved in launching other organic programs and organizations.

“I don’t know if we had higher expectations than McEvoy deserved or if he changed,” Kastel says now.

A spokesperson for USDA said the agency “values and has faith in Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy’s leadership of the National Organic Program.”

The program thoroughly investigates any complaints about non-compliance with organic protocols and it’s inaccurate that USDA’s internal auditors are investigating McEvoy or his department, as claimed by the Cornucopia Institute, the spokesperson said.

A major point of contention is McEvoy’s decision to change the decision-making process for which synthetic substances are allowed to remain in organic production.

Traditionally, synthetic substances were removed from the list of approved organic materials unless two-thirds of the members of the National Organic Standards Board voted to retain them.

In 2013, the USDA changed the procedure so that two-thirds of the board must vote to remove a substance. In effect, a nine-person majority of the 15-member board can vote to remove a substance and its use would still be allowed.

Earlier this year, a lawsuit was filed against McEvoy and his superiors at USDA for allegedly violating administrative law by implementing the new rule without public comment.

Among the 14 plaintiffs were the Cornucopia Institute, the Organic Consumers Association and the environmental groups Center for Food Safety, Beyond Pesticides and Food & Water Watch.

A federal judge recently dismissed the case, ruling the plaintiffs lack legal standing to challenge the rule, but they will be allowed to re-file their complaint to correct the issues identified by the judge.

The dispute over synthetic materials is just one example of heavy-handedness during McEvoy’s tenure at USDA, Kastel said.

Kastel said McEvoy has disregarded recommendations by NOSB to prohibit the use of nanotechnology and hydroponics in organic production, failed to sufficiently investigate large livestock farms for compliance with organic rules and concealed the identities of scientists who review the safety of materials.

It’s possible that McEvoy is simply carrying out orders from USDA leaders, but he is implementing these policies with zeal and a “big smile on his face,” Kastel said.

“We have a government agency operating by fiat,” said Jay Feldman, executive director of Beyond Pesticides. “Miles just happens to be the man

at the helm.”

Beyond Pesticides is involved in another lawsuit against McEvoy and USDA that alleges the agency has unlawfully permitted compost that’s contaminated with pesticides to be used in organic production.

A federal judge recently rejected USDA’s motion to dismiss the case.

Feldman said the National Organic Program under the Bush administration ignored recommendations by NOSB but at least followed procedures that allowed for public input on policies.

The situation under the Obama administration is “clearly worse. It’s a clear violation of process and law,” he said. “This is just bad for business because it undercuts public trust.”

It appears that McEvoy is acting at the behest of large corporations that want to capitalize on the growing popularity of organics, said Barry Flamm, a former chairman of the NOSB who once considered McEvoy a “breath of fresh air.”

“Organic has grown. It has become a money-maker,” said Flamm.

McEvoy’s policies seem aimed at removing obstacles to the way he wants to run the National Organic Program, such as when he disbanded a key policy-setting committee, stripped the NOSB of the ability to set its own agenda and otherwise undermined the board’s authority.

“I was totally shocked, surprised and angry,” Flamm said. “They really cut back on the public transparency. All these changes were made unilaterally.”

<http://www.capitalpress.com/Organic/20151021/organic-administrator-faces-backlash>

Mark Keating
Wheel of Life Consulting
Advocacy for Organic Agriculture
[REDACTED] (b) (6) [net](#)

“If I were asked to sum up the results of the work of the pioneers of the last 12 years or so on the relation of agriculture to public health, I should reply that a fertile soil means healthy crops, healthy livestock, and last, but not least, healthy human beings.”
Sir Albert Howard, 1945

From: [Allen, William - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: FW: Follow-up
Date: Wednesday, November 18, 2015 11:45:37 AM

FYI

From: Baer, Julian (Agriculture) [mailto:Julian_Baer@ag.senate.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, November 18, 2015 11:27 AM
To: Allen, William - AMS
Subject: Re: Follow-up

Thank you Bill. Yesterday was extremely helpful. I know you all are very busy, so I appreciate you coming up.

Regarding Miles, I have tremendous respect for him and the work that he does, and it makes me angry that people and organizations behave the way they do. I really feel for him. Please let us know if there are ways we can be supportive in the face of disappointing and inappropriate activities.

Julian Baer
Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry

(b) (6)

On Nov 18, 2015, at 10:02 AM, Allen, William - AMS <William.Allen@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Good morning. I hope yesterday was helpful. Also, I wanted to thank you for the kind words directed to Miles. The personal attacks are certainly unwarranted, but Miles always keeps his eyes on the tasks at hand and is a devoted public servant.

-Bill

William D. Allen IV
Director, Legislative & Regulatory Review Staff
USDA Agricultural Marketing Service

(b) (6)

From: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#)
To: [Walker, Natosha - AMS](#)
Subject: FW: FY16 Performance Plan
Date: Friday, November 06, 2015 8:59:50 AM
Attachments: [FY2016 SES plan - mmcevoy.docx](#)

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2015 3:58 PM
To: Morris, Erin - AMS; Barnes, Rex - AMS
Subject: FY16 Performance Plan

Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

SES Performance Management System Executive Performance Agreement



Part 1. Consultation. <i>I have reviewed this plan and have been consulted on its development.</i>						
Executive's Name (<i>Last, First, MI</i>): McEvoy, Miles, V				Appraisal Pd: 10/01/15 –9/30/16		
Executive's Signature:				Date:		
Title: Associate Administrator				Organization:		
Rating Official's Name (<i>Last, First, MI</i>): Barnes, Rex				CA <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> LT/LE <input type="checkbox"/>		
Rating Official's Signature:				Date:		
Part 2. Progress Review						
Executive's Signature:				Date:		
Rating Official's Signature:				Date:		
Reviewing Official's Signature (<i>Optional</i>):				Date:		
Part 3. Summary Rating						
Initial Summary Rating	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5 Outstanding	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 Exceeds Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 Minimally Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 Unsatisfactory	
Rating Official's Name (<i>Last, First, MI</i>):						
Rating Official's Signature:				Date:		
Executive's Signature:				Date:		
Reviewing Official's Signature (<i>Second-Level Official's Concurrence</i>):				Date:		
Higher Level Review (if applicable)						
<input type="checkbox"/> I request a higher level review. Executive's Initials:				Date:		
Higher Level Review Completed <input type="checkbox"/>				Date:		
Higher Level Reviewer Signature:						
Performance Review Board Recommendation		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
PRB Chair Signature:				Date:		
Annual Summary Rating		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
Appointing Authority Signature:				Date:		
Part 4. Derivation Formula and Calculation of Annual Summary Rating						
Critical Element	Element Rating		Weight	Score		Summary Level Ranges
	Initial	Final (if changed)		Initial	Final (if changed)	
1. Leading Change			15%			475-500 = Level 5 400-474 = Level 4 300-399 = Level 3 200-299 = Level 2 Any CE rated Level 1 = Level 1
2. Leading People			30%			
3. Business Acumen			10%			
4. Building Coalitions			10%			
5. Results Driven			35%			
Total			100%			

Part 5. Critical Elements

- **Performance Standards for Critical Elements** (The performance standard for each critical element is specified below; examples for the top three performance levels can be found in the system description).

Level 5: The executive demonstrates exceptional performance, fostering a climate that sustains excellence and optimizes results in the executive’s organization, agency, department or government-wide. This represents the highest level of executive performance, as evidenced by the extraordinary impact on the achievement of the organization’s mission. The executive is an inspirational leader and is considered a role model by agency leadership, peers, and employees. The executive continually contributes materially to or spearheads agency efforts that address or accomplish important agency goals, consistently achieves expectations at the highest level of quality possible, and consistently handles challenges, exceeds targets, and completes assignments ahead of schedule at every step along the way.
- **Level 4:** The executive demonstrates a very high level of performance beyond that required for successful performance in the executive’s position and scope of responsibilities. The executive is a proven, highly effective leader who builds trust and instills confidence in agency leadership, peers, and employees. The executive consistently exceeds established performance expectations, timelines, or targets, as applicable.
- **Level 3:** The executive demonstrates the high level of performance expected and the executive’s actions and leadership contribute positively toward the achievement of strategic goals and meaningful results. The executive is an effective, solid, and dependable leader who delivers high-quality results based on measures of quality, quantity, efficiency, and/or effectiveness within agreed upon timelines. The executive meets and often exceeds challenging performance expectations established for the position.
- **Level 2:** The executive’s contributions to the organization are acceptable in the short term but do not appreciably advance the organization towards achievement of its goals and objectives. While the executive generally meets established performance expectations, timelines and targets, there are occasional lapses that impair operations and/or cause concern from management. While showing basic ability to accomplish work through others, the executive may demonstrate limited ability to inspire subordinates to give their best efforts or to marshal those efforts effectively to address problems characteristic of the organization and its work.
- **Level 1:** In repeated instances, the executive demonstrates performance deficiencies that detract from mission goals and objectives. The executive generally is viewed as ineffectual by agency leadership, peers, or employees. The executive does not meet established performance expectations/timelines/targets and fails to produce – or produces unacceptable – work products, services, or outcomes.

Element Rating Level Points

Level 5 = 5 points
Level 4 = 4 points
Level 3 = 3 points
Level 2 = 2 points
Level 1 = 0 points

Critical Element 1. Leading Change**Weight: 15%**

Develops and implements an organizational vision that integrates key organizational and program goals, priorities, values, and other factors. Assesses and adjusts to changing situations, implementing innovative solutions to make organizational improvements, ranging from incremental improvements to major shifts in direction or approach, as appropriate. Balances change and continuity; continually strives to improve service and program performance; creates a work environment that encourages creative thinking, collaboration, and transparency; and maintains program focus, even under adversity.

Agency-Specific Performance Requirements

Demonstrates a focus on ensuring civil rights compliance and commitment in the workplace.

Leads organizational change and motivates managers to incorporate vision, strategic planning and results-driven management in the full range of the organization's activities. Addresses programmatic requirements as necessary to motivate and lead the organization. Strategies are designed and implemented to improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency, and to meet program goals. Program goals are aligned to agency strategic plans and accomplished within specified timeframes.

Interests of the organization, employee, and customer/stakeholder are well balanced and priorities are adjusted in response to changing demands. Meets management initiative goals as imposed by regulatory/oversight agencies (e.g. Office of Management and Budget and Office of Personnel Management), and the Department or agency.

Leads organization in supporting the Secretary's initiative to improve Departmental responses to important inquiries of USDA's partners, customers, and Legislative Officials and for improved release of information to the press and public. As requested, reports activities and process improvements to the Department's Office of Executive Secretariat, Office of Congressional Relations, and Office of Communications.

Coordinates with business units to align their individual plans and identify clear measures of accomplishment. Encourages the development and implementation of initiatives or innovative solutions to enhance/improve procedures or services. Encourages employees to take risk, think creatively and work cooperatively with others in the program and agency.

Shares information and goals/vision in a way that enhances transparency and encourages collaboration.

Applicable milestones from the USDA Civil Rights Plan and Strategic Plan are incorporated into the program or staff office strategic and annual performance plans. Applicable goals and objectives related to accountability, program delivery, outreach, workforce diversity, employment practices, resources and structure, performance, administrative activities, communications and reporting are met in accordance with Department and agency policy.

Develops and implements outreach strategies that enhance the delivery of agricultural services and assistance to underserved populations. Demonstrates understanding of and commitment to equal employment opportunity and ensures fair and equitable program delivery. Strengthens stakeholder relationships by continually drafting, communicating, and delivering educational programs about the benefits and effectiveness of AMS services.

Ensures subordinate supervisors exercise effective managerial, communication and interpersonal skills to supervise and develop a diverse workforce.

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

<i>Critical Element Rating – Leading Change</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
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Critical Element 2. Leading People**Weight: 30%**

Designs and implements strategies that maximize employee potential, connects the organization horizontally and vertically, and fosters high ethical standards in meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals. Provides an inclusive workplace that fosters the development of others to their full potential; allows for full participation by all employees; facilitates collaboration, cooperation, and teamwork, and supports constructive resolution of conflicts. Ensures employee performance plans are aligned with the organization's mission and goals, that employees receive constructive feedback, and that employees are realistically appraised against clearly defined and communicated performance standards. Holds employees accountable for appropriate levels of performance and conduct. Seeks and considers employee input. Recruits, retains, and develops the talent needed to achieve a high quality, diverse workforce that reflects the nation, with the skills needed to accomplish organizational performance objectives while supporting workforce diversity, workplace inclusion, and equal employment policies and programs.

Agency-Specific Performance Requirements

Creates an environment where people from diverse backgrounds feel respected, recognized, and valued; actively fosters and maintains a work environment free of bullying, sexual harassment, and discrimination as prescribed by Departmental and Federal civil rights regulations and laws. In addition, implements strategies for addressing underrepresentation of minorities, women, and/or persons with disabilities within the workforce.

Maintains a positive organizational environment that fosters diversity, inclusion, innovation, initiative, open and honest communication, and teamwork among employees and peers. Within available resources, ensures employees have the tools and training to do their jobs.

Leads organization to set goals and track results for achieving workforce diversity, recruitment, and retention programs that will help to maximize the hiring and retention of highly qualified employees in underrepresented groups. Upon request by OHRM reports activities and progress towards workforce diversity achievements.

Seeks employee feedback to identify needs and expectations and considers employee perspective when making decisions affecting workforce or programs. Increases employee participation in feedback opportunities such as the employee survey. Analyze feedback and develop strategies to address areas of opportunity.

Recruits and selects new employees based on organizational goals, budget considerations, and staffing needs. When filling a position, the supervisor engages and collaborates with HR to ensure skills required for the job are identified, posting of the job vacancy is accurate, and assists in identifying contacts for diverse locations or organizations for recruiting purposes. Participates as needed with HR in the proper screening of applications, and appropriate categorization of applicants based on qualifications.

Utilizes flexible hiring authorities when filling a vacancy (e.g., targeted disabilities, student employment, direct hire, appointing veterans, etc.) to ensure diversity in recruitment and hiring.

Successfully transitions new hires into the position by promptly providing an orientation into the workforce and establishing performance elements and standards. Supervisors provide ongoing feedback and coaching, and make appropriate use of the probationary period to assess the new hire's ability to perform in the position.

Encourages employees to participate in developmental assignments, details, mentoring and training programs, and other agency programs to develop and retain a highly qualified workforce. Closes competency/skills gap for mission critical positions.

Implements retention strategies that focus on key internal processes (e.g., work environment, employee orientation, executing Individual Development Plans for all employees--subject to bargaining obligations, coaching, development, and mentoring, etc.) that promote employee growth, supports the health of the workforce, and drive the future success of the organization's people and infrastructure. Closes competency/skills gap for mission critical positions.

Manages and controls attrition by developing best practices and retention strategies as well as by developing a succession plan. Assesses current workforce plans to ensure they are up-to-date in order to meet Program/Agency goals and objectives. Works with senior management officials and HR to comply with the workforce planning process as described in the Department's position management policy.

Develops employee performance plans within established timeframes and that align with Agency and Departmental goals and objectives. Communicates to employees how their work supports the Agency mission and strategic plan/initiatives. Employee performance plans contain clear, results-focused measures and ensures supervisors provide accurate and timely feedback to determine progress and success in meeting expectations. Employees are held accountable for their performance in meeting goals.

Ensures that performance plans, progress reviews, and appraisals of employees are conducted by the due dates established by the Department or Agency. Performance plans for each employee must include at least one critical element that is traceable to the agency's goals and objectives (e.g., Mission Results critical performance element). Provides ongoing feedback and coaching as demonstrated through performance feedback sessions as evidenced by 100% of employees receiving at least one feedback session at the midpoint of the rating period. Appraisals show a fair distribution in ratings among all employees.

Ensures appropriate action is taken to address performance problems in a manner that supports organizational goals and objectives. Ensures subordinate managers and supervisors adhere to the Agency performance management policy with regard to performance appraisal and employee recognition.

Performance and employee feedback data is used as an indicator of compliance and general satisfaction or needed improvement with regard to the planning, developing, monitoring, rating and rewarding of performance.

Utilizes the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) to identify and address issues related to employee engagement, development, and satisfaction. Target: Based on specific information collected from the 2014 FEVS, implements effective and measurable strategies to address FEVS scoring as applicable to my mission area, agency, and individual position.

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

Critical Element Rating – Leading People

Level 5

Level 4

Level 3

Level 2

Level 1

Critical Element 3. Business Acumen**Weight: 10%**

Assesses, analyzes, acquires, and administers human, financial, material, and information resources in a manner that instills public trust and accomplishes the organization's mission. Uses technology to enhance processes and decision making. Executes the operating budget; prepares budget requests with justifications; and manages resources.

Agency-Specific Performance Requirements

Manages resources in a manner that fosters an environment that upholds civil rights standards and is inclusive of a diverse workforce.

Human, financial, material, and informational resources are effectively acquired and managed to achieve performance goals. Needs assessments are based on organizational goals and budget realities, and opportunities to reduce program and administrative costs are sought. Management control systems are established/maintained to monitor activities, identify problem areas, and initiate timely corrective action.

Explores new partnerships and innovative ways to carry out AMS mission with fewer resources. Leverages budget realities (diminishing resources) and best practices to remain efficient, effective, relevant and valued. Procures, develops and uses resources to efficiently and effectively support AMS programs.

Adjusts spending priorities such as travel, training, equipment purchases, and vacancies by improving business processes, adapting and innovating procedures in these areas.

Evaluates and develops fee schedules that encourage increased efficiency and cost reductions while maintaining high quality services. Develops a long term user fee plan that provides for future adjustments.

Continuously seeks to improve business processes, sharing those efforts with other programs to improve overall Department performance. Fully leverage the expertise and commitment of the workforce to meet challenges and the agency mission.

Uses technology innovation and organizational synergies to meet the needs of American agriculture.

Provides leadership to support Federal and USDA strategic sourcing efforts in support of the Blueprint for Stronger Service and USDA Strategic Plan FY2014-2018: Strategic Goal Number 5. Champions USDA's "Shared First" policy and ensures strategic goals are met or exceeded. Promotes fulfillment of the small business socio-economic goals of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization. Champions biobased and biopreferred policies and ensures compliance with applicable guidance and regulations.

As applicable, enhances data accuracy in all acquisition systems and ensures that contractor performance data is reported timely in the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS). Promotes the development of the acquisition workforce through adherence to federal and agency policies and effective hiring, training and development, and succession planning. Ensures acquisition processes comply with federal and departmental policy and regulations while maximizing taxpayer investment, minimizing agency risk, and optimizing customer value.

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

Critical Element Rating – Business Acumen

 Level 5

 Level 4

 Level 3

 Level 2

 Level 1

Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions	Weight: 10%
<p>Solicits and considers feedback from internal and external stakeholders or customers. Coordinates with appropriate parties to maximize input from the widest range of appropriate stakeholders to facilitate an open exchange of opinion from diverse groups and strengthen internal and external support. Explains, advocates, and expresses facts and ideas in a convincing manner and negotiates with individuals and groups internally and externally, as appropriate. Develops a professional network with other organizations and identifies the internal and external politics that affect the work of the organization.</p>	
<p>Agency-Specific Performance Requirements</p> <p>Utilizes outreach strategies to network with minority organizations and institutions, as well as, advocates for women, minorities, and/or persons with disabilities.</p> <p>Ensures a high degree of responsiveness to organizational leadership, the public, and internal and external customers. Continuously reviews and monitors organizational performance to achieve agency mission results and considers the customer's point of view. Consults and collaborates and builds partnerships with agencies and other stakeholders, and takes decisive actions in accordance with law, regulation, and Department policy.</p> <p>Systematically listens to customers and gathers their feedback, actively seeking to identify their needs and expectations, and effectively communicating those needs and expectations to employees. Ensures employees are prompt, professional, fair and responsible to the circumstances of individual customers to the extent permitted by law and regulation.</p> <p>Collaborates with stakeholders to help them succeed, tell their story, and remain competitive in a global marketplace. Leverages the expertise and commitment of the workforce to meet the agency mission and future challenges.</p>	
<p>Rating Official Narrative: <i>(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)</i></p>	
<p>Critical Element Rating – Building Coalitions</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Level 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1</p>

Critical Element 5. Results Driven				Weight: 35%		
<p>Agency Goals/Objectives for current FY: Must have at least 1 result (may have more than 5) This critical element includes specific performance requirements expected of the executive during the appraisal period, focusing on measurable outcomes from the strategic plan or other measurable outputs and outcomes clearly aligned to organizational goals and objectives. At a minimum, the performance plan will include performance requirements (including measures, targets, timelines, or quality descriptors, as appropriate) describing the range of performance at Level 3 for each result specified. It is recommended to also establish the threshold measures/targets for Levels 5 and 2.</p> <p>Alignment--cite relevant goals/objectives, page numbers, from the Strategic Plan, Congressional Budget Justification/Annual Performance Plan, or other organizational planning document in the designated section for each performance requirement specified.</p>						
<p>Performance Requirement 1: Working Across AMS Programs As applicable, SEs will be appraised on execution of AMS' civil rights plan.</p> <p>Work across AMS program areas and other agencies to provide seamless and comparable services to similar customers and to improve relations and agency-wide collaboration; improve programs, services, and business processes.</p>			<p>Strategic Alignment: -Departmental Blueprint for Stronger Service -AMS Strategic Goal 6</p>			
<i>Performance Requirement 1 Rating</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<p>Performance Requirement 2: Cultural Transformation Leads the organization to eliminate barriers to improve operational and service excellence in work-life and wellness, labor relations, process improvement, employee development, talent management, customer focus and community outreach, and hiring reform. Pursues workforce diversity through recruitment, outreach and employee development programs designed to enhance the hiring and retention of highly qualified employees from diverse backgrounds. Supports the strategic objectives and action items contained in the AMS Special Emphasis Assessment Plan.</p> <p>Exercises all of USDA's special hiring authorities designed to increase employment of veterans and individuals with disabilities and targeted disabilities.</p> <p>Actively engages in the transformation of USDA by supporting process improvements in the organization. Engage employees to transform USDA into a model agency.</p> <p>Ensures that activities and timeframes established in the AMS Cultural Transformation Act Plan are met by demonstrating support through allocation of resources and commitment of program area managers to support initiatives.</p>			<p>Strategic Alignment: -Secretary's Cultural Transformation Initiative -Secretary's Management Initiative 1</p>			
<i>Performance Requirement 2 Rating</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<p>Performance Requirement 3: Protect the Integrity of Organic Products Continue rigorous investigations of complaints of alleged violations. Ensure terms of trade arrangements are being met. Ensure complete and thorough audits of USDA accredited certifying agents.</p> <p>Address 90% of appeals cases received in FY 2015 through a decision, settlement, or closure, in less than 180 days.</p>			<p>Strategic Alignment: USDA Goal 1 AMS Strategic Goal 4</p>			

<p>Complete the investigation of 260 or more complaint cases during FY 2016.</p> <p>Work with AMS and USDA other government agencies to implement clear organic regulations, guidance, instructions and policy. Publish 1 proposed rule and 2 final guidance documents</p> <p>Support the work of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) to develop recommendations on organic standards. Support public engagement, transparency, and a fair process in the development of NOSB recommendations. Conduct one NOSB training session and two NOSB public meetings in FY 2016.</p> <p>Continue implementing sunset process by published federal register notice to renew 2016 sunset materials.</p>						
<i>Performance Requirement 3 Rating</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<p>Performance Requirement 4: Support organic market development Maintain organic integrity in a sound and sensible manner. Support affordable, accessible and attainable certification for all organic operations. Provide opportunities for new and beginning farmers to succeed in organic production and marketing. Provide training to certifiers, organic farmers and the organic trade on sound and sensible organic certification.</p> <p>Provide one in-person certifier training session that covers sound and sensible certification practices.</p> <p>Lead efforts to negotiate and finalize organic equivalence arrangements; successfully complete required peer assessments to maintain existing equivalency arrangements.</p> <p>Support projects that implement the USDA Organic Working Group (OWG) objectives for FY2016. All five OWG topic areas show measurable progress towards reaching their goals in supporting organic agriculture.</p>				<p>Strategic Alignment:</p> <p>USDA Goal 1</p> <p>AMS Strategic Goal 4</p>		
<i>Performance Requirement 4 Rating</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<p>Performance Requirement 5: Information Technology Work with certifiers to define and implement quality standards for the list of certified organic operations. Provide quarterly updates to the list of certified operations that includes updates on suspended, revoked and reinstated organic operations.</p> <p>Ensure that all certifiers provide data to the Organic Integrity Database.</p> <p>Build and generate dynamic reports and statistics from the Organic Integrity Database that support updated responses to data calls concerning number of certified operations, statistics for certified operations per state, and statistics related to adverse actions against operations.</p>				<p>Strategic Alignment:</p> <p>USDA Goal 1</p> <p>AMS Strategic Goal 4</p>		

<i>Performance Requirement 5 Rating</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
Rating Official Narrative: <i>(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)</i>					
Performance Requirement 6: Support AMS Signature Process Improvement Support the implementation of the AMS Signature Process Improvement Initiative to improve the effectiveness of the Agency's operations.			Departmental Blueprint for Stronger Service AMS Strategic Goal 6		
<i>Performance Requirement 5 Rating</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<i>Critical Element Rating – Results Driven</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1

Part 6: Summary Rating Narrative (Mandatory)

Part 7: Executive's Accomplishment Narrative (Mandatory)

Part 8: Agency Use

From: [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: FW: Letter in support of Miles McEvoy
Date: Wednesday, May 20, 2015 3:49:28 PM
Attachments: [Letter of Support from OEFFA May 2015.pdf](#)

(b)(5) Deliberative

From: Jones, Samuel - AMS **On Behalf Of** AMS - Office Of The AMS Administrator
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2015 3:02 PM
To: Alonzo, Anne - AMS; Eckhouse, Sara - AMS; Bailey, Shayla - AMS; McEvoy, Miles - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS; Rakola, Betsy - OSEC
Subject: FW: Letter in support of Miles McEvoy

FYI...

Sam Jones-Ellard
 Public Affairs Specialist
 USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service

(b) (6)

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From: Carol Goland [<mailto:cgoland@oeffa.org>]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2015 2:54 PM
To: AGSEC - OES
Cc: AMS - Office Of The AMS Administrator
Subject: Letter in support of Miles McEvoy

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

Please see the attached letter from the Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association, expressing our support for Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy.

Thank you for your consideration,
 Carol Goland

--

Carol Goland, Ph.D.
 Executive Director
 Ohio Ecological Food & Farm Association
 41 Crowell Rd.
 Columbus, OH 43214
 office: 614.421.2022 x202
 mobile: (b) (6)
 fax: 614.421.2011
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OEFFA CERTIFICATION

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PHONE: 614-262-2022
FAX: 614-421-2011
EMAIL: organic@oeffa.org
WEB: www.oeffa.org

20 May 2015

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack
Room 200-A Whitten Building
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

As a USDA-accredited organic certifier and grassroots farming organization with many certified organic members, the Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association (OEFFA) offers this letter of support for Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy.

While we do not agree with every action taken by the Department, we recognize the challenging position Mr. McEvoy holds. Further, we appreciate the expertise he brings to this important work. With decades of experience building and supporting the organic industry, he provides a well-informed perspective and institutional memory on organic production and certification that is unparalleled in the Department. With his team, he has grown the infrastructure of the Program, stepped-up enforcement, and remained in constant communication with an ever-growing group of organic stakeholders.

Mr. McEvoy has demonstrated leadership during his tenure at the National Organic Program through the development of the Sound and Sensible Initiative. He has made a clear effort to personally connect and partner with organic certifiers. He visited OEFFA on two separate occasions, during which our staff had the opportunity to engage with him on a variety of issues, demonstrate our successful implementation of the Livestock Pasture Rule, and receive guidance and constructive feedback. We were struck by his desire to listen to our perspective and connect with producers by visiting some of our clients' farms. He continues to communicate openly and thoughtfully with us whenever we encounter him at industry events, such as the annual certifier training.

We look forward to the additional improvements to the NOP's work under Miles McEvoy's continued leadership, and appreciate his ongoing service to the Organic Foods Production Act, the diverse and growing organic community, and the National Organic Program.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Carol Goland, Ph.D.
Executive Director

cc: Anne Alonzo, Administrator for the Agricultural Marketing Service

From: [Wasserman, Wendy - AMS](#)
To: [Starmer, Elnor - OSEC](#); [Rakola, Betsy - OSEC](#); [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: Fwd: AMS Voice: News & Much, Much More!
Date: Wednesday, November 05, 2014 3:37:17 PM

Miles gets love!

Begin forwarded message:

From: The AMS Voice <AMSVoice@public.govdelivery.com>
Date: November 5, 2014 at 3:06:49 PM EST
To: <wendy.wasserman@ams.usda.gov>
Subject: AMS Voice: News & Much, Much More!
Reply-To: <AMSVoice@public.govdelivery.com>

Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a Web page.](#)

AMS Voice



November 5, 2014

Dear Wendy,


Next week, we honor one of our Nation's greatest assets – our veterans. I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of AMS' military employees as we recognize our veterans, active duty troops, National Guard and Reserve members and their families. Your dedication not only to the United States, but also to the U.S. farmers and ranchers that AMS supports every day, is a true testament to your character. We salute you!

Next week there will be a special edition of The AMS Voice that will be a tribute to all the military members at AMS. I encourage all of our programs to contribute information to ensure that we honor those who have sacrificed so much to the U.S. and USDA. More details are just two stories down in this edition.

Last week, the NOP along with others here at USDA were in Louisville, Ky., for the bi-annual National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) meeting, which turned out to be both positive and productive. You can learn more about the NOSB through [last week's USDA Blog post](#). This is the perfect time to tell you more about the NOP Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy.

Miles joined AMS in 2009, and has led the NOP in protecting organic integrity from farm to market ever since. Under his leadership, the NOP implemented new enforcement procedures that have led to dozens of civil penalties and over half a million dollars in fines. In addition, the NOP published the NOP Handbook, which provides guidance and instructions to organic farmers, processors and certifiers on how to obtain and maintain organic certification. Thanks to the work of Miles and his staff, USDA has helped farmers and businesses create an industry that today encompasses over 25,000 organic businesses and has grown to \$35 billion annually in U.S. retail sales.

Prior to joining AMS, Miles worked in organic agriculture for



more than 25 years. In 1988, he was the first organic inspector for the Washington State Department of Agriculture. Prior to that, he spent 10 years working on farms, in wild-capture fisheries and in reforestation. He has a master's in entomology from Cornell University. Miles is a true leader not only at USDA, but within the organic community. His ability to openly listen to and truly hear the many voices of the organic community is one of his special strengths. We are fortunate to have someone of Miles passion and calibre. Thanks for the service, Miles!

[Photo: Miles McEvoy has led AMS' National Organic Program since October 2009.]

Anne Alonzo
AMS Administrator

Next Brown Bag Session: Pathway to Senior Leadership



November 13 – Don't miss the next event in the popular AMS Brown Bag Lunch Career Development and Informational Sessions. November's session features a "Pathway to Senior Leadership" panel discussion, the first of a series featuring AMS senior leaders. They will share their journeys to their current positions, take your questions and offer career advice.

Note the confirmed room number: 2080-S.

The panelists will be Transportation and Marketing Program Deputy Administrator Arthur Neal; Cotton and Tobacco

Program Associate Deputy Administrator Angela Hooper; Deputy Associate Administrator/Chief Operating Officer Karen Comfort; and Livestock, Poultry and Seed Program's Standards Branch Chief David Bowden.

The next session is December 4 – Resume Building Workshop, led by National Organic Program Associate Deputy Administrator Jenny Tucker.

Time: Both sessions will be from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. Eastern

Location: Room 2080-S

Call-In Info: 888-844-9904; Access Code: 5206242

If You Are a Veteran, Please Read This!

The AMS Voice will issue a special Veterans Day edition to honor those employees who have served or are serving in the military. AMS veterans: We hope you participate! Your colleagues may not know you're veterans, and they would deeply appreciate your service to our country.

To participate, please e-mail the following to AMSVoice@ams.usda.gov:

1. A photo of yourself, preferably in uniform (if you don't have one, please send in something—we don't want to leave you out). The Voice needs a digital photo, so you may need to scan an older photo and save it as an image file such as a jpeg (.jpg). The Voice editor will resize it if necessary.



2. Answers to the following questions, so readers can learn a little bit about you:

Name

AMS position

Branch of military service

Military job

The best part about serving your country in the military

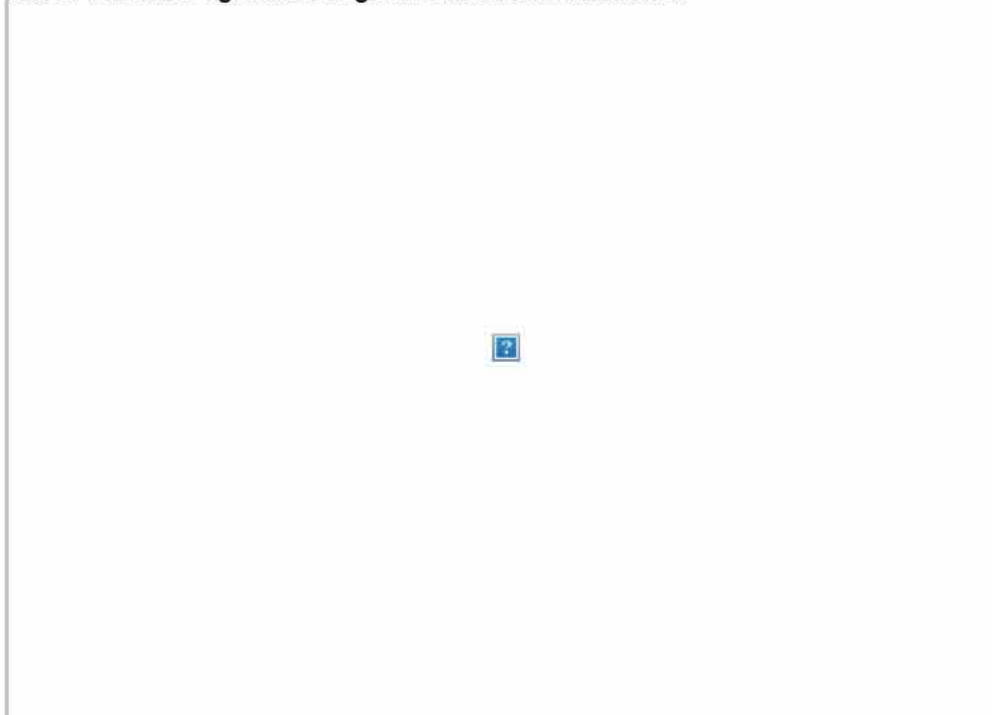
Your most interesting military experience (in no more than three sentences)

We'll list our veterans alphabetically, and each entry will have a photograph next to the responses to the questions. The special edition will come out either right before or right after Veterans Day.

The submission deadline is COB this Friday, 11/7.

F&V Program Team to Receive Secretary's Honor Award

AMS Fruit and Vegetable Program StrikeTeam members.



[Photo: StrikeForce members from AMS' Fruit and Vegetable Program win a Secretary's Honor Award for their work helping Alabama specialty crop growers.]

On November 6, 2014, the Fruit and Vegetable Program's StrikeForce Team will receive the Secretary's Honor Award for driving a USDA StrikeForce initiative that helped small, economically challenged farmers build markets for their specialty crops. The Team delivered

exceptional service within a tight timeframe dictated by the immediate availability of the farmers' ripe produce and Walmart's window for sourcing fresh, local seasonable products. Each team member's performance exceeded normal job expectations as they developed and delivered innovative customer service solutions to help the growers succeed.

The Team flew to Alabama to meet and educate the growers on audit requirements, listen to their specific needs and challenges and visit their farms to gain a firsthand understanding of their operations. The Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries committed additional auditors to expedite audit completion. Through this concentrated effort, the Team streamlined the audit review and approval process for these growers from an average of 14 days to three days.

For growers who did not meet USDA's acceptance criteria, the Team expedited the corrective actions process by allocating additional staff to the review process and, when necessary, conducting follow-up audit activities. Reviews of corrective actions, which are generally completed within a business week, were completed within 24 hours, and follow-up audits were conducted within several days so the growers could come into compliance with audit requirements quickly, thereby gaining access to Walmart's market.

Concurrently with providing direct support to the growers, the Team recognized that these and other growers in StrikeForce states would require multifaceted and ongoing support to succeed in the short and long terms. To meet that need, they built collaborative partnerships with Tuskegee University and Walmart's Small and Developing Farmer Program to create a long-term safety net for the growers. Specifically, the Team created an outreach program that taught Tuskegee staff how to educate and support growers seeking accreditation needed to access retail markets.

To expand their work beyond the original 25 growers, an interactive webinar was created, [USDA's Good Agricultural Practices Audit Program](#), geared toward growers and stakeholder groups in StrikeForce states. More than 230 people registered; 125 people participated individually; and, hundreds joined as part of group viewing sessions, including one at Tuskegee University, the Team's partner in the StrikeForce initiative.

Volunteer at the Chavez School!

Throughout the year, AMS works with the Cesar Chavez Public Charter Schools for Public Policy. This month, there are two opportunities to get involved with the school. One way is by assisting in Q2 Thesis Presentation of Chavez seniors. These students will be presenting the controversies surrounding their thesis topics, and they need members of the community to give them feedback to ensure they're on track! You can sign up for specific dates and times on the [Chavez website](#).

The other way is to assist Chavez juniors with informational interviews. The students will be interviewing members of the community about careers and how their jobs impact the community. For more information on both of these volunteering opportunities, please email Experiential Learning Manager Stephanie Remick at stephanie.remick@chavezschools.org.

HQ Senior Leaders Visit AMS Employees in Minneapolis

[Photo: In Minneapolis, the Office of the Associate Administrator/COO kicks off the first of a series of focus group sessions with field employees.]

Last week, Associate Administrator/COO Erin Morris and Deputy Associate Administrator/COO Karen T. Comfort traveled to Minneapolis to meet with AMS employees from the Compliance and Analysis, Dairy, Fruit and Vegetable and Livestock, Poultry and Seed programs who work in the city and surrounding area. They informed employees about the various initiatives that have been and currently are underway to transform AMS' culture.

Employees also shared their ideas on how to transform the Agency's culture, ultimately making AMS one of the best places to work in the federal government. Associate Administrator Morris and Deputy Associate Administrator Comfort's next stop is Winter Haven, Florida.

Industry Booklet Prints AMS Fact Sheet as 2-Page Spread

Have you ever considered using industry magazines to help advertise and promote AMS, just as we help the industry to market its products? That is exactly what the Livestock, Poultry and Seed (LPS) Program did last week at the American Wagyu Association Conference in San Antonio, TX. Wagyu is a name for a Japanese Beef breed that is noted for its extremely high degree of marbling. It's served only in the highest-quality restaurants.



LPS Acting Associate Deputy Administrator Larry Meadows addressed the annual meeting on the topic of USDA beef grading and brand certification. In the 90-page, high-quality Wagyu conference booklet, AMS received two pages for our latest AMS fact sheet. LPS likes to write articles and assist with stories published in industry newsletters and magazines and has done so on multiple occasions. The program assists the Wagyu breed by approving brand specifications and certifying the products from those beef animals.

Federal Benefits Open Season Begins Soon

The Federal Benefits Open Season – **November 10 – December 8, 2014** – is your annual opportunity to:

- Make changes to your enrollment in the Federal Employees Health Benefit (FEHB) program and the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Programs (FEDVIP)
- Enroll in the Federal Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAFEDS) for health care and/or dependent care for 2015

Go to [the MRP Open Season Website](#) for information on what is new this year. You will find links to information and tools to help you get started reviewing your coverage and making your decisions for 2015. The Office of Personnel Management has developed a series of live and recorded webcasts to assist you in making your open season decisions. Please visit

<http://www.opm.gov/insure/openseason/webcast.asp> for the dates and times.

OPM will post reminders, breaking information, and items of interest about the health, dental, and vision programs, and the flexible spending accounts during Open Season on both [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). You do not have to join to view the information.

Take Advantage of Fed Benefits Counseling Sessions in D.C.

Talking to a Benefits Specialist is a great resource to help you navigate Federal Employees Health Benefits, the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance Program, the Federal Employees Dental Vision Program and the Federal Flexible Spending Account Programs, as well as the retirement process. A Benefits Specialist can answer your questions about creditable civilian and military service, retirement benefit calculations and continuing insurance benefits into retirement.

Charlotte Drone and Stephanie Niemi, Benefits Specialists from Human Resources Operations in Minneapolis, will be in Rooms 1709-S and 1722-S in Washington, D.C., on Friday, November 14, 2014, to provide individual benefits counseling sessions. These on-site counseling sessions must be scheduled in advance.

To schedule an appointment with Charlotte and Stephanie, please contact Earl Bilek (earl.e.bilek@aphis.usda.gov, 612-336-3365) no later than Thursday, November 6, 2014.

Field employees: Please note that all employees may contact their servicing Benefits Specialist at any time with benefits questions. To locate the Benefits Specialist servicing your AMS program, go to: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/contact_us/downloads/benefits.pdf.

Enjoy CFC Fun in November While Supporting Worthy Causes



Stop by My Friend's Closet, a clothing thrift store

Days: Wed., Nov. 12, and Thurs., Nov. 13

Time: 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Location: Room 0088-S

Mid-Campaign Fall Carnival

Hungry for a little fun? Looking for lunch?!

Come browse our CFC Fall Carnival. Snacks, treats, munchies and GAMES from our multiple agencies. Meet some worthy charities while having a good old-fashioned time!

All of the USDA agencies will be there -- so should you!!

Day: Friday, Nov. 14

Time: 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Location: Whitten Patio

Attention Pathways Employees!

The Office of Personnel Management is hosting the first annual Pathways Day:

Day: Monday, November 17

Time: 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Location: The National Institutes of Health's Natcher Conference Center (Building 45), Bethesda, Maryland.

The event will provide a training opportunity for current Pathways participants in the Internship, Recent Graduates and Presidential Management Fellows programs. The day will include workshops on branding yourself, communicating, understanding equal employment opportunity, writing a Federal resume and more. You can register at <https://2014pathwaysday.eventbrite.com>. Capacity for this event is limited to 400, and registration will be on a first-come, first-serve basis. Email any questions to pathways@opm.gov.

LPS Educates Future Chefs at California College

On November 3, Livestock, Poultry and Seed (LPS) Program employees Ron Nicholas and Ray Vazquez visited San Joaquin Delta College in Stockton, Calif., to teach student chefs about U.S. grade standards for shell eggs and poultry. These demonstrations allow LPS to share with future chefs and food service purchasers the value of the USDA grade shield and grading programs. The class is part of the culinary arts coursework at the college.

[Photo: Culinary arts students at San Joaquin Delta College in Stockton, California, learn about USDA grade standards for shell eggs and poultry.]



Announcing Science & Technology's Lunch & Learn Series

As a scientific program, it is particularly important for the Science and Technology (S&T) Program to sustain a continuously learning culture. To that end, S&T is delighted to announce the launching of the S&T Lunch & Learn Series. The goal of this initiative is to expand learning, encourage knowledge-sharing and increase employee communication and engagement. Sessions are led by employees on a voluntary basis and can cover any topics that relate to scientific, agricultural or professional developments, such as:

- Scientific and technical ideas and developments
- Agricultural practices and trends
- Health, nutrition and wellness topics
- Book or agriculture-related film reviews

S&T will hold its inaugural session on November 13 from noon to 1 p.m. Eastern in the Fruit and Vegetable Conference Room, 2068-S. The topic of discussion is "How science is used in policy and decision making." Mike Sheats, Director of the Agricultural Analytics Division, will lead the discussion. Please mark your calendar for this important and fun event.

Employees can actively participate by leading a session or simply showing up with their lunch to listen or join in! Please contact Doug Keeler at Douglas.Keeler@ams.usda.gov to submit topics for the series.

AMS-er's Child Helps Secretary Cut Child-Care Center Ribbon

The daughter of AMS IT Specialist Effie Pryor recently had the honor of helping Secretary Tom Vilsack cut the ribbon for the official opening of USDA's Child Development Center in Washington, D.C. Two-year-old Victoria stood right next to the Secretary, scissors in hand, and assisted the other VIPs in the official act. Housed in the Sidney Yates Building, the 11,000-square-foot child development facility can care for about 80 children on the first floor and serves children from 6 weeks to 5 years old.

"The center provides a wonderful learning environment for Victoria," Pryor said. "The location makes being a working parent a lot easier. It is amazing how much my daughter has developed and learned. With each day, she is happier and a more well-rounded child."

For more information about the center, visit the [Government Service Agency's web page](#) announcing the opening.

[Photo: Victoria Pryor-Williamson (in yellow), daughter of AMS IT Specialist Effie Pryor, prepares to cut the ribbon to open USDA's Child Development Center in Washington, D.C. She's in very good company: Secretary Tom Vilsack (center) and, next to him (left to right), Deputy Secretary Krysta Harden and Assistant Secretary for Administration Dr. Gregory Parham.]



New Webinar Focuses on Relationships, Communications

Save the date -- November 12. Participate in a live webinar for employees: Enhance Your Relationships with Better Communication.

You are invited to join Magellan's live interactive webinar on Wednesday, November 12, from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. Central Time, 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. Eastern Time. This webinar will focus on how to enhance your relationships with better communications and covers family dynamics, friends and effective communication. We currently are waiting for the register link from Federal Occupational Health.

Leave Transfer Program: Francine Torres

Ms. Francine Torres, a Program Assistant with the Transportation and Marketing Program in Washington, D.C., has been approved as a recipient under the Leave Transfer Program. Ms. Torres will be out of the office for an extended period with a serious medical condition. Ms. Torres has exhausted all of her available leave. Donations of annual leave or restored annual leave would be appreciated.

Anyone wishing to donate leave to Ms. Torres may submit a Form AD-1043 by fax, (612) 336-3544, or mail (but not both) to:

USDA APHIS MRPBS HRD
Attn: LCT
Butler Square 5th Floor
100 North 6th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55403

Form Ad-1043 can be found on the web at:

http://www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/hr/pay_leave_tod/leave_donor_listing.shtml

Celebrate Native American Heritage Month!

On Thursday, November 13, USDA will celebrate Native American Heritage Month, honoring the contributions of Native Americans across the United States. Please take part in any of the observances being held during the day:



10 a.m. – Official USDA Observance, Jefferson Auditorium – featuring Ada Deer, former Assistant Secretary of the Department of the Interior

11 a.m. – 2 p.m. – Cultural Exchange Event, Whitten Patio

2 -4 p.m. - Session focused on outreach to Tribal Colleges Outreach Session, Room 107-A, Whitten Building

Free Financial and Legal Services

The [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#) offers free financial and legal services, including consultation with financial experts and licensed attorneys, to provide assistance with your legal and financial questions.

The EAP [Financial Services](#) consultants will provide free help to you, your household members and dependents. They will also identify your needs for free financial counseling, family budgeting, debt consolidation, buying a home, college budgeting, saving and investment strategies, saving for retirement and much more.

The EAP [Legal Service](#) includes help with: living wills, healthcare power of attorney, financial planning, estate planning, housing and real estate, car accidents, criminal matters, small claims court causes, traffic violations, identify theft and much more.

For more information, call 1-800-222-0364 or (1-888-262-7848 TTY).

LPS Employee Retires After 3 Decades of Federal Service

The Livestock, Poultry and Seed's Seed Regulatory and Testing Division (SRTD) celebrated the retirement of Seed



Marketing Specialist Jerry R. Irwin on October 31, 2014, in Gastonia, N.C.

Irwin began his career with AMS as a Clerk Typist for Marketing Programs and Procurement in 1984 and was promoted to Procurement Assistant in 1985. In 1990, he accepted the position of Secretary for the AMS Seed Regulatory and Testing Division. In 2000 he was promoted to Seed Marketing Specialist, where he enforced the Federal Seed Act and worked with State cooperators to ensure truth in labeling, which benefits the seed industry as well as the public.

[Photo: Jerry Irwin receives his 30-year service award signed by Livestock, Poultry and Seed Program Deputy Administrator Dr. Craig Morris.]

His major accomplishments include: coordinating and updating the State Noxious-Weed Seed Requirements recognized in the administration of the Federal Seed Act; developing the SRTD-Authorized International Seed Testing Association Seed Sampler Program with the assistance of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency; serving as an editor of the Items of Interest in Seed online Journal; and contributing to the development of the Association of American Seed Control Officials Handbook on Sampling Seed.

Irwin has received numerous commendations from both SRTD and the seed industry. Although he has admitted that he will miss his coworkers and colleagues in the industry, he has staunchly resisted all bribe attempts aimed at getting him to stay. All kidding aside, Irwin has served as an indispensable part of the SRTD team and will be greatly missed.

Fundamentals of Human Resource Management (FHRM) Training

Supervisors: Fiscal year (FY) 2015 Fundamentals of Human Resource Management (FHRM) training is available to you. First priority will be given to first-time supervisors in a 12-month probationary period. In FY 2015, if first-time supervisors have not taken the required FHRM training within one year, their current status as a supervisor will change. This training is the replacement course for BOSS I for AMS employees.

Learn more by clicking on this link: [FY 2015 FHRM Training](#)

F&V Program Thanks Employee for Going Extra Mile

The Fruit and Vegetable Program wants to thank Steve Sessa, a Lead Auditor for its Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division, for going above and beyond the call of duty recently. Sessa worked his normal tour of duty when, late in the day, he learned from a nearby field office's supervisor that another employee was unable to cover his midnight to 8 a.m. shift at a freeze-drying processing facility.



Sessa, a former inspector himself at that location, called his supervisor at home and volunteered to cover the shift since no one else was available. At midnight, Steve was back on the job in the plant, delivering outstanding customer service and ensuring the facility could continue production without any hiccups resulting from the USDA. This is a great example of teamwork and commitment to ensuring the SCI Division provides our industry stakeholders with services when, and where, they need it.

Spooky (and whacky) Time at USDA's Farmers Market



[Photo: Woodsy Owl leads trick-or-treaters in an unforgettable dance routine for Halloween 2014 at the USDA Farmers Market in Washington, D.C.]

If you stopped by the USDA Farmers Market on Halloween, you no doubt had a spooktacular time. The market featured free family-friendly activities, including pumpkin painting, face painting, live entertainment by the Richmond Indigenous Gourd Orchestra and more. Many people guessed the weight of a giant pumpkin and wore their best costume for a chance to win prizes.

People's Garden beekeepers and other pollinator experts were on hand to help visitors make a pollinator-themed costume and explain how bees make that sweet treat called honey. Woodsy Owl made a guest appearance and danced with the costumed pollinators and other Halloween revelers.

Several vendors joined the market for the first time on Halloween. Distillery Lane Ciderworks offered delicious hot apple cider and heritage apples; Henry's Hot Sauce made great-tasting hot sauces from their fresh peppers grown on the family farm; and The Capital Candy Jar served up small batches of sweet confections.

If you missed the spooktacular, don't despair—visit the market this Friday! You'll find everything for your lunch or a snack and so much more! The market features farmers/vendors from the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia selling fresh fruits, vegetables, herbs, prepared foods, baked goods, kettle popcorn, local honey products, hand-made soap and more.

The market is open from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm at the USDA Whitten Building parking lot at the corner of 12th Street & Independence Avenue, S.W., every Friday through the fall.

Telling the AMS Story This Week

Each week we will highlight how we have been working to "Tell the AMS Story." Here are the recent blogs and press releases. Check them out so you can help tell our story!

Blogs:

Why Test Seeds? by Ernest Allen, Deputy Director of the Agriculture Marketing Service Seed Regulatory and Testing Division. Before the late 1800's, there weren't any standards or laws overseeing the seed trade. This allowed individuals to take advantage of the unorganized seed market by selling low quality seed to buyers. In some instances, what was sold wasn't even seed at all.

Unfortunately, even the most seasoned seed buyers can't always tell what they will get when

purchasing seed. Will the seed grow? If it does grow, what will it grow into? Will these seeds contain a disease that will hurt my other crops? Read more on the [USDA Blog](#).

Meeting to Make a Difference in USDA's Food Purchasing Programs by Dave Munford, Agricultural Marketing Service Contract Specialist. When you're a contract specialist with USDA's [Agricultural Marketing Service \(AMS\)](#), you're part of a Commodity Procurement team that purchases 1.7 billion pounds of commodities a year to support domestic agriculture. You're part of a network- which also includes the [Food and Nutrition Service](#), the [Farm Service Agency](#), and hundreds of American agricultural producers, processors, and suppliers- which reaches far and wide to send quality, wholesome, nutritious products that feed students and other recipients in federal food and nutrition assistance programs. Read more on the [USDA Blog](#).

Press Releases:

[U.S. and Canada Release Revised Institutional Meat Purchase Specifications to Facilitate Trade](#)
[Secretary Vilsack Names Members to the National Mango Board](#)

Find all the press releases this week in the [AMS Newsroom](#). Find out more about what the agency is doing through the AGNIS [Weekly Activity Report](#) site (VPN required).

Find out more about what the agency is doing through the AGNIS [Weekly Activity Report](#) site (VPN required).

Training Opportunities

Here are upcoming training opportunities available to you! The [Training Calendar](#) of available opportunities is posted on the [Center for Training and Organization Development SharePoint site](#). Unless otherwise noted, all classes are listed in Eastern Time.

Webinars

November 4 - [5 Choices to Extraordinary Productivity](#), 2 – 4 p.m.
 November 5 - [5 Choices to Extraordinary Productivity](#), 2 – 4 p.m.
 November 6 - [Stress Management and Burnout](#), 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 November 6 - [Creating Meaningful Individual Development Plans](#), 2 – 4 p.m.
 November 12 - [A Primer in Change: Kotter's Model](#), 2 – 3:30 p.m.
 November 13 - [Overcoming the Common Barriers in Virtual Teams](#), 11:00 a.m. – 1 p.m.
 November 13 - [Managing Self Through Transition](#), 2 – 3:30 p.m.
 November 18 - [Requests, Offers & Promises: Communication that Builds Trust](#), 2 – 3 p.m.
 November 20 - [InsideOut GROW](#), 1 – 5 p.m.

Classroom Training

November 6 - [Writing Up!](#), 9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., Training Room 2, Riverdale, Md.
 November 13 - [7 Habits of Highly Effective Managers](#), 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m., Gray's Peak, Ft. Collins, Colo.
 November 13 - [InsideOut GROW](#), 9 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Training Room 6, Patriots Plaza III, Washington, D.C.

Please view link at: <http://agnis/sites/worklife/Lists/Announcements/AllItems.aspx>

AMS Job Opportunities Online: Just A Click Away

Below is the link to the USAJOBS webpage that lists the current AMS job openings. Each week with a simple click you can see what opportunities are open to you.

Explore the possibilities: [All AMS Jobs!](#)

Have a Story or Announcement You'd Like to Share?

We want to hear from you. Contact your program representative (see below) for review & clearance to get your news or announcement into the AMS Voice.

Hints and requirements for submitting your story in the [Voice Guidelines](#).

The AMS Voice comes out once a week on Wednesdays, with submissions due every Tuesday

at noon. Contact your program's representative to get your news or announcement into the AMS Voice. The program representatives are:

Livestock, Poultry and Seed - [Yvonne Dock](#)
Fruit and Vegetable - [Pamela Stanziani](#)
Dairy - [Becky Unkenholz](#)
Cotton and Tobacco - [Monica Alexander](#)
Transportation and Marketing - [Dana Stewart](#)
National Organic Program - [Jennifer Tucker](#)
Science and Technology - [Doug Keeler](#)
Information Technology - [Summer Butler](#)
Legislative and Regulatory Review - [Chris Sarcone](#)
Compliance and Analysis - [Natasha Stewart](#)
Administrator's Office (Civil Rights, APHIS/HR, etc) - [Dana Stewart](#)

Have questions first? Email AMSVoice@ams.usda.gov.

STAY CONNECTED:

Know someone else who would be interested?

SUBSCRIBER SERVICES: [Preferences](#) | [Help](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Questions? [Contact us](#). Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a Web page](#).

This email was sent to wendy.wasserman@ams.usda.gov using GovDelivery, on behalf of: USDA Agricultural Marketing Service
1400 Independence Ave., S.W. Washington, DC 20250



From: [Alonzo, Anne - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Cc: [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#); [Morris, Erin - AMS](#); [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)
Subject: Fwd: Chronology
Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 6:51:11 AM

Miles, thanks and sorry for all this.

(b)(5) Deliberative

Last night I shared your chronology with David; Erin will be

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

On Oct 19, 2015, at 9:16 PM, McEvoy, Miles - AMS
<Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Attached is some background on the Cornucopia complaints including details of AMS-NOP's review of the complaints, analysis of the photographic evidence, and how we consulted with AMS accredited certifiers on the compliance of these operations with the USDA organic regulations. You will see that AMS-NOP conducted a thorough review and determined that there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations of these certified organic operations.

(b)(5) Deliberative

Thanks,

Miles V McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program

<Cornucopia Complaints.docx>

<Chronology.docx>

From: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#)
To: [Jimenez, Sonia - AMS](#); [Tharp, Melissa - AMS](#)
Subject: Fwd: FY16 Performance Plan
Date: Thursday, October 22, 2015 4:38:03 PM
Attachments: [FY2016 SES plan - mmcevoy.docx](#)
[ATT00001.htm](#)

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "McEvoy, Miles - AMS" <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>
Date: October 22, 2015 at 3:58:16 PM EDT
To: "Morris, Erin - AMS" <erin.morris@ams.usda.gov>, "Barnes, Rex - AMS" <Rex.Barnes@ams.usda.gov>
Subject: **FY16 Performance Plan**

Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

SES Performance Management System Executive Performance Agreement



Part 1. Consultation. <i>I have reviewed this plan and have been consulted on its development.</i>						
Executive's Name (<i>Last, First, MI</i>): McEvoy, Miles, V				Appraisal Pd: 10/01/15 –9/30/16		
Executive's Signature:				Date:		
Title: Associate Administrator				Organization:		
Rating Official's Name (<i>Last, First, MI</i>): Barnes, Rex				CA <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> LT/LE <input type="checkbox"/>		
Rating Official's Signature:				Date:		
Part 2. Progress Review						
Executive's Signature:				Date:		
Rating Official's Signature:				Date:		
Reviewing Official's Signature (<i>Optional</i>):				Date:		
Part 3. Summary Rating						
Initial Summary Rating	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5 Outstanding	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 Exceeds Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 Minimally Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 Unsatisfactory	
Rating Official's Name (<i>Last, First, MI</i>):						
Rating Official's Signature:				Date:		
Executive's Signature:				Date:		
Reviewing Official's Signature (<i>Second-Level Official's Concurrence</i>):				Date:		
Higher Level Review (if applicable)						
<input type="checkbox"/> I request a higher level review. Executive's Initials:				Date:		
Higher Level Review Completed <input type="checkbox"/>				Date:		
Higher Level Reviewer Signature:						
Performance Review Board Recommendation		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
PRB Chair Signature:				Date:		
Annual Summary Rating		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
Appointing Authority Signature:				Date:		
Part 4. Derivation Formula and Calculation of Annual Summary Rating						
Critical Element	Element Rating		Weight	Score		Summary Level Ranges
	Initial	Final (if changed)		Initial	Final (if changed)	
1. Leading Change			15%			475-500 = Level 5 400-474 = Level 4 300-399 = Level 3 200-299 = Level 2 Any CE rated Level 1 = Level 1
2. Leading People			30%			
3. Business Acumen			10%			
4. Building Coalitions			10%			
5. Results Driven			35%			
Total			100%			

Part 5. Critical Elements

- **Performance Standards for Critical Elements** (The performance standard for each critical element is specified below; examples for the top three performance levels can be found in the system description).

Level 5: The executive demonstrates exceptional performance, fostering a climate that sustains excellence and optimizes results in the executive's organization, agency, department or government-wide. This represents the highest level of executive performance, as evidenced by the extraordinary impact on the achievement of the organization's mission. The executive is an inspirational leader and is considered a role model by agency leadership, peers, and employees. The executive continually contributes materially to or spearheads agency efforts that address or accomplish important agency goals, consistently achieves expectations at the highest level of quality possible, and consistently handles challenges, exceeds targets, and completes assignments ahead of schedule at every step along the way.
- **Level 4:** The executive demonstrates a very high level of performance beyond that required for successful performance in the executive's position and scope of responsibilities. The executive is a proven, highly effective leader who builds trust and instills confidence in agency leadership, peers, and employees. The executive consistently exceeds established performance expectations, timelines, or targets, as applicable.
- **Level 3:** The executive demonstrates the high level of performance expected and the executive's actions and leadership contribute positively toward the achievement of strategic goals and meaningful results. The executive is an effective, solid, and dependable leader who delivers high-quality results based on measures of quality, quantity, efficiency, and/or effectiveness within agreed upon timelines. The executive meets and often exceeds challenging performance expectations established for the position.
- **Level 2:** The executive's contributions to the organization are acceptable in the short term but do not appreciably advance the organization towards achievement of its goals and objectives. While the executive generally meets established performance expectations, timelines and targets, there are occasional lapses that impair operations and/or cause concern from management. While showing basic ability to accomplish work through others, the executive may demonstrate limited ability to inspire subordinates to give their best efforts or to marshal those efforts effectively to address problems characteristic of the organization and its work.
- **Level 1:** In repeated instances, the executive demonstrates performance deficiencies that detract from mission goals and objectives. The executive generally is viewed as ineffectual by agency leadership, peers, or employees. The executive does not meet established performance expectations/timelines/targets and fails to produce – or produces unacceptable – work products, services, or outcomes.

Element Rating Level Points

Level 5 = 5 points
 Level 4 = 4 points
 Level 3 = 3 points
 Level 2 = 2 points
 Level 1 = 0 points

Critical Element 1. Leading Change**Weight: 15%**

Develops and implements an organizational vision that integrates key organizational and program goals, priorities, values, and other factors. Assesses and adjusts to changing situations, implementing innovative solutions to make organizational improvements, ranging from incremental improvements to major shifts in direction or approach, as appropriate. Balances change and continuity; continually strives to improve service and program performance; creates a work environment that encourages creative thinking, collaboration, and transparency; and maintains program focus, even under adversity.

Agency-Specific Performance Requirements

Demonstrates a focus on ensuring civil rights compliance and commitment in the workplace.

Leads organizational change and motivates managers to incorporate vision, strategic planning and results-driven management in the full range of the organization's activities. Addresses programmatic requirements as necessary to motivate and lead the organization. Strategies are designed and implemented to improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency, and to meet program goals. Program goals are aligned to agency strategic plans and accomplished within specified timeframes.

Interests of the organization, employee, and customer/stakeholder are well balanced and priorities are adjusted in response to changing demands. Meets management initiative goals as imposed by regulatory/oversight agencies (e.g. Office of Management and Budget and Office of Personnel Management), and the Department or agency.

Leads organization in supporting the Secretary's initiative to improve Departmental responses to important inquiries of USDA's partners, customers, and Legislative Officials and for improved release of information to the press and public. As requested, reports activities and process improvements to the Department's Office of Executive Secretariat, Office of Congressional Relations, and Office of Communications.

Coordinates with business units to align their individual plans and identify clear measures of accomplishment. Encourages the development and implementation of initiatives or innovative solutions to enhance/improve procedures or services. Encourages employees to take risk, think creatively and work cooperatively with others in the program and agency.

Shares information and goals/vision in a way that enhances transparency and encourages collaboration.

Applicable milestones from the USDA Civil Rights Plan and Strategic Plan are incorporated into the program or staff office strategic and annual performance plans. Applicable goals and objectives related to accountability, program delivery, outreach, workforce diversity, employment practices, resources and structure, performance, administrative activities, communications and reporting are met in accordance with Department and agency policy.

Develops and implements outreach strategies that enhance the delivery of agricultural services and assistance to underserved populations. Demonstrates understanding of and commitment to equal employment opportunity and ensures fair and equitable program delivery. Strengthens stakeholder relationships by continually drafting, communicating, and delivering educational programs about the benefits and effectiveness of AMS services.

Ensures subordinate supervisors exercise effective managerial, communication and interpersonal skills to supervise and develop a diverse workforce.

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

<i>Critical Element Rating – Leading Change</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
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Critical Element 2. Leading People**Weight: 30%**

Designs and implements strategies that maximize employee potential, connects the organization horizontally and vertically, and fosters high ethical standards in meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals. Provides an inclusive workplace that fosters the development of others to their full potential; allows for full participation by all employees; facilitates collaboration, cooperation, and teamwork, and supports constructive resolution of conflicts. Ensures employee performance plans are aligned with the organization's mission and goals, that employees receive constructive feedback, and that employees are realistically appraised against clearly defined and communicated performance standards. Holds employees accountable for appropriate levels of performance and conduct. Seeks and considers employee input. Recruits, retains, and develops the talent needed to achieve a high quality, diverse workforce that reflects the nation, with the skills needed to accomplish organizational performance objectives while supporting workforce diversity, workplace inclusion, and equal employment policies and programs.

Agency-Specific Performance Requirements

Creates an environment where people from diverse backgrounds feel respected, recognized, and valued; actively fosters and maintains a work environment free of bullying, sexual harassment, and discrimination as prescribed by Departmental and Federal civil rights regulations and laws. In addition, implements strategies for addressing underrepresentation of minorities, women, and/or persons with disabilities within the workforce.

Maintains a positive organizational environment that fosters diversity, inclusion, innovation, initiative, open and honest communication, and teamwork among employees and peers. Within available resources, ensures employees have the tools and training to do their jobs.

Leads organization to set goals and track results for achieving workforce diversity, recruitment, and retention programs that will help to maximize the hiring and retention of highly qualified employees in underrepresented groups. Upon request by OHRM reports activities and progress towards workforce diversity achievements.

Seeks employee feedback to identify needs and expectations and considers employee perspective when making decisions affecting workforce or programs. Increases employee participation in feedback opportunities such as the employee survey. Analyze feedback and develop strategies to address areas of opportunity.

Recruits and selects new employees based on organizational goals, budget considerations, and staffing needs. When filling a position, the supervisor engages and collaborates with HR to ensure skills required for the job are identified, posting of the job vacancy is accurate, and assists in identifying contacts for diverse locations or organizations for recruiting purposes. Participates as needed with HR in the proper screening of applications, and appropriate categorization of applicants based on qualifications.

Utilizes flexible hiring authorities when filling a vacancy (e.g., targeted disabilities, student employment, direct hire, appointing veterans, etc.) to ensure diversity in recruitment and hiring.

Successfully transitions new hires into the position by promptly providing an orientation into the workforce and establishing performance elements and standards. Supervisors provide ongoing feedback and coaching, and make appropriate use of the probationary period to assess the new hire's ability to perform in the position.

Encourages employees to participate in developmental assignments, details, mentoring and training programs, and other agency programs to develop and retain a highly qualified workforce. Closes competency/skills gap for mission critical positions.

Implements retention strategies that focus on key internal processes (e.g., work environment, employee orientation, executing Individual Development Plans for all employees--subject to bargaining obligations, coaching, development, and mentoring, etc.) that promote employee growth, supports the health of the workforce, and drive the future success of the organization's people and infrastructure. Closes competency/skills gap for mission critical positions.

Manages and controls attrition by developing best practices and retention strategies as well as by developing a succession plan. Assesses current workforce plans to ensure they are up-to-date in order to meet Program/Agency goals and objectives. Works with senior management officials and HR to comply with the workforce planning process as described in the Department's position management policy.

Develops employee performance plans within established timeframes and that align with Agency and Departmental goals and objectives. Communicates to employees how their work supports the Agency mission and strategic plan/initiatives. Employee performance plans contain clear, results-focused measures and ensures supervisors provide accurate and timely feedback to determine progress and success in meeting expectations. Employees are held accountable for their performance in meeting goals.

Ensures that performance plans, progress reviews, and appraisals of employees are conducted by the due dates established by the Department or Agency. Performance plans for each employee must include at least one critical element that is traceable to the agency's goals and objectives (e.g., Mission Results critical performance element). Provides ongoing feedback and coaching as demonstrated through performance feedback sessions as evidenced by 100% of employees receiving at least one feedback session at the midpoint of the rating period. Appraisals show a fair distribution in ratings among all employees.

Ensures appropriate action is taken to address performance problems in a manner that supports organizational goals and objectives. Ensures subordinate managers and supervisors adhere to the Agency performance management policy with regard to performance appraisal and employee recognition.

Performance and employee feedback data is used as an indicator of compliance and general satisfaction or needed improvement with regard to the planning, developing, monitoring, rating and rewarding of performance.

Utilizes the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) to identify and address issues related to employee engagement, development, and satisfaction. Target: Based on specific information collected from the 2014 FEVS, implements effective and measurable strategies to address FEVS scoring as applicable to my mission area, agency, and individual position.

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

Critical Element Rating – Leading People

Level 5

Level 4

Level 3

Level 2

Level 1

Critical Element 3. Business Acumen**Weight: 10%**

Assesses, analyzes, acquires, and administers human, financial, material, and information resources in a manner that instills public trust and accomplishes the organization's mission. Uses technology to enhance processes and decision making. Executes the operating budget; prepares budget requests with justifications; and manages resources.

Agency-Specific Performance Requirements

Manages resources in a manner that fosters an environment that upholds civil rights standards and is inclusive of a diverse workforce.

Human, financial, material, and informational resources are effectively acquired and managed to achieve performance goals. Needs assessments are based on organizational goals and budget realities, and opportunities to reduce program and administrative costs are sought. Management control systems are established/maintained to monitor activities, identify problem areas, and initiate timely corrective action.

Explores new partnerships and innovative ways to carry out AMS mission with fewer resources. Leverages budget realities (diminishing resources) and best practices to remain efficient, effective, relevant and valued. Procures, develops and uses resources to efficiently and effectively support AMS programs.

Adjusts spending priorities such as travel, training, equipment purchases, and vacancies by improving business processes, adapting and innovating procedures in these areas.

Evaluates and develops fee schedules that encourage increased efficiency and cost reductions while maintaining high quality services. Develops a long term user fee plan that provides for future adjustments.

Continuously seeks to improve business processes, sharing those efforts with other programs to improve overall Department performance. Fully leverage the expertise and commitment of the workforce to meet challenges and the agency mission.

Uses technology innovation and organizational synergies to meet the needs of American agriculture.

Provides leadership to support Federal and USDA strategic sourcing efforts in support of the Blueprint for Stronger Service and USDA Strategic Plan FY2014-2018: Strategic Goal Number 5. Champions USDA's "Shared First" policy and ensures strategic goals are met or exceeded. Promotes fulfillment of the small business socio-economic goals of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization. Champions biobased and biopreferred policies and ensures compliance with applicable guidance and regulations.

As applicable, enhances data accuracy in all acquisition systems and ensures that contractor performance data is reported timely in the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS). Promotes the development of the acquisition workforce through adherence to federal and agency policies and effective hiring, training and development, and succession planning. Ensures acquisition processes comply with federal and departmental policy and regulations while maximizing taxpayer investment, minimizing agency risk, and optimizing customer value.

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

Critical Element Rating – Business Acumen

 Level 5

 Level 4

 Level 3

 Level 2

 Level 1

Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions**Weight: 10%**

Solicits and considers feedback from internal and external stakeholders or customers. Coordinates with appropriate parties to maximize input from the widest range of appropriate stakeholders to facilitate an open exchange of opinion from diverse groups and strengthen internal and external support. Explains, advocates, and expresses facts and ideas in a convincing manner and negotiates with individuals and groups internally and externally, as appropriate. Develops a professional network with other organizations and identifies the internal and external politics that affect the work of the organization.

Agency-Specific Performance Requirements

Utilizes outreach strategies to network with minority organizations and institutions, as well as, advocates for women, minorities, and/or persons with disabilities.

Ensures a high degree of responsiveness to organizational leadership, the public, and internal and external customers. Continuously reviews and monitors organizational performance to achieve agency mission results and considers the customer's point of view. Consults and collaborates and builds partnerships with agencies and other stakeholders, and takes decisive actions in accordance with law, regulation, and Department policy.

Systematically listens to customers and gathers their feedback, actively seeking to identify their needs and expectations, and effectively communicating those needs and expectations to employees. Ensures employees are prompt, professional, fair and responsible to the circumstances of individual customers to the extent permitted by law and regulation.

Collaborates with stakeholders to help them succeed, tell their story, and remain competitive in a global marketplace. Leverages the expertise and commitment of the workforce to meet the agency mission and future challenges.

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

Critical Element Rating – Building Coalitions Level 5 Level 4 Level 3 Level 2 Level 1

Critical Element 5. Results Driven				Weight: 35%		
<p>Agency Goals/Objectives for current FY: Must have at least 1 result (may have more than 5) This critical element includes specific performance requirements expected of the executive during the appraisal period, focusing on measurable outcomes from the strategic plan or other measurable outputs and outcomes clearly aligned to organizational goals and objectives. At a minimum, the performance plan will include performance requirements (including measures, targets, timelines, or quality descriptors, as appropriate) describing the range of performance at Level 3 for each result specified. It is recommended to also establish the threshold measures/targets for Levels 5 and 2.</p> <p>Alignment--cite relevant goals/objectives, page numbers, from the Strategic Plan, Congressional Budget Justification/Annual Performance Plan, or other organizational planning document in the designated section for each performance requirement specified.</p>						
<p>Performance Requirement 1: Working Across AMS Programs As applicable, SEs will be appraised on execution of AMS' civil rights plan.</p> <p>Work across AMS program areas and other agencies to provide seamless and comparable services to similar customers and to improve relations and agency-wide collaboration; improve programs, services, and business processes.</p>			<p>Strategic Alignment: -Departmental Blueprint for Stronger Service -AMS Strategic Goal 6</p>			
<i>Performance Requirement 1 Rating</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<p>Performance Requirement 2: Cultural Transformation Leads the organization to eliminate barriers to improve operational and service excellence in work-life and wellness, labor relations, process improvement, employee development, talent management, customer focus and community outreach, and hiring reform. Pursues workforce diversity through recruitment, outreach and employee development programs designed to enhance the hiring and retention of highly qualified employees from diverse backgrounds. Supports the strategic objectives and action items contained in the AMS Special Emphasis Assessment Plan.</p> <p>Exercises all of USDA's special hiring authorities designed to increase employment of veterans and individuals with disabilities and targeted disabilities.</p> <p>Actively engages in the transformation of USDA by supporting process improvements in the organization. Engage employees to transform USDA into a model agency.</p> <p>Ensures that activities and timeframes established in the AMS Cultural Transformation Act Plan are met by demonstrating support through allocation of resources and commitment of program area managers to support initiatives.</p>			<p>Strategic Alignment: -Secretary's Cultural Transformation Initiative -Secretary's Management Initiative 1</p>			
<i>Performance Requirement 2 Rating</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<p>Performance Requirement 3: Protect the Integrity of Organic Products Continue rigorous investigations of complaints of alleged violations. Ensure terms of trade arrangements are being met. Ensure complete and thorough audits of USDA accredited certifying agents.</p> <p>Address 90% of appeals cases received in FY 2015 through a decision, settlement, or closure, in less than 180 days.</p>			<p>Strategic Alignment: USDA Goal 1 AMS Strategic Goal 4</p>			

<p>Complete the investigation of 260 or more complaint cases during FY 2016.</p> <p>Work with AMS and USDA other government agencies to implement clear organic regulations, guidance, instructions and policy. Publish 1 proposed rule and 2 final guidance documents</p> <p>Support the work of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) to develop recommendations on organic standards. Support public engagement, transparency, and a fair process in the development of NOSB recommendations. Conduct one NOSB training session and two NOSB public meetings in FY 2016.</p> <p>Continue implementing sunset process by published federal register notice to renew 2016 sunset materials.</p>						
<i>Performance Requirement 3 Rating</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<p>Performance Requirement 4: Support organic market development Maintain organic integrity in a sound and sensible manner. Support affordable, accessible and attainable certification for all organic operations. Provide opportunities for new and beginning farmers to succeed in organic production and marketing. Provide training to certifiers, organic farmers and the organic trade on sound and sensible organic certification.</p> <p>Provide one in-person certifier training session that covers sound and sensible certification practices.</p> <p>Lead efforts to negotiate and finalize organic equivalence arrangements; successfully complete required peer assessments to maintain existing equivalency arrangements.</p> <p>Support projects that implement the USDA Organic Working Group (OWG) objectives for FY2016. All five OWG topic areas show measurable progress towards reaching their goals in supporting organic agriculture.</p>				<p>Strategic Alignment:</p> <p>USDA Goal 1</p> <p>AMS Strategic Goal 4</p>		
<i>Performance Requirement 4 Rating</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<p>Performance Requirement 5: Information Technology Work with certifiers to define and implement quality standards for the list of certified organic operations. Provide quarterly updates to the list of certified operations that includes updates on suspended, revoked and reinstated organic operations.</p> <p>Ensure that all certifiers provide data to the Organic Integrity Database.</p> <p>Build and generate dynamic reports and statistics from the Organic Integrity Database that support updated responses to data calls concerning number of certified operations, statistics for certified operations per state, and statistics related to adverse actions against operations.</p>				<p>Strategic Alignment:</p> <p>USDA Goal 1</p> <p>AMS Strategic Goal 4</p>		

<i>Performance Requirement 5 Rating</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
Rating Official Narrative: <i>(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)</i>					
Performance Requirement 6: Support AMS Signature Process Improvement Support the implementation of the AMS Signature Process Improvement Initiative to improve the effectiveness of the Agency's operations.			Departmental Blueprint for Stronger Service AMS Strategic Goal 6		
<i>Performance Requirement 5 Rating</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<i>Critical Element Rating – Results Driven</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1

Part 6: Summary Rating Narrative (Mandatory)

Part 7: Executive's Accomplishment Narrative (Mandatory)

Part 8: Agency Use

From: [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Bailey, Douglas - AMS](#)
Cc: [Tensuan, Kristin - AMS](#); [Swartwood, Stacy - AMS](#)
Subject: Honor Award Text/List for Organic Integrity Database
Date: Monday, March 14, 2016 5:00:44 PM
Attachments: [05AMSOrganicIntegrityDatabase.docx](#)
[05AMSOrganicIntegrityDatabase.xlsx](#)

Attached is the text and name list of the Organic Integrity Database Honor Award nomination. You two are listed as team leads.

I am planning to get this into the PDF form first thing tomorrow – it then goes to Erin for AMS review...

We welcome any feedback – please feel free to redline.

Jenny

CITATION - Suggested citation that will be printed on certificate (25 words or fewer, include the accomplishment/contribution's result)

For developing and launching the Organic Integrity Database, a modernized system that provides up to date information about certified organic operations to the public

SIGNIFICANCE. Clearly describe the business challenge and the significance of the contribution/ accomplishment being nominated relative to the category selected. (30 lines)

The organic industry is a rapidly growing sector in U.S. agriculture; organic sales in the U.S. grew to \$39-billion in 2014. The certification of organic farms and businesses operates as a robust public-private partnership. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) accredits 79 third party organizations, called certifiers, who in turn certify more than 30,000 organic farms and businesses around the world.

The USDA organic regulations require that certifiers submit a list of their certified farms and businesses each year. Before 2015, certifiers submitted their lists using individual spreadsheets; only limited information was provided, and the quality of the data submitted was highly variable. USDA staff then manually reviewed and compiled a master list. This annual list of certified operations was quickly out-of-date as new operations were certified or as operations were suspended or revoked. As a result, AMS faced significant challenges in overseeing the organic industry and protecting the integrity of the USDA organic seal. USDA and stakeholders across the organic supply chain could not at any given time easily determine which operations were legitimately certified as organic. Further, the lack of accurate up-to-date information was also a challenge to the general public and stakeholders, as there was a lack of data and transparency about organic operations for those interested in the organic market.

To address these challenges, the 2014 Farm Bill provided funding to develop modernized technology to replace the outdated list and manual process. Using this funding, an AMS team initiated a collaborative software development project, and successfully launched the Organic Integrity Database in the fall of 2015. Referred to as INTEGRITY, the database allows organic certifiers to update their lists of certified operations at any time. This means that when a new farmer becomes certified, he or she won't have to wait up to a year before being listed in USDA's master list of operations. Instead, certifiers can report the information to USDA as soon as the organic certificate is issued.

The INTEGRITY team designed, built, and delivered this information technology solution in less than a year. The system is deterring fraud by providing accurate and more timely information about operations certified to use the USDA organic seal, and is actively strengthening USDA's oversight of the quickly growing organic industry.

MISSION - Clearly describe the impact of the contribution/accomplishment being nominated on the Department successfully meeting its mission, strategic goals and/or management initiatives. Include any measurables listed in such documents as the Strategic Plan, Blueprint for Stronger Service or Diversity Roadmap, as applicable. (30 lines)

The USDA Strategic Plan includes the goal of building a USDA for the 21st century that is high performing and efficient, engaging employees to improve service efficiency. The collaborative approach taken by the Organic Integrity Database Team advanced this goal in both its process and its product.

By engaging certifiers in the development process, the team facilitated the exchange of technical knowledge and best practices across diverse industry partners to improve data quality and consistency. Many certifiers involved shared that the process motivated them to examine their own internal data management processes, and improve the quality of their data in their home certification systems.

Further, by building data quality validation tools into the system, more than 320 hours of USDA labor hours were saved this year; this savings will be realized every year moving forward. Because of this work, USDA is now able to announce its annual count of certifier operations to the organic community and the public up to 3 months earlier than in previous years. Most importantly, the list of organic operators will be accurate throughout the year, rather than being updated annually. This enables USDA to track the growth of the organic industry in near real time, as the count of organic farms and businesses increases over time.

The Organic Integrity Database is also advancing the goal of developing shared technology solutions across the Department. By collaborating with representatives of the Organic Working Group, the National Agricultural Statistics Service, the Economic Research Service, and other AMS programs, the INTEGRITY team defined a data dictionary that will facilitate the collection of data that was once managed under a separate certifier census process, and has designed data snapshot reports that support research projects both internal and external to USDA.

Finally, the selection of the database development team itself supported Department goals related to strategic sourcing and diversity. The AMS team collaborated with the Farm Service Agency to use an existing contract mechanism to engage a software development team. The technology development contract used to build INTEGRITY is with a small, economically disadvantaged, woman-owned, qualified HUBZone business. AMS also contracted with a small business for the business process consulting element of the project.

INITIATIVE AND INGENUITY - Describe the degree to and the results by which the contribution/ accomplishment substantially exceeds normal job expectations, as well as the ingenuity or resourcefulness demonstrated. - Also describe any unusual complications or obstacles overcome in the accomplishment. (30 lines)

The primary challenges in developing the Organic Integrity Database were engaging the 79 organic certifiers in the system development process, and building a system quickly to sustain confidence and momentum. Other than carrying USDA accreditation, organic certifiers are fully independent of USDA. Operating both domestically and internationally, certifiers include small businesses, State departments of agriculture, non-profits, and large certification businesses. Certifiers have very different levels of information technology knowledge, and different ways of managing certified operation data. At the same time, these certifiers are collectively the primary data providers to INTEGRITY, so their engagement in system development was critical.

To facilitate this engagement, AMS established a certifier user group to provide input on system design and development. At its start, 25% of the certifiers joined the user group, and actively attended working sessions and webinars to weigh in on critical capabilities and design elements. Many of these certifiers also served as early testers of the system as it was developed. The user group grew over time, as the stakeholder community realized their power in shaping system development as it unfolded.

AMS also hosted three public webinars over the one year development period. These interactive sessions were attended by certifiers, researchers, advocacy groups, organic businesses, and industry stakeholders. More than 100 people attended each webinar, offering feedback and comments in real time. AMS also conducted outreach about the system with agencies across USDA with an interest in organic data, and kept the organic community updated with newsletter articles and conference updates.

All of this engagement was managed using agile software development best practices. "Agile" software development is a process that stresses iterative development, user engagement, leadership engagement, and real-time learning. To maximize the benefits of this approach, the team established a dedicated team room at USDA, engaged leadership across the organic and technology communities of interest, and followed the "U.S. Digital Services Playbook" to effectively extract and apply agile best practices from across the government into this project.

BENEFITS - Describe the results already attained. Describe the demonstrated measurable or non-measurable benefits to the Department, customers served and/or other stakeholders. (30 lines)

The Organic Integrity Database has two primary elements: a public facing site, which launched at the end of September 2015; and a certifier data upload and entry site, which launched in November 2015. By mid-January 2016, all 79 certifiers had submitted data to INTEGRITY, and many certifiers are now using the system on an ongoing basis to add new certified operations in near real-time. Attendees at two of the largest organic industry conferences in February and March 2016 reported that industry representatives and the public were checking INTEGRITY in real time to verify that companies were truly certified as organic; this had never been possible before.

One of the most significant results of the INTEGRITY development effort is the launch of a brand new classification system for organic products and categories, built into the database structure itself. The team built the product classification module using both "top down" and "bottom up" approaches. The "bottom-up" approach leveraged textual analysis to determine the most commonly reported terms in the past; the "top down" review included reviewing 18 other classification systems. The resulting new classification system is enabling more structured data collection, supporting both organic compliance and industry statistical reporting.

Further, INTEGRITY allows organic certifiers to directly validate and submit data on the organic operations they certify at any time, providing consumers and the industry with more accurate timely data about organic operations. The system also provides immediate feedback to certifiers about any data errors, enabling correction before posting for the public to see.

Current users of INTEGRITY include staff from across USDA with an interest in organic data; certifiers; organic farms and businesses; advocacy groups; researchers; organic consumers; and other organic industry stakeholders. Certifiers have praised both INTEGRITY itself and the process used to build it, and have committed to continuing to populate the system with more and more data as time passes.

a. Prepare a synopsis of no more than 150 words describing the achievements on which the nomination is based. The synopsis should be concise and descriptive, and should fully outline the outstanding achievements related to the award for which the individual/group is nominated.

The Agricultural Marketing Service's (AMS) Organic Integrity Database (INTEGRITY) Team successfully developed and launched a modernized organic certification database in less than a year. The database

replaces an annual, manual, labor-intensive, spreadsheet process with an online system that USDA-accredited organic certifiers can use to submit data for public use at any time. The team's success was driven by a proactive user engagement approach, a rigorous implementation of the agile software development process, and collaborative relationships with stakeholders across the USDA and organic communities. Launched at the end of 2015, INTEGRITY is being used by organic certifiers to report changes in their list of certified organic farms and businesses, by businesses wishing to connect with other buyers and sellers, by AMS to oversee the organic industry, and by the public to verify the organic status of the products they are buying. We are building organic integrity, one data set at a time.

Individual or Group Name (include for every employee)		Nominating Agency Staff Office or External Collaborative Organization (include for every employee)		Last Name (in alphabetical order)		First Name & MI		Team Leader? (Yes as approved by staff of O)		Name Exactly As it Should Appear on the Certificate (including such designations as M.D., Ph.D., etc., and honorifics)		Employee's Agency (no acronyms; include for every employee, other if non- USDA)		Other (non-USDA agency or outside organization)		Official Title		Pay Plan Series and Grade (ex: GS-301- 13)		Duty Station (city) (state) Abbrev		Email Address		Special Circumstances (e.g., employee retired, deceased, otherwise no longer with USDA - include DA, E separated)	
1	Organic Integrity Database Team	Agri cultural Marketing Service	Blatley	Douglas	Douglas	Yes	Douglas Blatley		Agri cultural Marketing Service			Chief Information Officer	SES	Washington	DC	blatley.douglas@aphis.usda.gov									
2	Organic Integrity Database Team	Agri cultural Marketing Service	Bowker	Daniel	Daniel	No	Daniel Bowker		Farm Services Agency			Commodity Officer	GS-1102-13	Washington	DC	blatley.douglas@aphis.usda.gov									
3	Organic Integrity Database Team	Agri cultural Marketing Service	Carney	Sherry S.	Sherry S.	No	Sherry S. Brown		Agri cultural Marketing Service			Commodity Officer	GS-1102-13	Washington	DC	blatley.douglas@aphis.usda.gov									
4	Organic Integrity Database Team	Agri cultural Marketing Service	Carney	Adam	Adam	No	Adam Carney		Natural Resources Service			Section Head, Census Section	GS-1102-15	Washington	DC	blatley.douglas@aphis.usda.gov									
5	Organic Integrity Database Team	Agri cultural Marketing Service	Carney	Adam	Adam	No	Adam Carney		Natural Resources Service			Section Head, Census Section	GS-1320-1	Washington	DC	blatley.douglas@aphis.usda.gov									
6	Organic Integrity Database Team	Agri cultural Marketing Service	Dewling	John	John	No	John Dewling		Other	New Jersey Department of Agriculture		Agri cultural Resource Specialist	N/A	Trenton	NJ	blatley.douglas@aphis.usda.gov									
7	Organic Integrity Database Team	Agri cultural Marketing Service	Dowell	Davin	Davin	No	Davin Dowell		Other	Washington State Department of Agriculture		Organic Certification Specialist	N/A	Olympia	WA	blatley.douglas@aphis.usda.gov									
8	Organic Integrity Database Team	Agri cultural Marketing Service	Flood	Jenni	Jenni	No	Jenni Flood		Other	AUS-QUAL Pty Ltd		Admin-Support Officer – Organic Prod	N/A	Murrumbidgee, Queensland and Avon	QLD/NT	blatley.douglas@aphis.usda.gov									
9	Organic Integrity Database Team	Agri cultural Marketing Service	Ganikow	Aleksey	Aleksey	No	Aleksey Ganikow		Other	Harmonia Holdings Group		Entrepreneur Architect	N/A	Melbourne	VA	blatley.douglas@aphis.usda.gov									
10	Organic Integrity Database Team	Agri cultural Marketing Service	Jalal	Mohammed Aif	Mohammed Aif	No	Mohammed Aif Jalal		Agri cultural Marketing Service			Information Technology Specialist	GS-2210-13	Washington	DC	blatley.douglas@aphis.usda.gov									
11	Organic Integrity Database Team	Agri cultural Marketing Service	Lewin	Jake	Jake	No	Jake Lewin		Other	CCOF Certification Service		President	N/A	San Jose	CA	blatley.douglas@aphis.usda.gov									
12	Organic Integrity Database Team	Agri cultural Marketing Service	McEvoy	Miles V.	Miles V.	Yes	Miles V. McEvoy		Agri cultural Marketing Service			Deputy Administrator	SES	Washington	DC	blatley.douglas@aphis.usda.gov									
13	Organic Integrity Database Team	Agri cultural Marketing Service	Muchagosi	Swaiby	Swaiby	No	Swaiby Muchagosi		Other	Harmonia Holdings Group		Product Manager	N/A	Melbourne	VA	blatley.douglas@aphis.usda.gov									
14	Organic Integrity Database Team	Agri cultural Marketing Service	Ohb	Dirk	Dirk	No	Dirk Ohb		Other	Harmonia Holdings Group		Director of Business Development	N/A	Colorado	CO	blatley.douglas@aphis.usda.gov									
15	Organic Integrity Database Team	Agri cultural Marketing Service	Shahar	Ravi	Ravi	No	Ravi Shahar		Other	Harmonia Holdings Group		Program Manager	GS-03_3-13	Melbourne	VA	blatley.douglas@aphis.usda.gov									
16	Organic Integrity Database Team	Agri cultural Marketing Service	Trammood	Kevin	Kevin	No	Kevin Trammood		Agri cultural Marketing Service			Project Analyst	GS-03_3-13	Washington	DC	blatley.douglas@aphis.usda.gov									
17	Organic Integrity Database Team	Agri cultural Marketing Service	Tucker	Jennifer	Jennifer	No	Jennifer Tucker		Agri cultural Marketing Service			Project Manager	GS-2210-1	Washington	DC	blatley.douglas@aphis.usda.gov									
18	Organic Integrity Database Team	Agri cultural Marketing Service	Welsch	Sam	Sam	No	Sam Welsch		Other	OneCert, Inc.		Associate Deputy Administrator	GS-0201-15	Lincoln	NE	blatley.douglas@aphis.usda.gov									
19	Organic Integrity Database Team	Agri cultural Marketing Service	Welsch	Sam	Sam	No	Sam Welsch		Other	OneCert, Inc.		President	N/A	Lincoln	NE	blatley.douglas@aphis.usda.gov									
20																									

From: [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)
To: [Lewis, Paul I - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Michael, Matthew - AMS](#)
Cc: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: Input for Miles" Accomplishments - DUE 8/15 - NOON
Date: Thursday, August 04, 2016 5:52:28 PM
Attachments: [McEvoy-Mid-Year-2016.docx](#)
[SES 2015 Accomp - McEvoy.docx](#)
[NOP-Accomp-TEMPLATE.docx](#)
Importance: High

Sorry this took me a little longer to get out to you. As discussed yesterday, please send me your inputs to Miles' accomplishments by 8/15 at Noon.

- NOP-Accomp-TEMPLATE – This is the only file I need back – completed, NOT redlined. Just replace "FILL IN HERE" with your inputs
- Mid-Year – What we sent in mid-year for reference/starting points
- SES 2015 – Final version from last year – Use this as a guide for level of detail, language

Thanks
Jenny

FY 2016 Mid-Year
Senior Executive Service (SES) Accomplishment Report
Miles McEvoy - Deputy Administrator, AMS National Organic Program

Critical Element 1. Leading Change

Weight:
15%

- (b) (6)
-
-
-
-
-

Critical Element 2. Leading People

Weight:
30%

- (b) (6)
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Critical Element 3. Business Acumen

**Weight:
10%**

- (b) (6)
-
-
-

Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions

**Weight:
10%**

- (b) (6)
-
-
-
-
-

Critical Element 5. Results Driven – Performance Requirements

**Weight:
35%**

Performance Requirement 1: Working Across AMS Programs

- (b) (6)
-
-
-
-
-

Performance Requirement 2: Cultural Transformation

(b) (6)

-
-
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-

Performance Requirement 3: Protect the Integrity of Organic Products

(b) (6)

-
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-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Performance Requirement 4: Support Organic Market Development

(b) (6)

-
-

(b) (6)

-
-
-

Performance Requirement 5: Information Technology

(b) (6)

-
-
-
-

Performance Requirement 6: Support AMS Signature Process Improvements

(b) (6)

-
-
-
-

FY 2015 Senior Executive Service (SES) Accomplishment Report
Miles McEvoy - Deputy Administrator, AMS National Organic Program

Critical Element 1. Leading Change

Weight:
15%

- (b) (6)
-
-
-

Critical Element 2. Leading People

Weight:
30%

- (b) (6)
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Critical Element 3. Business Acumen

Weight:
10%

- (b) (6)
-
-
-

Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions

**Weight:
10%**

- (b) (6)
-
-
-
-
-

Critical Element 5. Results Driven – Performance Requirements

**Weight:
35%**

Performance Requirement 1: Working Across AMS Programs: (b) (6)

- (b) (6)
-
-
-
-
-
-

Performance Requirement 2: Cultural Transformation (b) (6)

- (b) (6)
-

- (b) (6)

Performance Requirement 3: Protect the Integrity of Organic Products (b) (6)

- (b) (6)

Performance Requirement 4: Support Organic Market Development (b) (6)

- (b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 5: Information Technology (b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 6: Support AMS Signature Process Improvements (b) (6)

(b) (6)

Input for FY 2016 Deputy Administrator Accomplishments

Blue text is instructional text to help guide you as to what to include.

Critical Element 1. Leading Change -

Develops and implements an organizational vision that integrates key organizational and program goals, priorities, values, and other factors. Assesses and adjusts to changing situations, implementing innovative solutions to make organizational improvements, ranging from incremental improvements to major shifts in direction or approach, as appropriate. Balances change and continuity; continually strives to improve service and program performance; creates a work environment that encourages creative thinking, collaboration, and transparency; and maintains program focus, even under adversity.

- FILL IN HERE

Critical Element 2. Leading People

Designs and implements strategies that maximize employee potential, connects the organization horizontally and vertically, and fosters high ethical standards in meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals. Provides an inclusive workplace that fosters the development of others to their full potential; allows for full participation by all employees; facilitates collaboration, cooperation, and teamwork, and supports constructive resolution of conflicts. Ensures employee performance plans are aligned with the organization's mission and goals, that employees receive constructive feedback, and that employees are realistically appraised against clearly defined and communicated performance standards. Holds employees accountable for appropriate levels of performance and conduct. Seeks and considers employee input. Recruits, retains, and develops the talent needed to achieve a high quality, diverse workforce that reflects the nation, with the skills needed to accomplish organizational performance objectives while supporting workforce diversity, workplace inclusion, and equal employment policies and programs.

- FILL IN HERE

Critical Element 3. Business Acumen

Assesses, analyzes, acquires, and administers human, financial, material, and information resources in a manner that instills public trust and accomplishes the organization's mission. Uses technology to enhance processes and decision making. Executes the operating budget; prepares budget requests with justifications; and manages resources.

- FILL IN HERE

Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions

Solicits and considers feedback from internal and external stakeholders or customers. Coordinates with appropriate parties to maximize input from the widest range of appropriate stakeholders to facilitate an open exchange of opinion from diverse groups and strengthen internal and external support. Explains, advocates, and expresses facts and ideas in a convincing manner and negotiates with individuals and

groups internally and externally, as appropriate. Develops a professional network with other organizations and identifies the internal and external politics that affect the work of the organization.

- FILL IN HERE

5: Results Driven – Performance Requirement 1: Working Across AMS Programs

- FILL IN HERE

5: Results Driven – Performance Requirement 2: Cultural Transformation

- Leads the organization to eliminate barriers to improve operational and service excellence in work-life and wellness, labor relations, process improvement, employee development, talent management, customer focus and community outreach, and hiring reform. Pursues workforce diversity through recruitment, outreach and employee development programs designed to enhance the hiring and retention of highly qualified employees from diverse backgrounds. Supports the strategic objectives and action items contained in the AMS Special Emphasis Assessment Plan.
- Exercises all of USDA's special hiring authorities designed to increase employment of veterans and individuals with disabilities and targeted disabilities.
- Actively engages in the transformation of USDA by supporting process improvements in the organization. Engage employees to transform USDA into a model agency.
- Ensures that activities and timeframes established in the AMS Cultural Transformation Act Plan are met by demonstrating support through allocation of resources and commitment of program area managers to support initiatives.
- FILL IN HERE

5: Results Driven – Performance Requirement 3: Protect the Integrity of Organic Products

For this element, be sure to address the following performance plan that apply to you – indicate at the start of the bullet whether the target was MET, EXCEEDED, or NOT MET, followed by HOW/WHY – do not just repeat item below, but describe what was done to meet, exceed or what was not met:

- Continue rigorous investigations of complaints of alleged violations. Ensure terms of trade arrangements are being met. Ensure complete and thorough audits of USDA accredited certifying agents.
- Address 90% of appeals cases received in FY 2015 through a decision, settlement, or closure, in less than 180 days.
- Complete the investigation of 260 or more complaint cases during FY 2016.
- Work with AMS and USDA other government agencies to implement clear organic regulations, guidance, instructions and policy. Publish 1 proposed rule and 2 final guidance documents
- Support the work of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) to develop recommendations on organic standards. Support public engagement, transparency, and a fair process in the

development of NOSB recommendations. Conduct one NOSB training session and two NOSB public meetings in FY 2016.

- Continue implementing sunset process by published federal register notice to renew 2016 sunset materials.
- FILL IN HERE

5: Results Driven – Performance Requirement 4: Support organic market development

For this element, be sure to address the following performance plan that apply to you – indicate at the start of the bullet whether the target was MET, EXCEEDED, or NOT MET, followed by HOW/WHY – do not just repeat item below, but describe what was done to meet, exceed or what was not met:

- Maintain organic integrity in a sound and sensible manner. Support affordable, accessible and attainable certification for all organic operations. Provide opportunities for new and beginning farmers to succeed in organic production and marketing. Provide training to certifiers, organic farmers and the organic trade on sound and sensible organic certification.
- Provide one in-person certifier training session that covers sound and sensible certification practices.
- Lead efforts to negotiate and finalize organic equivalence arrangements; successfully complete required peer assessments to maintain existing equivalency arrangements.
- Support projects that implement the USDA Organic Working Group (OWG) objectives for FY2016. All five OWG topic areas show measurable progress towards reaching their goals in supporting organic agriculture.
- FILL IN HERE

5: Results Driven – Performance Requirement 5: Information Technology

- JENNY HAS THIS ONE

From: [Strohm, Sasha - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Bailey, Melissa - AMS](#); [Michael, Matthew - AMS](#)
Subject: Materials for Management Review
Date: Monday, May 05, 2014 8:35:02 AM
Attachments: [MR 14-1 Report 05 05 14.docx](#)
[2014 Management Review.docx](#)

Hello Management Team,

On May 7 we are conducting our annual QMS management review meeting. This is an annual review, conducted each fiscal year, although it did not take place last year. The purpose of this meeting is to evaluate our effectiveness in satisfying the NOP requirements, our customer requirements, and our quality objectives.

Attached please find the materials in preparation for Wednesday's meeting. Please let me know if you have any questions.

I assume you will gather in Miles' office for the meeting, but please stay tuned for dial-in instructions.

Thanks,

Sasha

Sasha Strohm
Marketing Specialist
USDA National Organic Program
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Room 2648-S
Washington, DC 20250
(202) 205-7808 fax

National Organic Program Management Review Report

Date of Management Review	May 7, 2014
Management Review Identifier	MR 14-1 Report 05 05 14

Attendance

	Meeting Attendees Names	Title, Position
1.	Miles McEvoy	Deputy Administrator
2.	Jennifer Tucker	Associate Deputy Administrator
3.	Cheri Courtney	Accreditation and International Activities Division Director
4.	Melissa Bailey	Standards Division Director
5.	Matthew Michael	Compliance and Enforcement Division Director
6.	Sasha Strohm	Quality Manager
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		

Agenda

Agenda Items	Notes for Meeting	Action Taken
a. Follow-up actions from earlier NOP management reviews (Management Review Work Plans)	N/A	
b. Results of NOP Internal Audits (Internal Audit Report and Corrective and Preventive Action Work Plan.	2013 Internal Audit (notes attached)	
c. Status of preventive action and corrective action for NOP.		
d. Results of auditing organizations, (e.g. NIST, ANSI) when conducted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OIG Milk Audit (2011) – Phases I and II (notes attached) • 2013 ANSI Peer Review (undergoing separate review) 	
e. List of recognition bodies, accreditation bodies, countries, etc. that recognize NOP or the NOP Regulation and/or have audited NOP during the year.		
f. Trends in non-conformances		
g. Participation in international activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Japan • Korea • Switzerland 	
h. Feedback from interested parties	Sound and Sensible initiative – launched in FY13. Making organic initiative more affordable and attainable.	
i. New areas of accreditation		
j. New areas of audit		
k. Process performance, if applicable		
l. Service conformity, if applicable		

<p>m. Fulfillment of objectives</p>	<p>Created training modules in Spanish; working towards publishing Handbook documents in Spanish.</p>	
<p>n. Changes that could affect the management system</p>	<p>Publishing Handbook documents in Spanish.</p>	
<p>o. Appeals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced average days to closure from 294 days in 2012 to 196 days in 2013. • Hearing - Birchwood 	
<p>p. Analysis of complaints</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issued 18 civil penalties (\$78,500) • Backlog reduced for first time 	
<p>q. Recommendations for improvement</p>		
<p>r. List other agenda items pertinent to the conduct of the NOP accreditation services below:</p>		
<p>R1. NOSB</p>		
<p>R2. Sunset changes</p>		

Actions for Improvement Summary

Summary of Actions for Improvement of the NOP management system and its processes include the defining or redefining of policies, goals, and objectives and identifying areas of improvement within the NOP Quality Manual.

Actions for Improvement	General Timeframe for Improvement	General Resources
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		

NOP Deputy Administrator, <i>Miles E. McEvoy</i>	Signature	Date

Note: Documents provided for the NOP Management Review are required records to be filed with this summary report.

2014 Management Review

May 7, 2014

9-10:30am

Purpose: To ensure the NOPs continuing suitability and effectiveness in satisfying NOP requirements, customer requirements, stated quality policy, and quality objectives. The NOP conducts an annual management review to ensure its continuing adequacy and effectiveness in satisfying the regulations, ISO/IEC 17011, and stated policies and objectives.¹

Responsibilities:

- **Miles:** Conduct review and provide resources to implement actions for improvement.
- **Sasha:** Schedule review and prepare management review materials. After review is completed, ensure actions for improvement are implemented.
- **Top Management:** Evaluate management review information and determine appropriate actions for improving quality management system. Implement actions for improvement as assigned.

Questions/Considerations:

1. (b)(5) Deliberative
2. (b)(5) Deliberative

Materials for Evaluation:

1. Audits
 - 2013 INTERNAL AUDIT (Focus on AIA)
 - Issue: Time Management
 - (b)(5) Deliberative
 - ACTION ITEMS
 - (b)(5) Deliberative
 - (b)(5) Deliberative
 - (b)(5) Deliberative

¹No management review was conducted in 2013 due to changeover in Quality Manager position

- (b)(5) Deliberative
- (b)(5) Deliberative
- Issue: Generalists vs. Specialists
 - (b)(5) Deliberative
 - ACTION ITEMS
 - (b)(5) Deliberative
 - (b)(5) Deliberative
 - (b)(5) Deliberative
 - (b)(5) Deliberative
 - (b)(5) Deliberative
 - (b)(5) Deliberative
- Issue: Communication
 - (b)(5) Deliberative
 - ACTION ITEMS
 - (b)(5) Deliberative

- (b)(5) [Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

○ **2011 OIG MILK AUDIT (PHASE I)**

- Finding: NOP Needs to Ensure that Organic Milk is not Coming into Contact with Prohibited Substances While Being Transported
 - The NOP published NOP 5031 Final Guidance on January 22, 2014 clarifying that only operations that receive and distribute products in the same container—without opening, relabeling or otherwise processing them—are excluded from the certification requirements of the regulations. The guidance explains how the exclusion applies to different types of handling operations, including those that handle unpackaged organic products.

• ACTION ITEMS

- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

Commented [SLS1]: (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

○ **2011 OIG MILK AUDIT (PHASE II)**

- Issue: Origin of Livestock:

• ACTION ITEMS

- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- n. (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

Commented [SLS2]: (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

Commented [SLS3]: (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

Commented [SLS4]: (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

- (b)(5) Deliberative
- (b)(5) Deliberative
- (b)(5) Deliberative
- Peer Review
 - ANSI 2014 Peer Review – (b)(5) Deliberative

- Commented [SLS5]: (b)(5) Deliberative
- Commented [SLS6]: (b)(5) Deliberative
- Commented [SLS7]: (b)(5) Deliberative

Next Steps—After the Review:

- (b)(5) Deliberative
- (b)(5) Deliberative
- (b)(5) Deliberative
- (b)(5) Deliberative
- (b)(5) Deliberative

From: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#)
To: [Earnest, Darryl - AMS](#); [Coale, Dana - OSEC](#); [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: Mid-Year Accomplishments
Date: Tuesday, July 15, 2014 3:02:40 PM

Darryl/Dana/Miles,

Can you send me your write ups for your 6-month accomplishments? We are trying to pull some info together on civil rights accomplishments for the Agency Head Assessment report.

Thanks,

Erin

Erin Morris
Associate Administrator/
Chief Operating Officer
USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC, 20250

From: [Walker, Natosha - AMS](#)
To: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#)
Subject: Mid-Year Reviews
Date: Tuesday, May 10, 2016 11:31:43 AM
Attachments: [Bailey,D SES 2016 Mid Year.pdf](#)
[Coale,D SES 2016 Mid Year.pdf](#)
[McEvoy,M SES 2016 Mid Year.pdf](#)
[Guo,R SES 2016 Mid Year.pdf](#)
[Jimenez,S SES 2016 Mid Year.pdf](#)
[Earnest,D SES 2016 Mid Year.pdf](#)
[Morris,C SES 2016 Mid Year.pdf](#)
[Neal,A SES 2016 Mid Year.pdf](#)
[Parrott,C SES 2016 Mid Year.pdf](#)
[Morris,E SES 2016 Mid Year.pdf](#)

Hi Erin,

Please see attached.

Thank you,

Natosha Walker

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Agricultural Marketing Service

Room 3069-S

Phone: (b) (6)

Fax: 202-260-9191

NatoshaL.Walker@ams.usda.gov

**Performance Management System
Executive Performance Agreement**

AMS Only



Part 1. Consultation. *I have reviewed this plan and have been consulted on its development.*

Executive's Name (Last, First, MI): McEvoy, Miles, V	Appraisal Pd: 10/01/15 –9/30/16
Executive's Signature: <i>[Signature]</i>	Date: 11/9/2015
Title: Associate Deputy Administrator	Organization:
Rating Official's Name (Last, First, MI): Barnes, Rex	CA <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> LT/LE <input type="checkbox"/>
Rating Official's Signature: <i>[Signature]</i>	Date: 11/9/15

Part 2. Progress Review

Executive's Signature: <i>[Signature]</i>	Date: 4/22/2016
Rating Official's Signature: <i>[Signature]</i>	Date: 4/22/2016
Reviewing Official's Signature (Optional): <i>[Signature]</i>	Date: 4/22/16

Part 3. Summary Rating

<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5 Outstanding	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 Exceeds Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 Minimally Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 Unsatisfactory
Initial Summary Rating				
Rating Official's Name (Last, First, MI):				
Rating Official's Signature:			Date:	
Executive's Signature:			Date:	
Reviewing Official's Signature (Second-Level Official's Concurrence):			Date:	

Higher Level Review (if applicable)

<input type="checkbox"/> I request a higher level review. Executive's Initials:	Date:
Higher Level Review Completed <input type="checkbox"/>	Date:
Higher Level Reviewer Signature:	

Performance Review Board Recommendation	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
PRB Chair Signature:	Date:				
Annual Summary Rating	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
Appointing Authority Signature:	Date:				

Part 4. Derivation Formula and Calculation of Annual Summary Rating

Critical Element	Element Rating		Weight	Score		Summary Level Ranges
	Initial	Final (if changed)		Initial	Final (if changed)	
1. Leading Change			15%			475-500 = Level 5 400-474 = Level 4 300-399 = Level 3 200-299 = Level 2 Any CE rated Level 1 = Level 1
2. Leading People			30%			
3. Business Acumen			10%			
4. Building Coalitions			10%			
5. Results Driven			35%			
Total			100%			

From: [Taylor, Jameelah - AMS](#) on behalf of [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#)
To: [Alonzo, Anne - AMS](#); [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: Miles - FY2015 Mid-Year Review

From: [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Cc: [Nelson, Kristen - AMS](#)
Subject: Miles Mid Year Summary - From ODA (Jenny/Kristen)
Date: Thursday, March 12, 2015 7:18:15 PM
Attachments: [Miles-MidYr-From ODA.docx](#)

Consolidated input from Kristen and me for ODA.

Miles McEvoy – Mid-Year Accomplishments from ODA

Performance Requirement 1: Implement Clear and Consistent Organic Standards.

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 2: Protect the Integrity of Organic Products.

- (b) (6)

Performance Requirement 3: Implement Sound and Sensible Certification Practices.

- (b) (6)

-

Performance Requirement 4: Support Organic Market Development.

- (b) (6)

Performance Requirement 5: Support Public Involvement.

- (b) (6)

-

-

Performance Requirement 6: Information Technology Improvements.

- (b) (6)

From: [The Cornucopia Institute](#)
 To: Miles.McEvoy@usda.gov
 Bcc: [McEvoy Miles - AMS](#)
 Subject: New Organic Leadership Called For, Talking Yogurt, Nominations to NOSB Open, and more
 Date: Saturday, April 25, 2015 8:02 08 AM

Share      

PROMOTING ECONOMIC JUSTICE FOR FAMILY-SCALE FARMING

NEWS FROM THE CORNUCOPIA INSTITUTE



NEWS FROM THE CORNUCOPIA INSTITUTE

APRIL
25,
2015

Cornucopia: Remove Miles McEvoy from Organic Leadership at USDA

Image



The Cornucopia Institute yesterday sent a letter to USDA Secretary Vilsack and President Obama calling for the removal of Miles McEvoy as Deputy Administrator of the National Organic Program (NOP). McEvoy has repeatedly deferred to corporate interests with his lax enforcement of organic law on [organic factory farms](#), and ignored National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) recommendations on [nanotechnology](#), [hydroponics](#) and [aquaculture](#), among others. With 200+ materials up for NOSB review this year, McEvoy has neither provided funds for needed Technical Reviews nor the customary third annual NOSB meeting which would allow the NOSB and the public adequate time to gather research and input. His unilateral gutting of the sunset procedure will be [contested in court](#) by 15 organic stakeholders, including Cornucopia. [NOTE: Follow the NOSB meeting in La Jolla, CA next week via [Twitter](#) at #NOSB and on [Cornucopia's website](#).]

Source: USDA

[READ MORE](#)

Cornucopia's Linley Dixon on Yogurt, Organics and Chemical Defoamers

Image



Dr. David Naimon recently interviewed Dr. Linley Dixon, Farm and Food Policy Analyst, on Cornucopia's newest report, [Culture Wars: How the Food Giants turned Yogurt, a Health Food, into Junk Food](#). The half-hour interview covers some of the most interesting aspects of the report. Dixon explains that although organic yogurts seldom carry the "live and active cultures" label, they often contain more live and active cultures than the yogurts bearing the seal. Dixon further notes that due to requirements for grassfeeding in organic dairy, organic yogurt typically has a healthier ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 fatty acids. Processing agents do not need to be listed in ingredients, though traces of the chemicals may remain in food. Conventional yogurt often contains residue from chemical defoamers not allowed in organics. Drs. Naimon and Dixon also discussed the possible effects of artificial sweeteners and antibiotics on the gut microbiota, including unexpected weight gain.

[LISTEN TO THE INTERVIEW](#)

NOSB Nominations Due May 15, Appointment Process Remains Shadowy

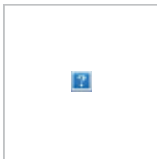
Image



The National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) is a 15-member appointed board of organic stakeholders who advise the USDA's National Organic Program (NOP) on substances and other regulatory topics. The NOSB includes four organic farmer/growers, three environmentalists, three consumer advocates, two handlers, one retailer, one scientist and one certifying agent. The NOP is now seeking applicants to fill the five-year terms for two farmer positions, two public interest advocate positions and the USDA accredited certifying agent spot. [Previous appointments](#) have stretched the farmer description to include agribusiness employees. Nomination instructions can be found [here](#), and the deadline is May 15, 2015. Cornucopia has again requested Secretary Vilsack make the nominations public, but he has [indicated, once again, he will not](#).

[READ MORE](#)

Cornucopia Welcomes New Board Member and Policy Advisors



Mitch Blumenthal

The Cornucopia Institute welcomes Mitch Blumenthal, president and founder of Global Organic/Specialty Source Inc., to its board of directors. Mitch's experience in organic farming and distribution is a welcome addition to Cornucopia's knowledge base. Amanda Love retired from the board and joined Cornucopia's policy advisory panel, along with Texas farmer Cameron Molberg. Cameron is the CEO of the only certified organic feed mill in Texas and the largest certified organic pasture-based chicken farm in the state, Coyote Creek Organic Feed Mill and Farm. The board reelected Helen Kees as president, Kevin Engelbert as vice-president, Roger Featherstone as treasurer and Barry Flamm as secretary.

[READ MORE](#)

Cornucopia is Hiring!



The Cornucopia Institute is seeking an individual with a true passion and enthusiasm for protecting the integrity of organic food and agriculture, and the family farmers who produce it. The **Communications and Development Assistant** will assist with Cornucopia's many communications (reports, newsletters, infographics, etc.) as well as the organization's revenue development efforts (grants, fundraising mailings, occasional fundraising events, etc.). Reporting directly to the [Communications and Development Director](#), this is an early-career position that offers great opportunity for advancement. A heartfelt passion for protecting the environment, the good food movement, human health, humane livestock husbandry, and social/economic justice for family farmers is essential.

Cornucopia is formally based in Cornucopia, Wisconsin, but staff members are "virtually officed" in home offices around the country. Because of this, applicants must be highly motivated and able to work independently.

[VIEW JOB DESCRIPTION & APPLY](#)

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P.O. Box 126 Cornucopia, Wisconsin 54827
TEL: [608-625-2000](tel:608-625-2000) | FAX: [866-861-2214](tel:866-861-2214) | www.cornucopia.org



From: [Eckhouse, Sara - AMS](#) on behalf of [Alonzo, Anne - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Morris, Erin - AMS](#); [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#); [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#); [Stoker, Edward - AMS](#); [Bailey, Shayla - AMS](#); [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#); [Rakola, Betsy - OSEC](#); [Ricci, Carrie - OGC](#)
Subject: NOP Issues
Attachments: [FW USDA Organic Program DivisiveIn Crisis ObamaVilsack asked for New Leadership.msg](#)

We will have the conference line open for those who are teleworking today.

Call-in: 888-844-9904

Code: (b) (6)

From: [McEvoy Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Alonzo Anne - AMS](#); [Eckhouse Sara - AMS](#); [Barnes Rex - AMS](#); [Morris Erin - AMS](#); [Rakola Betsy - OSEC](#)
Cc: [Jones Samuel - AMS](#); [Stoker Edward - AMS](#); [Bailey Shayla - AMS](#); [Tucker Jennifer - AMS](#)
Subject: FW: USDA Organic Program Divisive/In Crisis: Obama/Vilsack asked for New Leadership
Date: Friday, April 24, 2015 10:41:08 AM

FYI

From: The Cornucopia Institute [mailto:cultivate@cornucopia.org]
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2015 10:25 AM
To: Miles.McEvoy@usda.gov
Subject: USDA Organic Program Divisive/In Crisis: Obama/Vilsack asked for New Leadership

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Cornucopia Institute | PRESS RELEASE

APRIL 24, 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
 Contact Mark Kastel, 608-625-2042

Prominent Government Watchdog Asks Obama Administration to Remove Organic Leadership at USDA National Organic Program Divisive and in Crisis

<http://www.cornucopia.org/2015/04/prominent-government-watchdog-asks-obama-administration-to-remove-organic-leadership-at-usda/>

CORNUCOPIA, WIS The nation's preeminent organic industry watchdog, [The Cornucopia Institute](#), sent [a letter](#) today to the White House, and to USDA Secretary Thomas J. Vilsack, requesting a change in leadership at the regulator's National Organic Program (NOP). A radical shift in the unique public-private governance in the organic sector, established by Congress in 1990, has created deep fissures within the organic community and, more recently, resulted in 15 organic stakeholders, including Cornucopia, [suing the USDA](#).

Previous administrations faced plenty of criticism from organic advocates. However, during the Clinton and Bush years, USDA officials were universally viewed as respecting the purview of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB). [This 15-member multi-stakeholder body](#) was established by Congress to review all synthetic/non-organic ingredients and materials used in organic farming and food production. Congress also mandated that the USDA Secretary seek the counsel of the NOSB on all aspects of implementing the [Organic Foods Production Act \(OFPA\)](#).

"Although the USDA ignored some of the NOSB recommendations in the past, until recently they never went 180 degrees in the opposite direction in deference to the preferences of powerful corporate interests," said Kevin Engelbert, a former NOSB member from Nichols, New York. "And they never reversed the 23-year tradition of allowing the NOSB the autonomy to create their own procedure manual, set their own agenda and create their own workplan."

The Cornucopia Institute, established in 2004, with 10,000 members, is thought to represent more certified organic farmers than any other organization in the nation. Mr. Engelbert and his family were the first certified organic dairy farmers in the United States.

In 2009, President Obama and Mr. Vilsack were universally praised for their choice of appointing Miles McEvoy, a former organic official with the state of Washington, to lead the NOP. Yet, after an extended honeymoon, public sentiment has taken a decisive turn toward disappointment and controversy in recent years, brought to a head by several unilateral decisions made by the USDA without collaborating, as had been the custom, with the NOSB.

Although many organic industry observers were already becoming disillusioned with the approach during the Obama/Vilsack administration, Mr. McEvoy threw gasoline on the fire, in the fall of 2013, when he unilaterally [reversed](#) the "Sunset" procedure. Mandated by Congress, this procedure required the NOSB to review every synthetic material/ingredient approved for use in organics every five years.

Dr. Barry Flamm, a conservation expert and former chairman of the NOSB later lamented, "I thought we had improved the Sunset process during my tenure on the Board. Besides taking the teeth out of the Sunset provisions, the reversal is a real affront to all of us who believed in the public governance process that Congress built into the organic law."

Under the old procedure, synthetics were reviewed every five years and then sunsetted off the National List unless voted to be relisted if appropriate. Under the new USDA procedures, these materials will instead stay on the list in perpetuity unless the NOSB takes action to remove them (and in a complete reversal, the removal of a material will require a two-thirds super-majority to remove a material).

Although the change in the Sunset provisions, bypassing the NOSB, was supported by many of the corporate agribusinesses that have invested in organics, by a number of the major certifiers who oversee their operations, and by industry lobbyists, it was universally viewed as *a stick in the eye* by farmers, consumers and public interest groups that have been able to collaborate on the process in the past.

In addition to "gutting the Sunset procedure," as The Cornucopia Institute referred to it, a diverse subset of organic stakeholders have also expressed grave concern about several other positions the USDA has taken in direct conflict with the direction of the NOSB. These include:

Nanotechnology

In 2010, the NOSB made clear, in a resolution, that inadequate science currently existed enabling it to conclude that food, or food packaging, manufactured through nanotechnology, was safe for human consumption or appropriate for inclusion in certified organic food products. They recommended a more thorough examination and asked the USDA for technical assistance to conduct a more thorough examination, including convening a symposium on the subject. Instead, five years later the NOP unilaterally decided against any moratorium on organic food containing nanoparticles and instead ruled to allow them to be petitioned for use on a case-by-case basis, like any other synthetic or non-organic substance.

Hydroponics

Also in 2010, the NOSB clearly stated that U.S. organic law required organic plants to be grown in soil with federal regulations focusing on enhancing soil fertility, thus positively impacting the nutritional content of organic food. Growing plants in water, or air, using a narrow mixture of natural and synthetic nutrients, in the opinion of the Board, does not meet the letter or spirit of OFPA. However, the NOP, and some major U.S. certifiers, are allowing giant, multimillion-dollar installations to grow plants indoors, under artificial lighting, and labeling the products *organic* without even identifying their origin as hydroponic.

Aquaculture

At the bequest of economically powerful agribusiness lobbyists, the USDA has charged ahead pushing the NOSB to approve a myriad of synthetic inputs, without even having in place a regulatory framework for how organic aquaculture would be managed. Many advocacy groups have challenged whether or not open net fish farming in the oceans could be done without environmental degradation.

Organic Regulatory Theater

At the next NOSB meeting, beginning April 27, the volunteer panel faces the unrealistic task of carefully reviewing approximately 200 synthetics and materials that will Sunset in 2016 and 2017, in addition to a number of broader policy issues. In the past when the workload has exceeded the NOSB's capacity, the USDA has scheduled a third meeting during the year and/or added extra days to NOSB gatherings. This has not happened despite this year's workload grossly exceeding what the NOSB, and oversight groups like The Cornucopia Institute, can realistically examine.

Enforcement

When Miles McEvoy took over as staff director of the NOP, the new Deputy Administrator publicly stated that the organic industry was now entering "the age of enforcement." Yet major fraud investigations have languished and some perpetrators have even received favorable treatment and anonymity during his tenure. "We have giant factory farms, like Shamrock Dairy in Arizona, which the USDA has found to have violated the law, still operating more than six years after legal complaints were originally filed," said Mark A. Kastel, the Institute's Codirector. "If it weren't for the work of The Cornucopia Institute, this 'pending' enforcement action would still be secret."

Despite the potential deterrent effect, the USDA has systematically refused to publicize the full background, nature of violations, and names of any companies or farms under investigation – even after these entities were found to have broken the law and were fined or otherwise penalized.

In what appears to be a serious ethical lapse, at a recent USDA training for accredited organic certifiers, Mr. McEvoy appeared to coach attendees on damage control tactics concerning organic livestock factory farms that have been the target of recent outside investigations and accused of violating organic law. The take-away message by certification officials from what Mr. McEvoy said was that industry watchdogs were "bashing **your** operations." [emphasis added]

"Since the NOP is responsible for not only investigating the alleged improprieties at these factory farms, but also overseeing the performance of the certifiers that inspect those operations, the apparent bias is extremely troubling," added Kastel.

This is not the first time The Cornucopia Institute has called upon the USDA Secretary to change management at the NOP for what appears to be inappropriate favoritism and collaboration with the corporate sector.

Cornucopia, in 2009, collaborated with a *Washington Post* investigation exposing a sweetheart deal between a powerful industry lobbyist and Dr. Barbara Robinson, then head of the USDA's organic program. She allegedly illegally approved materials for use in organics, overruling her staff and bypassing the NOSB. Cornucopia subsequently called upon both President Obama and USDA Secretary Vilsack to remove Dr. Robinson, which ultimately occurred later that year.

"For those of us who were practicing organic agriculture prior to Congress authorizing the USDA to oversee this industry, the behavior of current management at the NOP is a big disappointment," said Helen Kees, Cornucopia's Board President and an organic beef and vegetable producer from Wisconsin. "The authority of the NOSB has been undermined, and it doesn't really matter whether Miles McEvoy is the chief architect or just willingly carrying out orders. The organic community needs an independent voice that can be universally respected to head this important regulatory body," Kees asserted.

-30-

MORE

In the past, the process by which the NOSB operated was developed by the Board itself, in collaboration with organic stakeholders, after being officially noticed in the Federal Register.

"The Policy Procedure Manual (PPM) was developed by the Board, after extensive public input, and approved by the USDA during the Bush administration," according to former NOSB Chairman Dr. Flamm.

During his five years on the NOSB, Dr. Flamm also served for four years as the chairman of the Policy Subcommittee, which developed the NOSB's PPM.

"You don't need to take The Cornucopia Institute's word alone in supporting the thesis that the USDA has overstepped their legal authority and undermined the unique process Congress set up to assure organic stakeholders that corporations would not wield undue influence in promulgating organic law," Cornucopia's Kastel added.

Last year, in a blunt letter, the two primary authors of the enabling legislation, the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990, Representative Peter DeFazio and the Senate's longest-serving member, Patrick Leahy, both clearly expressed that, in their unique position to judge, the edict reversing the Sunset procedures clearly violated the will of Congress.

The two congressional leaders were echoed in another letter to Secretary Vilsack, by three prominent past chairman of the NOSB: James Riddle,

founder of [Independent Organic Inspectors Association](#); Jeff Moyer, a longtime organic farming educator/leader with the Rodale Institute; and Dr. Barry Flamm, a natural resource and environmental consultant, the first certified organic cherry producer in Montana, and board secretary of The Cornucopia Institute.

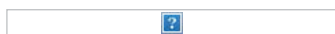
More Organic Regulatory Theater

Since the NOSB was designed to have broad industry representation, and is not a scientific panel, Congress gave the body the authority to engage scientific experts to do Technical Reviews of synthetics and other materials up for consideration. This part of the law has never been respected. Instead, the USDA has hand-picked the contractors. In the earlier history of the organic program, they chose agribusiness executives and consultants to review materials petitioned by corporate agribusiness. This was a clear conflict of interest, thoroughly outlined in Cornucopia's white paper, [The Organic Watergate](#).

Currently, the USDA is contracting nonprofit organizations funded by corporate agribusiness to conduct the materials reviews. In one case, the nonprofit wing of the powerful industry lobby group, the Organic Trade Association, is preparing Technical Reviews for the NOSB.

"This is a clear conflict of interest and the proverbial fox watching the organic chicken coop," stated Cornucopia's Kastel. "A further cloak of secrecy the USDA has donned, regarding the conflicts exposed in *The Organic Watergate report*, is that the agency is now refusing to disclose the names of the scientists writing the Technical Reviews for this public body —this makes critiquing potential conflicts of interest impossible."

Along with the nearly insurmountable workload imposed on the NOSB by the USDA, the agency has refused to spend adequate dollars to pay for Technical Reviews the NOSB has requested. Instead, NOP officials are touring the country in what some have charged is an expensive public relations campaign selling organics. "This leaves the NOSB ill-equipped to rigorously review many of the synthetic and non-organic materials that are up for review and that were not properly scrutinized when they were added to the National List in the first place," stated Kastel.



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TEL: [608-625-2000](tel:608-625-2000) | FAX: [866-861-2214](tel:866-861-2214) | www.cornucopia.org



From: [Bradley, Mark - AMS](#)
To: trudy.bialic@pccsea.com
Cc: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Avila, Joan - AMS](#)
Subject: RE: complaints coming in
Date: Wednesday, May 21, 2014 3:10:49 PM

Hi Trudy,

I've requested a meeting on Miles' calendar as discussed for 3:00 pm DC time for tomorrow, May 22. I'll let you know if there are any changes due to schedule conflicts.

Nice talking to you...

Thanks,

Mark



Mark A. Bradley | Assistant to the Deputy Administrator | 202.690.0725 | FAX 202.205.7808 | Cell
 (b) (6)

USDA – AMS – NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM | 1400 Independence Ave. SW | Washington, DC 20250

Organic Integrity from Farm to Table, Consumers Trust the Organic Label

Register to receive NOP Announcements - <http://bit.ly/NOPOrganicInsiderRegistration>

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Wednesday, May 21, 2014 6:48 AM
To: Bradley, Mark - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Cc: Avila, Joan - AMS
Subject: RE: complaints coming in

Mark – Please set up a conference call with Trudy to discuss. Thanks.

Miles V McEvoy
 Deputy Administrator
 National Organic Program

From: Bradley, Mark - AMS
Sent: Monday, May 19, 2014 3:19 PM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: RE: complaints coming in

Miles – Jenny suggested I show you this before sending. It's a bit more detailed than we may normally send, but this is a very well-versed questioner who will keep asking until we answer her questions. I will hold until you OK...Thanks. Mark

- - -

Hi Trudy –

Thanks for your question. Joan asked if I would be willing to pick up the discussion here.

We realize there a bit of discussion on how OFPA and the Federal Advisory Committee Act overlap on certain issues regarding FACA Board management. While the optics of having the NOP Deputy Administrator sitting next to the NOSB Chair may have surprised some folks (although certainly not

the Board), the requirements of both statutes were satisfied by having Miles and NOSB Chair Mac Stone work side-by-side to run the meeting. FACA requires the Agency to facilitate the work of citizen advisory boards, to open and close the meetings, and to chair the meetings when appropriate. OFPA says the Board will elect a chair. Therefore, both statutes have been applied and satisfied. Miles has always been responsible for and in charge of the meeting as required under FACA. The only thing that changed was having Miles sit next to Mac instead of over at the NOP staff table. Some saw it as an attempt to micro-manage the Board. Others saw it as a closer, more mutually supportive collaboration between the Board and the Program. We prefer the latter view. Miles and Mac were able to more easily collaborate on regulatory or procedural questions without Mac having to announce any questions he may have over the public address system; Miles was able to help out Mac on comments or questions from the public, if needed.

For questions regarding the revised sunset process, we've just posted a new fact sheet that should explain the process and how it addresses both the statute and regulatory process. It will be announced in the Inside very soon. [Here is the link.](#) I think that it answers your questions on the new sunset process better than I can here.

Finally, nothing around here happens in a vacuum; any decisions, actions or policies published in the Federal Register are fully vetted through the Department and through our Office of General Counsel. Given the level of review this action received before it ever came out, the Program is confident that the changes comply with both the Federal Advisory Committee Act and OFPA. The NOSB is still in charge of the National List and has the sole authority to recommend additions and deletions to materials included on that list. And we now have a consistent process on how materials are added to and removed from the List.

I hope this helps. Please let me know if you need more or different information.

Thanks,

Mark



Mark A. Bradley | Assistant to the Deputy Administrator | 202.690.0725 | FAX 202.205.7808 | Cell
(b) (6)

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Organic Integrity from Farm to Table, Consumers Trust the Organic Label

Register to receive NOP Announcements - <http://bit.ly/NOPOrganicInsiderRegistration>

From: Trudy Bialic [<mailto:trudy.bialic@pccsea.com>]

Sent: Friday, May 02, 2014 5:28 PM

To: Avila, Joan - AMS

Subject: RE: complaints coming in

Thank you, Joan,

I appreciate your reply and if possible, could use a bit more clarification to make it square with my reading of the Organic Food Production Act.

Your reply did not address the fact that OFPA gave *unique* authority and powers to the NOSB, unlike any other federal advisory board. No other advisory board to the federal government has the powers granted to NOSB by OFPA. It appears that USDA's attempt to refashion NOSB — to conform with how other advisory boards operate — breaches OFPA's intent and the letter of the law.

Yes, I am on NOP's email list to receive notice of public comment. PCC Natural Markets traditionally has commented on issues viewed as important to our membership. The "streamlined sunset review" is particularly troubling to us, and I wrote comments to NOP on that last fall, and had them resent for the spring meeting. (I have not attended the past several meetings due to some health issues that developed last fall.)

To allow any or all synthetics common to non-organic foods, unless 2/3 of NOSB votes to remove them, is clearly not what OFPA provided for. I would not have expected such a policy edict to come from Miles, our own state's former organic program manager, and it is very worrisome for the value of the organic seal that we fought for so hard.

I would be glad to review any supporting arguments or evidence for why the "streamlined sunset review process" is NOT contravening the OFPA mandate, if you could point me to it? Please advise.

Much obliged, take care,
Trudy

Trudy Bialic / Director, Public Affairs / PCC Natural Markets / Seattle, WA / (b) (6)

From: Avila, Joan - AMS [<mailto:Joan.Avila@ams.usda.gov>]
Sent: Friday, May 02, 2014 7:43 AM
To: Trudy Bialic
Subject: RE: complaints coming in

Dear Ms. Bialic:

We appreciate your email and we appreciate your perspective. Your input is very important to the work we do.

The reason why Mr. McEvoy co-chaired the meeting is because the USDA did recently adjust how it works with the National Organic Standards Board to be more consistent with how other federal advisory boards are managed. As NOP's deputy administrator, Miles McEvoy is responsible for making sure that NOSB meetings are run smoothly and effectively. At the Spring NOSB meeting, Miles opened the meeting and made sure that public participation was balanced and fair. This is a normal part of how federal advisory boards are managed, and supports the public meeting process in a positive way.

Public comments are a very important source of feedback for us. Are you signed up on our email list to receive public comment notices? If so – wonderful – then we encourage you to use those opportunities to get your views heard – they are very important to us. If no, and you are interested

in doing signing up, please go to www.ams.usda.gov/nop.

Thank you for your feedback.

Joan F. Avila, Secretary
National Organic Program
Agricultural Marketing Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Stop 0268, Room 2648-S
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268
Joan.avila@ams.usda.gov

(b) (6)

From: Trudy Bialic [<mailto:trudy.bialic@pccsea.com>]
Sent: Thursday, May 01, 2014 6:24 PM
To: Avila, Joan - AMS
Subject: FW: complaints coming in
Importance: High

Hi Joan,

Are you able to address the question below?

Thank you,

Trudy Bialic / Director, Public Affairs / PCC Natural Markets / Seattle, WA / (b) (6)

From: Trudy Bialic
Sent: Thursday, May 01, 2014 3:01 PM
To: Miles McEvoy (AGR) (Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)
Subject: complaints coming in
Importance: High

Dear Miles,

I expect your hands are full at the moment. You should know, however, we are being rained on here in your home state, getting e-mails and calls about what's going on at the San Antonio meeting.

They pointedly are aghast at your self-appointment as co-chair and the reversal of the sunset rule, demanding PCC "do something" about them.

I always ask questions before weighing evidence. My question is whether you believe these are appropriate actions, or whether USDA/AMS has ordered them? Where did these actions originate?

Take care,

Trudy Bialic

Director, Public Affairs
PCC Natural Markets
Seattle, Wash. 98105

(b) (6)

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From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)
Subject: RE: Draft of Email Requesting Information for FY 2014 AHA Report
Date: Monday, June 16, 2014 1:59:27 PM
Attachments: [McEvoy, M. 2013 Perf App Signed.pdf](#)
[SES Performance Plan--Miles McEvoy.pdf](#)

Jenny –

Can you complete the rest of this request for Cliff and send with the attached documents? Thanks.
Miles

From: Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Sent: Wednesday, June 11, 2014 3:32 PM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Subject: RE: Draft of Email Requesting Information for FY 2014 AHA Report

Ah – I have that. That's also part of the other data call that I already am handling. So yes, I have that.

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Wednesday, June 11, 2014 3:28 PM
To: Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: Re: Draft of Email Requesting Information for FY 2014 AHA Report

Right. I will get those. How about the goal 6 stuff?

Miles V McEvoy
 Deputy Administrator
 USDA National Organic Program

On Jun 11, 2014, at 2:29 PM, "Tucker, Jennifer - AMS" <Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

I would do this, but I don't have a copy of your performance records..... so I don't have anything to assemble.

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Wednesday, June 11, 2014 1:46 PM
To: Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: FW: Draft of Email Requesting Information for FY 2014 AHA Report

Please assemble the documents that Cliff needs. Thanks.

From: Gilchrist, Clifton - AMS
Sent: Friday, June 06, 2014 1:55 PM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Subject: RE: Draft of Email Requesting Information for FY 2014 AHA Report

A copy of your mid-year review and write-up for this year (if you have one?). Also, a signed performance rating from last year.

Also, for Goal 6: a response for each of the five areas mentioned.

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Friday, June 06, 2014 1:41 PM
To: Gilchrist, Clifton - AMS
Subject: RE: Draft of Email Requesting Information for FY 2014 AHA Report

Hi Cliff,

I'm not sure what you need from NOP. Can you please clarify? Thanks.

Miles

From: Gilchrist, Clifton - AMS
Sent: Thursday, June 05, 2014 3:21 PM
To: Bailey, Douglas - AMS; Barnes, Rex - AMS; Coale, Dana - AMS; Earnest, Darryl - AMS; Eckhouse, Sara - AMS; Guo, Ruihong - AMS; McEvoy, Miles - AMS; Morris, Craig - AMS; Morris, Erin - AMS; Neal, Arthur - AMS; Parrott, Charles - AMS; Sarcone, Chris - AMS; Tharp, Melissa - AMS; Jimenez, Sonia - AMS; Trykowski, David - AMS; Francis, William - AMS
Cc: Ulibarri, Ronald - AMS; Cox, Billy - AMS; Comfort, Karen - AMS; Barnes, Rex - AMS; Eckhouse, Sara - AMS; Cor, Teri - AMS; Satterfield, Rose - AMS; Tuckwiller, David - AMS
Subject: FW: Draft of Email Requesting Information for FY 2014 AHA Report

Good afternoon,

Although we have not yet received OASCR'S official data call for FY 2014, I have attached OASCR's draft of the CR Performance Report which needs to be completed and submitted to OASCR. We need your response by **June 20, 2014**, so that a DRAFT can be submitted to the front office in a timely fashion.

For: All AMS Programs:

- **Goal 1.1 (b) – Employee's Performance Plans**
 "Agencies are required to send a **signed copy** of a representative sampling of performance plans showing evidence of EEO elements for SES, GS-15, GS-14, GS-13, GS-12, GS-9-11, and GS-1-8."

In the past, we submitted **FY 2014 Mid-Year Reviews and Accomplishments** to demonstrate fulfillment of this goal.

So, as in previous years, we are asking for the following for the respective grades: SES (OA, NOP, T&M); GS-15(Dairy, C&A); GS-14(Cotton and Tobacco); GS-13(F&V); GS-12(ITS); GS-9-12(LPS); and GS-1-8(S&T)

If you don't have a sample please contact me or Teri Cor at 720-0583.

For: Commodity Procurement Branch/Office of Outreach/Beverly Brown)

- **GOAL: 5. Procurement:**

The Agency must take affirmative steps to increase procurement with businesses owned and operated by small business, small disadvantaged business, service disabled veterans, HUBZone, and persons with disabilities (AbilityOne, previously referred to as the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act or "JWOD").

For: Cultural Transformation (Karen (CT Lead)/Programs/CR/Outreach/C&A)

- **GOAL: 6. Secretary's Commitment:**

The Secretary's commitment of successful transformation includes:

1. An inclusive workplace environment where there is equity of opportunity and all employees are empowered to reach their full potential;
2. Modernization of technology and systems that will enable us to provide the highest level of service;
3. A commitment by USDA employees to improving USDA's past and future record of civil rights, including expanded outreach efforts to socially-disadvantaged farmers and ranchers;
4. Systems of accountability that encourage all employees to achieve high standards of performance and customer service; and
5. A renewed commitment to creating diversity in the workforce and succession planning.

Please note that this year OASCR is requiring copies of the Agency's Succession Plan. (C&A)

Also, please note that AMS will be awarded as much as eight additional points for developing and implementing an outreach strategy to enhance civil rights, EEO and/or customer service to USDA employees and constituents. Our submission must include detailed descriptions, targeted audiences, and measurable outcome for all outreach initiatives. (T&M/Outreach-Billy Cox)

For: CT-Karen Comfort/CR/Outreach-Billy Cox):

GOAL: 7. Implementation of the Secretary's Commitment to Diversity

This goal is pursuant to the Secretary's directive for a USDA cultural transformation as ONE USDA. In order to reach the Secretary's goal of expanding diversity in the Department, Office of Human Resources Management developed a Diversity **Strategic Plan** comprised of six (6) components:

- 1) Leadership Accountability and Commitment;
- 2) Outreach and Partnership;
- 3) Recruiting and Hiring,
- 4) Retention and Promotion;
- 5) Diversity Training and Awareness; and
- 6) Employee Development and Recognition.

(Please note that once again OASCR is requiring information on implementation of AMS's Diversity Strategic Plan rather than its Diversity Road Map, which had been required initially.)

Note: Areas not identified involve Civil Rights (Goals 3, 4, 8). If you have questions, please contact me or Teri Cor, **(b) (6)**.

Thanks!

Cliff

|

Clifton J. Gilchrist
Civil Rights Director
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Room 1095-S, Stop 0206
Washington, DC 20250
(Phone) **(b) (6)**
(Fax)202/690-0476


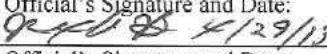
United States Department of Agriculture Senior Executive Service Performance Plan and Appraisal Record

Employee Name (Last, First, MI): McEvoy, Miles, V	Position Title: Deputy Administrator	Series: ES-301	Salary: 120,000
Agency: Agricultural Marketing Service	Interim Appraisal: <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Summary Rating: <input type="checkbox"/>	Appraisal Period Dates: (From/To): 10/1/12 through 9/30/2013	

1. Plan Development - Consultation and Certification: Signatures below certify that the rating official has developed the performance plan in consultation with the employee and has discussed the final plan with the employee. The discussion occurs at the beginning of the performance period. The rating official provides the employee a copy of the plan.


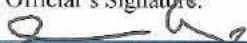
Rating Official's Signature: 	Date: 11/20/12
Reviewing Official's Signature: 	Date: 11/20/2012
Employee's Signature: 	Date: 11/28/12

2. Progress Review: Initials below certify that a mandatory progress review was completed within the appraisal period.


Employee's Initials and Date:  4/29/13	Rating Official's Signature and Date:  4/29/13	Rating Official's Title:
Employee's Initials and Date:	Rating Official's Signature and Date:	Rating Official's Title:

3. Initial Summary Rating (Check One): The Rating Official must check the initial summary rating level determined using the Element and Summary Rating Guide.

(b) (6) Outstanding (b) (6) Superior (b) (6) Fully Successful (b) (6) Minimally Satisfactory (b) (6) Unsatisfactory

Rating Official's Signature: 	Date: 10/01/13
Reviewing Official's Signature: 	Date: 10/2/13

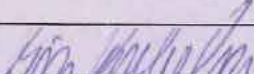
This evaluation has been discussed with me and I have been given a copy. I am aware that if I disagree with my rating and decide to submit a narrative response indicating so, it must be submitted in writing within 5 calendar days of receipt of my evaluation. *Signature does not constitute agreement or disagreement with the rating.*

Employee's Signature: 	Date: 10/18/2013	<input type="checkbox"/> Employee Written Response Attached
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4. Performance-Based Recommendations (Check all that apply): *Attach written justification for recommended actions based on appraisal, briefly summarizing any managerial and program accomplishments and impact on the Department or Agency.

<input type="checkbox"/> Retain <input type="checkbox"/> Reassign <input type="checkbox"/> Remove*	<input type="checkbox"/> Performance Award:	<input type="checkbox"/> Base Salary Increase to: \$ Indicate Total Percentage:
<input type="checkbox"/> Presidential Rank Award*		Date of Last PRA:
Agency Head/Staff Director/Under or Assistant Secretary Signature:		Date:

5. Performance Review Board Recommendations (Check all that apply): Indicate the summary rating and performance award and/or pay recommendations resulting from the PRB. If PRB recommended rating differs from initial summary rating, the Board must provide a written statement identifying specific elements where there is disagreement and rationale for recommendation.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concur with Initial Summary Rating:	(b) (6) Outstanding (b) (6) Superior (b) (6) Fully Successful (b) (6) Minimally Satisfactory (b) (6) Unsatisfactory	
<input type="checkbox"/> Change Summary Rating To:		
<input type="checkbox"/> Retain <input type="checkbox"/> Reassign <input type="checkbox"/> Remove*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Performance Award Amount: 10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> Base Salary Increase/Decrease to: \$ Indicate Total Percentage: %
<input type="checkbox"/> Presidential Rank Award		Date of Last PRA:
PRB Chairperson's Signature: 	Date: 12-17-13	

Secretary's Approval: Signature below indicates approval of final rating and performance-based recommendations.

I concur with the PRB's Recommendations

Secretary's Signature: 	Date:
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Element and Initial Summary Rating Guide

Performance Element Rating Level Descriptions: Element ratings are to be based on observable performance and behaviors during the appraisal period. The following five level element rating scale is to be applied to the appraisal of each individual performance element at the end of the appraisal period.

Outstanding: At the outstanding level of performance, the Senior Executive achieves and completes all critical element requirements in an exemplary manner. An outstanding rating exemplifies the highest level of performance possible, and is characterized by both organizational accomplishment and personal achievement. The outstanding level is representative of the executive's influence on the organization through innovative and effective management practices and procedures, noteworthy program implementation, success in building partnerships and coalitions, demonstrative responsiveness to internal and external customers, and outstanding management of resources. The Senior Executive's performance reflects measurable and lasting improvements in organizational performance.

Superior: At the superior level of performance, the Senior Executive demonstrates consistently excellent performance, where the majority of element requirements exceed the fully successful level. The Senior Executive has demonstrated more than effective performance of essential requirements, has had a positive impact on mission accomplishment, and has enhanced the performance of self and others.

Fully Successful: At the fully successful level of performance, the Senior Executive meets expectations and demonstrates sound and solid performance, where all critical element requirements are completed in a satisfactory manner and the executive has performed effectively. The Senior Executive has contributed to organizational goals and achieved meaningful results.

Minimally Satisfactory: At the minimally satisfactory level of performance, the Senior Executive only partially meets element requirements for the fully successful level, and has been marginally effective. This level of performance, while demonstrating some positive contributions to the organization, shows notable deficiencies.

Unsatisfactory: At the unsatisfactory level of performance, the Senior Executive does not meet performance requirements, and performance deficiencies resulted in demonstrable negative consequences for the organization. The executive is not willing or not able to perform the essential performance requirements.

Assignment of Element Ratings: Check the appropriate rating for each element within the performance plan.

Element 1	(b) (6) Outstanding	(b) (6) Superior	(b) (6) Fully Successful	(b) (6) Minimally Satisfactory	(b) (6) Unsatisfactory	
Element 2	(b) (6) Outstanding	(b) (6) Superior	(b) (6) Fully Successful	(b) (6) Minimally Satisfactory	(b) (6) Unsatisfactory	
Element 3	(b) (6) Fully Successful	(b) (6) Unsatisfactory	(b) (6) N/A	(b) (6) N/A	(b) (6) N/A	
Element 4	(b) (6) Outstanding	(b) (6) Superior	(b) (6) Fully Successful	(b) (6) Minimally Satisfactory	(b) (6) Unsatisfactory	(b) (6) N/A
Element 5	(b) (6) Outstanding	(b) (6) Superior	(b) (6) Fully Successful	(b) (6) Minimally Satisfactory	(b) (6) Unsatisfactory	(b) (6) N/A

Converting Element Ratings to Initial Summary Rating and Rating of Record:

The Executive's initial summary rating and rating of record is determined using the table below. The Mission Results element has the greatest emphasis for measurable results. After each element rating level has been determined, the supervisor will assign the initial summary rating by applying the following descriptions.

(b) (6) Outstanding	(b) (6) Superior	(b) (6) Fully Successful	(b) (6) Minimally Satisfactory	(b) (6) Unsatisfactory*
All performance elements rated outstanding and the Civil Rights element is rated fully successful.	Mission Results is rated superior or above and other elements are rated fully successful or above, and the Civil Rights element is rated fully successful.	Mission Results and Civil Rights elements are rated fully successful and other elements are rated fully successful or above.	One or more elements rated minimally satisfactory. No elements rated unsatisfactory.	One or more elements rated unsatisfactory. *Attach written justification for recommended actions based on appraisal, summarizing performance deficiencies and actions that were taken to help improve performance.

National Organic Program | Agricultural Marketing Service
Fiscal Year 2013 (FY13) Performance Accomplishments | Miles V. McEvoy, Deputy Administrator

As National Organic Program (NOP) Deputy Administrator, Mr. McEvoy is responsible for protecting the integrity of the USDA organic seal. Mr. McEvoy leads a staff of 34 professional staff in overseeing an industry that yielded \$35-billion in U.S. sales during 2012. Key FY13 accomplishments are described below.

Mission Results

Organic Integrity – Accreditation Activities:

(b) (6) (b) (6)

Organic Integrity - Enforcement Program:

(b) (6) (b) (6)

Trade Agreement Support:

(b) (6) (b) (6)

Standards Development:

(b) (6) (b) (6)

Partnership Development – AMS and USDA:

(b) (6) (b) (6)

Partnership Development – Other Federal Agencies:

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Organization Realignment - NOP Appeals:

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Education and Outreach:

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Correspondence and Communication:

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Leadership/Management

(b) (6)

Civil Rights

(b) (6)

**USDA Mandatory Department-wide Senior Executive Service
Critical Performance Elements and Requirements**

Element 1 - Mission Results (Mandatory/Critical). This element measures an executive's contribution to strategic goals and objectives through timely and effective planning, implementation, decision making, evaluation and accountability.

Performance Requirements: This is the one mandatory critical SES performance element that measures results, specifically results contributing to the mission or the organization. Performance requirements in the element are expressed in terms of measurable results that directly link to and meet the organizational goals and objectives required of the executive during the appraisal period. Measurable results in this element account for more than 60% of the performance plan and drive the summary rating above "Fully Successful" level. *It is expected that each executive include any specific Civil Rights goals or targets for which they will be held accountable for during the appraisal period in this element. Measures would include those pertaining to the mission or the workforce, i.e., diversity, inclusion or outreach and/or any specific improvement targets stemming from the organization's annual Civil Right's performance assessment.*

ELEMENT 2 - Leadership/Management (Mandatory/Critical). This element measures an Executive's success in leading and managing their organization in the accomplishment of organizational goals through leading change; managing resources; addressing programmatic and organizational requirements; incorporating vision, strategic planning and results-driven management into the full range of organization activities; and being held accountable through customer/stakeholder and employee feedback.

Performance Requirements: This is a mandatory critical SES performance element. The performance requirements in this element are expressed in terms of narrative expectations. Meeting the requirements described below constitute meeting the "Fully Successful" element level.

Leads organizational change and motivates managers to incorporate vision, strategic planning and results-driven management in the full range of the organization's activities. Addresses programmatic requirements as necessary to motivate and lead the organization. Strategies are designed and implemented to improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency, and to meet program goals. Program goals are aligned to agency strategic plans and accomplished within specified timeframes. Interests of the organization, employee, and customer/stakeholder are well balanced and priorities are adjusted in response to changing demands. Meets management initiative goals as imposed by regulatory/oversight agencies (e.g. Office of Management and Budget and Office of Personnel Management), and the Department or agency.

Human, financial, material and informational resources are effectively acquired and managed to achieve performance goals. Needs assessments are based on organizational goals and budget realities, and opportunities to reduce program and administrative costs are sought. Management control systems are established/maintained to monitor activities, identify problem areas, and initiate timely corrective action.

Maintains a positive organizational environment that fosters diversity, inclusion, innovation, initiative, open and honest communication, and teamwork among employees and peers. Within available resources, ensures employees have the tools and training to do their jobs.

Leads organization to set goals and track results for achieving workforce diversity, recruitment, and retention programs that will help to maximize the hiring and retention of highly qualified employees in underrepresented groups. Upon request by OHRM reports activities and progress towards workforce diversity achievements.

Leads organization in supporting the Secretary's initiative to improve Departmental responses to important inquiries of USDA's partners, customers, and Legislative Officials and for improved release of information to the press and public. As requested reports activities and process improvements to the Department's Office of Executive Secretariat, Office of Congressional Relations, and Office of Communications.

Employee Perspective: Seeks employee feedback to identify needs and expectations and considers employee perspective when making decisions affecting workforce or programs.

Customer Perspective: Ensures a high degree of responsiveness to organizational leadership, the public, and internal and external customers. Continuously reviews and monitors organizational performance to achieve agency mission results and considers the customer's point of view. Consults and collaborates and builds partnerships with agencies and other stakeholders, and takes decisive actions in accordance with law, regulation, and Department policy. Continuously seeks to improve business processes, sharing those efforts with other units to improve overall Department performance. Systematically listens to customers and gathers their feedback, actively seeking to identify their needs and expectations, and effectively communicating those needs and expectations to employees. Ensures employees are prompt, professional, fair and responsible to the circumstances of individual customers to the extent permitted by law and regulation.

Recruitment and Hiring

Recruits and selects new employees based on organizational goals, budget considerations, and staffing needs. When filling a position, the supervisor engages and collaborates with HR to ensure skills required for the job are identified, posting of the job vacancy is accurate, and assists in identifying contacts for diverse locations or organizations for recruiting purposes. Participates as needed with HR in the proper screening of applications, and appropriate categorization of applicants based on qualifications.

Utilizes flexible hiring authorities when filling a vacancy (e.g., targeted disabilities, student employment, direct hire, appointing veterans, etc.) to ensure diversity in recruitment and hiring.

Retention and Succession Planning

Successfully transitions new hires into the position by promptly providing an orientation into the workforce and establishing performance elements and standards. Supervisor provides ongoing feedback and coaching, and makes appropriate use of the probationary period to assess the new hire's ability to perform in the position.

Implements retention strategies that focus on key internal processes (e.g., work environment, employee orientation, executing Individual Development Plans for all employees--subject to bargaining obligations, coaching, development, and mentoring, etc.) that promotes employee growth, supports the health of the workforce and drive the future success of the organization's people and infrastructure.

Assesses current workforce plans to ensure they are up-to-date in order to meet Program/Agency goals and objectives. Works with senior management officials and HR to comply with the workforce planning process as described in the Department's position management policy.

Performance Management

The supervisor establishes subordinate employee performance plans within established timeframes and that align with Agency and Departmental goals and objectives. Communicates to employees how their work supports the Agency mission and strategic plan/initiatives. Employee performance plans contain clear, results-focused measures and the supervisor provides accurate and timely feedback to determine progress and success in meeting expectations:

The supervisor completes performance plans, progress reviews, and appraisals of subordinate employees by the due dates established by the Department or Agency. Performance plans for each employee must include at least one critical element that is traceable to the agency's goals and objectives (e.g., Mission Results critical performance element).

Provides ongoing feedback and coaching as demonstrated through performance feedback sessions as evidenced by 100% of employees receiving at least one feedback session at the midpoint of the rating period.

Ensures appropriate action is taken to address performance problems in a manner that supports organizational goals and objectives.

Ensures subordinate managers and supervisors adhere to the Agency performance management policy with regard to performance appraisal and employee recognition.

Performance and employee feedback data is used as an indicator of compliance and general satisfaction or needed improvement with regard to the planning, developing, monitoring, rating and rewarding of performance.

Element 3 - Civil Rights (Mandatory/Critical). This element measures an Executive's leadership in the implementation and meeting of civil rights strategic goals; enforcement of civil rights laws, rules, regulations; and holding subordinate supervisors accountable for achieving civil rights goals and objectives in all employment, program delivery, and other administrative activity.

Performance Requirements:

This is the one mandatory critical SES performance element that is a pass/fail element. Being pass/fail, an executive is rated at either the "Fully Successful" level or the "Unsatisfactory" level. The performance requirements in this element are expressed in terms of narrative expectations. Meeting the requirements described below constitutes meeting the "Fully Successful" element level.

Note: This pass/fail element primarily measures compliance to civil rights laws, policies, and requirements. USDA recognizes that each agency or organization has specific civil rights goals and targets to include those pertaining to mission and the workforce, i.e., diversity, inclusion, outreach, etc. These specific goals and targets are appropriately measured under Element 1, Mission Results. **It is expected that each executive include the civil rights goals and targets for which they will be held accountable for during the appraisal period under Element 1.**

Applicable milestones from the USDA Civil Rights Plan and Strategic Plan are incorporated into the agency or staff office strategic and annual performance plans. Applicable goals and objectives related to accountability, program delivery, outreach, workforce diversity, employment practices, resources and structure, performance, administrative activities, communications and reporting are met in accordance with Department and agency policy.

Develops and implements outreach strategies that enhance the delivery of agricultural services and assistance to underserved populations. Demonstrates an understanding of and commitment to equal employment opportunity and ensures fair and equitable program delivery.

Ensures subordinate supervisors exercise effective managerial, communication and interpersonal skills to supervise and develop a diverse workforce.

The importance of Civil Rights and Equal Employment is communicated to unit employees at least once during the rating cycle, and other Civil Rights and Equal Employment topics are routinely addressed at staff meetings.

Executive completes and ensures all subordinate employees complete annual civil rights training within identified timeframes and agency and departmental requirements.

Makes good faith efforts to resolve employment complaints and workforce disputes at all times, particularly early in the process, by offering alternative dispute resolution, training, and alternative assignments; by timely response to requests for information from EEO counselors, mediators, investigators, and adjudicators; and by prompt implementation of settlement agreements.

USDA Optional Program/Position-Specific Senior Executive Service Critical Performance Elements and Requirements

Rating officials and the executive may add up to two program/position-specific critical elements that the executive is expected to accomplish during the appraisal period. The total number of elements assigned should not exceed five elements, including the three mandatory elements stated in the performance plan. USDA policy recommends that any executive responsible for homeland security functions have a separate homeland security element designated as a program/position-specific critical element. Homeland security is defined as the functions related to continuity of operations, continuity of government, facility, or information technology security, or those related to safety of food and agricultural products. Performance requirements should be described in terms of specific results(s) with metrics, in terms of clear, credible measures (e.g., quality, timeliness and/or cost-effectiveness) of performance. **At the option of the Secretary or Assistant Secretary for Administration, one of the optional critical elements may be used to address a program or function that all USDA Executives are to be held accountable for as deemed necessary.**

Element – Name of Program/Position Specific (Optional/Critical):

Definition: (Briefly define what the element measures.)

Performance Requirements: It is important to note that the element is critical, which means that an executive's "Unsatisfactory" performance in the element would result in an overall "Unsatisfactory" rating. Therefore, if a program/position-specific element is used, the duties and responsibilities should be important to the position. The performance requirements in this element are expressed in terms of narrative expectations. Meeting the requirements below constitute meeting the "Fully Successful" element level.

(Indicate performance requirements here.)

Strategic Alignment

Executives in the U. S. Department of Agriculture are accountable for supporting the mission of the Department and their Agency in providing leadership in food, agriculture, natural resources, rural development and related issues based on sound public policy, the best available science, and efficient management. This plan identifies the critical performance elements and establishes performance requirements for each element which align with the mission, goals, and organizational objectives. The Department's Strategic Goals and Management Initiatives are stated below. Agencies should indicate their relevant Strategic Goals and Management Initiatives in the space provided below.

Departmental Strategic Goals and Management Initiatives:

USDA Strategic Goals:

1. Assist rural communities to create prosperity so they are self-sustaining, repopulating, and economically thriving.
2. Ensure our national forests and private working lands are conserved, restored, and made more resilient to climate change, while enhancing our water resources.
3. Help America promote sustainable agricultural production and biotechnology exports as America works to increase food security.
4. Ensure that all of America's children have access to safe, nutritious, and balanced meals.
5. Help create a culture where all employees are fully committed, motivated, and engaged in achieving USDA's cultural transformation.
6. Implement the principles outlined in the *USDA Diversity Recruitment Roadmap* to help position USDA for current challenges and to meet future challenges.

USDA Management Initiatives:

- Engage USDA employees to transform USDA into a model agency.
- Provide civil rights services to Agriculture employees and customers.
- Coordinate outreach and improve consultation and collaboration efforts to increase access to USDA programs and services.
- Leverage USDA Departmental Management to increase performance, efficiency, and alignment.
- Optimize Information Technology (IT) policy and applications.
- Optimize USDA "green" or sustainable operations.
- Enhance USDA homeland security and emergency preparedness to protect USDA employees and the public.
- Enhance the USDA Human Resources process to recruit and hire skilled, diverse individuals to meet the program needs of USDA.
- Improve USDA correspondence, communications, and congressional relations to increase transparency, responsibility and accountability with USDA's partners, customers, and Legislative Officials.

Agency Strategic Goals and Management Initiatives (These will be used to show linkage in the Mission Results element):

Strategic Goals:

1. Support our customers in making verifiable marketing-enhancing claims about how to their products are produced, processed, and packaged.
2. Provide benefits to the agricultural industry and general public by delivering timely, accurate and unbiased marketing innovation; and purchasing commodities in temporary surplus and donating them for Federal food and nutrition programs.
3. Enable agricultural groups to create marketing self-help programs designed to strengthen the position in the marketplace.
4. Monitor specific agricultural industries/activities to ensure they maintain practices established by regulation to protect buyers, sellers, and other stakeholders.

Management Strategy:

- Procure, develop, and use resources to efficiently and effectively support AMS programs.

Element 1 - Mission Results (Mandatory/Critical).																																					
<p>Instructions: In the table below, describe the applicable goal or strategy the work aligns to and the results-focused measures. The executive will be accountable for accomplishing these measures during the appraisal period and will be expected to address completion of them in their annual accomplishment report. Accomplishing the results-focused performance measures described below constitute meeting the "Fully Successful" element level. There is no minimum number of performance requirements. Requirements are determined by the rating official in consultation with the employee.</p>																																					
Linkage (List the Goal and/or Strategy and Objective):	Performance Measures (List the specific accomplishments, outcomes, deliverables, and/or target dates):																																				
Secretary's Cultural Transformation	<p>Supports the Secretary's initiative for Cultural Transformation through continuous examination and survey of the workforce, customer service, training, and leadership, creates an environment of inclusion, exceptional performance and effective leadership and works to eliminate any barriers to operational and service excellence.</p> <p>Ensures that activities and timeframes established in the AMS Cultural Transformation Action Plan are met by demonstrating support through allocation of resources and commitment of program area managers to support initiatives.</p> <p>Actively engages in the transformation of USDA by supporting process improvements in the organization.</p>																																				
USDA Diversity Recruitment Roadmap	<p>Supports the Secretary's initiative for USDA Diversity Recruitment Roadmap by expanding upon mission-specific activities and timelines to ensure diversity recruitment program success and leadership accountability.</p> <p>Demonstrates progress in addressing identified areas of under-representation in the agency/program workforce per the AMS MD-715, FEORP, DVAAP, and related reports as measured by end of fiscal year workforce assessment/analysis.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="808 1171 1495 1709"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Current AMS Workforce</th> <th>Civilian Labor Force</th> <th>2013 AMS Target</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>White Women</td> <td>23.9%</td> <td>33.7%</td> <td>25.0%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hispanic Men</td> <td>6.2%</td> <td>6.2%</td> <td>6.5%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asian Men</td> <td>1.8%</td> <td>1.9%</td> <td>1.9%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asian Women</td> <td>1.4%</td> <td>1.7%</td> <td>1.6%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Native Amer/Pac Isld Men</td> <td>.00%</td> <td>.1%</td> <td>.02%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Native Amer/Pac Isld Women</td> <td>.02%</td> <td>.1%</td> <td>.04%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Veterans</td> <td></td> <td>-</td> <td>11%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disabled Veterans</td> <td></td> <td>-</td> <td>4%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Current AMS Workforce	Civilian Labor Force	2013 AMS Target	White Women	23.9%	33.7%	25.0%	Hispanic Men	6.2%	6.2%	6.5%	Asian Men	1.8%	1.9%	1.9%	Asian Women	1.4%	1.7%	1.6%	Native Amer/Pac Isld Men	.00%	.1%	.02%	Native Amer/Pac Isld Women	.02%	.1%	.04%	Veterans		-	11%	Disabled Veterans		-	4%
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<p>USDA Office of Executive Secretariat (OES) Goal - To increase transparency, responsibility, and accountability for preparing quality and timely correspondence on behalf of the Secretary through collaboration and partnership with all U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agencies and Staff Offices.</p>	<p>Ensure that an effective correspondence program is in place throughout the subordinate organization that results in correspondence that is of high quality, responsive to the concerns of the constituent, factually correct, consistent with USDA policies, and reflects USDA's mission and the Secretary's priority messages.</p> <p>Draft correspondence assignments from the Office of the Executive Secretariat (OES), including any background, supporting documentation, or other assignments relative to the preparation of a draft response to Secretarial correspondence are completed within 5 to 7 calendar days of receipt of request.</p> <p>Direct responses to correspondence from a public official, trade association, head of a major corporate or non-profit organization, or otherwise designated as high priority that are assigned to an agency to respond directly are prepared, signed by an appropriate official, and sent within 10 to 15 calendar days of receipt of request.</p> <p>Direct responses to correspondence from the general public that are assigned to an agency to respond directly are prepared, signed by an appropriate official, and sent within 10 to 15 calendar days of receipt of request.</p>
<p>USDA Office of Congressional Relations (OCR) Goal – To increase accountability for Agency staff dealing with Congressional and state and local Intergovernmental relations on behalf of the Secretary, including state level staff.</p>	<p>Responds immediately (upon contact) to OCR requests for information related to urgent Congressional concerns and hot topics.</p> <p>Weekly reporting, weekly meetings, communications, and correspondence are handled effectively, efficiently, and meet OCR requirements as stated in the ASOCR's memo, dated February 17, 2010. This pertains to all communications and interactions with elected/legislative officials, and associated legislative activities.</p> <p>Performance results in timely Departmental responses to public and program delivery inquiries.</p>
<p>USDA Office of Communications (OC) Goal – To increase accountability of Agency staff at all levels with external communications to the press and the public about USDA, Secretary Vilsack and the Obama Administration.</p>	<p>Responds immediately (upon contact) to OC requests for information, suggested talking points, and materials, and ensures information provided is applicable, accurate and comprehensive. Ensures that public affairs or appropriate staff attend meetings requested by OC and provide requested information for Departmental short and long-range planning documents, to include the Week Ahead.</p> <p>Ensures that press or appropriate staff keeps OC abreast of all press inquiries and those hot issues with the potential of becoming press stories.</p> <p>Performance results in the accurate and timely release of Departmental information to the press and public.</p>
<p>FY 2010-2015 USDA Strategic Plan Goal 1 - Assist rural communities to create prosperity so they are self-sustaining, repopulating, and economically thriving.</p> <p>AMS Strategic Plan Goal 4. Monitor specific agricultural industries/activities to ensure they maintain practices established by regulation to protect buyers, sellers, and other stakeholders.</p>	<p>Annual percentage growth in the number of agricultural operations certified as organic, increasing volume of organic food products available to American consumers and promoting export sales of organic food products.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Baseline 2009: 1% o Target 2015: 3%

FY 2010-2015 USDA Strategic Plan Goal 1 - Assist rural communities to create prosperity so they are self-sustaining, repopulating, and economically thriving.

AMS Strategic Plan Goal 1: Support our customers in making verifiable marketing-enhancing claims about how to their products are produced, processed, and packaged.

AMS Strategic Plan Goal 4. Monitor specific agricultural industries/activities to ensure they maintain practices established by regulation to protect buyers, sellers, and other stakeholders.

Accredited certifying agents, both domestic and foreign, are in conformance with National Organic Program (NOP) accreditation criteria.

Baseline 2009:

- 90% full conformance
- 99% conformance with minor findings

Target 2015:

- 95% full conformance
- 99.5% conformance with minor findings

International Market Access

By the end of the 4th quarter, conduct peer review assessments of the Canadian and EU Organic Equivalency Arrangements to ensure fair implementation and maintain access to markets. Establish equivalency arrangement with Japan to expand market access for US organic products.

Accredited Certifying Agent Compliance

Conduct initial, mid-term, and renewal accreditation audits with certifying agents and produce well-documented reports that illustrate the level of conformance that each certifying agent has with respect to the regulations by the end of the 4th quarter.

**United States Department of Agriculture
Senior Executive Service Performance Plan and Appraisal Record**

Employee Name (Last, First, MI): McEvoy, Miles, V	Position Title: Deputy Administrator	Series: ES-301	Salary: 120,000
Agency: Agricultural Marketing Service	Interim Appraisal: <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Summary Rating: <input type="checkbox"/>	Appraisal Period Dates: (From/To): 10/1/12 through 9/30/2013	
1. Plan Development - Consultation and Certification: Signatures below certify that the rating official has developed the performance plan in consultation with the employee and has discussed the final plan with the employee. The discussion occurs at the beginning of the performance period. The rating official provides the employee a copy of the plan.			
Rating Official's Signature: <i>Ray A. Bama</i>		Date: 11/20/12	
Reviewing Official's Signature: <i>Paul R. Shyn</i>		Date: 11/20/2012	
Employee's Signature: <i>[Signature]</i>		Date: 11/28/12	
2. Progress Review: Initials below certify that a mandatory progress review was completed within the appraisal period.			
Employee's Initials and Date: <i>MM 4/29/13</i>	Rating Official's Signature and Date: <i>[Signature] 4/29/13</i>	Rating Official's Title:	
Employee's Initials and Date:	Rating Official's Signature and Date:	Rating Official's Title:	
3. Initial Summary Rating (Check One): The Rating Official must check the initial summary rating level determined using the Element and Summary Rating Guide.			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Outstanding <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Superior <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fully Successful <input type="checkbox"/> Minimally Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory			
Rating Official's Signature: <i>Ray A. Bama</i>		Date: 10/01/13	
Reviewing Official's Signature: <i>[Signature]</i>		Date: 10/2/13	
This evaluation has been discussed with me and I have been given a copy. I am aware that if I disagree with my rating and decide to submit a narrative response indicating so, it must be submitted in writing within 5 calendar days of receipt of my evaluation. <i>Signature does not constitute agreement or disagreement with the rating.</i>			
Employee's Signature: <i>[Signature]</i>		Date: 10/18/2013	<input type="checkbox"/> Employee Written Response Attached
4. Performance-Based Recommendations (Check all that apply): *Attach written justification for recommended actions based on appraisal, briefly summarizing any managerial and program accomplishments and impact on the Department or Agency.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Retain <input type="checkbox"/> Reassign <input type="checkbox"/> Remove*		<input type="checkbox"/> Performance Award:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Presidential Rank Award*		<input type="checkbox"/> Base Salary Increase to: \$ Indicate Total Percentage: % Date of Last PRA:	
Agency Head/Staff Director/Under or Assistant Secretary Signature:		Date:	
5. Performance Review Board Recommendations (Check all that apply): Indicate the summary rating and performance award and/or pay recommendations resulting from the PRB. If PRB recommended rating differs from initial summary rating, the Board must provide a written statement identifying specific elements where there is disagreement and rationale for recommendation.			
<input type="checkbox"/> Concur with Initial Summary Rating:		<input type="checkbox"/> Outstanding <input type="checkbox"/> Superior <input type="checkbox"/> Fully Successful <input type="checkbox"/> Minimally Satisfactory <input type="checkbox"/> Unsatisfactory	
<input type="checkbox"/> Change Summary Rating To:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Retain <input type="checkbox"/> Reassign <input type="checkbox"/> Remove*		<input type="checkbox"/> Performance Award Amount:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Presidential Rank Award		<input type="checkbox"/> Base Salary Increase/Decrease to: \$ Indicate Total Percentage: % Date of Last PRA:	
PRB Chairperson's Signature:		Date:	
Secretary's Approval: Signature below indicates approval of final rating and performance-based recommendations.			
I concur with the PRB's Recommendations			
Secretary's Signature:		Date:	

Element and Initial Summary Rating Guide

Performance Element Rating Level Descriptions: Element ratings are to be based on observable performance and behaviors during the appraisal period. The following five level element rating scale is to be applied to the appraisal of each individual performance element at the end of the appraisal period.

Outstanding: At the outstanding level of performance, the Senior Executive achieves and completes all critical element requirements in an exemplary manner. An outstanding rating exemplifies the highest level of performance possible, and is characterized by both organizational accomplishment and personal achievement. The outstanding level is representative of the executive's influence on the organization through innovative and effective management practices and procedures, noteworthy program implementation, success in building partnerships and coalitions, demonstrative responsiveness to internal and external customers, and outstanding management of resources. The Senior Executive's performance reflects measurable and lasting improvements in organizational performance.

Superior: At the superior level of performance, the Senior Executive demonstrates consistently excellent performance, where the majority of element requirements exceed the fully successful level. The Senior Executive has demonstrated more than effective performance of essential requirements, has had a positive impact on mission accomplishment, and has enhanced the performance of self and others.

Fully Successful: At the fully successful level of performance, the Senior Executive meets expectations and demonstrates sound and solid performance, where all critical element requirements are completed in a satisfactory manner and the executive has performed effectively. The Senior Executive has contributed to organizational goals and achieved meaningful results.

Minimally Satisfactory: At the minimally satisfactory level of performance, the Senior Executive only partially meets element requirements for the fully successful level, and has been marginally effective. This level of performance, while demonstrating some positive contributions to the organization, shows notable deficiencies.

Unsatisfactory: At the unsatisfactory level of performance, the Senior Executive does not meet performance requirements, and performance deficiencies resulted in demonstrable negative consequences for the organization. The executive is not willing or not able to perform the essential performance requirements.

Assignment of Element Ratings: Check the appropriate rating for each element within the performance plan.

Element 1	(b) Outstanding (6)	(b) Superior (6)	(b) Fully Successful (6)	(b) Minimally Satisfactory (6)	(b) Unsatisfactory (6)	
Element 2	Outstanding	Superior	Fully Successful	Minimally Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	
Element 3	Fully Successful	(b) Unsatisfactory (6)				
Element 4	Outstanding	Superior	Fully Successful	Minimally Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	(b) N/A (6)
Element 5	Outstanding	Superior	Fully Successful	Minimally Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	(b) N/A (6)

Converting Element Ratings to Initial Summary Rating and Rating of Record:

The Executive's initial summary rating and rating of record is determined using the table below. The Mission Results element has the greatest emphasis for measurable results. After each element rating level has been determined, the supervisor will assign the initial summary rating by applying the following descriptions.

(b) Outstanding (6) All performance elements rated outstanding and the Civil Rights element is rated fully successful.	(b) Superior (6) Mission Results is rated superior or above and other elements are rated fully successful or above, and the Civil Rights element is rated fully successful.	(b) Fully Successful (6) Mission Results and Civil Rights elements are rated fully successful and other elements are rated fully successful or above.	(b) Minimally Satisfactory (6) One or more elements rated minimally satisfactory. No elements rated unsatisfactory.	(b) Unsatisfactory* (6) One or more elements rated unsatisfactory. *Attach written justification for recommended actions based on appraisal, summarizing performance deficiencies and actions that were taken to help improve performance.
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National Organic Program | Agricultural Marketing Service
Fiscal Year 2013 (FY13) Performance Accomplishments | Miles V. McEvoy, Deputy Administrator

As National Organic Program (NOP) Deputy Administrator, Mr. McEvoy is responsible for protecting the integrity of the USDA organic seal. Mr. McEvoy leads a staff of 34 professional staff in overseeing an industry that yielded \$35-billion in U.S. sales during 2012. Key FY13 accomplishments are described below.

Mission Results

Organic Integrity – Accreditation Activities:

(b) (6)

[Redacted content]

Organic Integrity - Enforcement Program:

(b) (6)

[Redacted content]

Trade Agreement Support:

(b) (6)

[Redacted content]

Standards Development:

(b) (6)

[Redacted content]

Partnership Development – AMS and USDA:

(b) (6)

[Redacted content]

From: [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#)
To: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#); [Brownlee, Jim - AMS](#)
Subject: RE: draft proposed statement
Date: Wednesday, May 07, 2014 2:02:19 PM
Attachments: [Sunset-NOP-NOSB-Statement-v3-mvm_sje.docx](#)

(b)(5) Deliberative

Sam Jones-Ellard
Public Affairs Specialist
USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service

(b) (6)

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Wednesday, May 07, 2014 9:02 AM
To: Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Cc: Jones, Samuel - AMS; Morris, Erin - AMS; Lipson, Mark - OSEC
Subject: RE: draft proposed statement

I made some further edits. I have (b)(5) Deliberative .

From: Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Sent: Friday, May 02, 2014 1:08 PM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Cc: Jones, Samuel - AMS; Morris, Erin - AMS; Lipson, Mark - OSEC
Subject: RE: draft proposed statement

Attached is clean revision – we can (b)(5) Deliberative
Instead of (b)(5) Deliberative

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Friday, May 02, 2014 8:41 AM
To: Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Cc: Jones, Samuel - AMS; Morris, Erin - AMS; Lipson, Mark - OSEC
Subject: Re: draft proposed statement

More thoughts
We should (b)(5) Deliberative
Should we (b)(5) Deliberative
Also (b)(5) Deliberative

Miles V McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
USDA National Organic Program

On May 1, 2014, at 5:57 PM, "Tucker, Jennifer - AMS" <Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Draft proposed statement for website and email responses attached. I think (b)(5) Deliberati

(b)(5) Deliberative

Jenny

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Thursday, May 01, 2014 6:04 PM
To: Tucker, Jennifer - AMS; Jones, Samuel - AMS; Morris, Erin - AMS; Lipson, Mark - OSEC
Subject: FW: complaints coming in
Importance: High

We need (b)(5) Deliberative

Miles V McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

From: Trudy Bialic [<mailto:trudy.bialic@pccsea.com>]
Sent: Thursday, May 01, 2014 6:01 PM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Subject: complaints coming in
Importance: High

Dear Miles,

I expect your hands are full at the moment. You should know, however, we are being rained on here in your home state, getting e-mails and calls about what's going on at the San Antonio meeting. They pointedly are aghast at your self-appointment as co-chair and the reversal of the sunset rule, demanding PCC "do something" about them.

I always ask questions before weighing evidence. My question is whether you believe these are appropriate actions, or whether USDA/AMS has ordered them? Where did these actions originate?

Take care,

Trudy Bialic
Director, Public Affairs
PCC Natural Markets
Seattle, Wash. 98105

(b) (6)

This email has been scanned for email related threats and delivered safely by Mimecast.
For more information please visit <http://www.mimecast.com>

<Sunset-NOP-NOSB-Statement.docx>

Organic Sunset Process and Advisory Board Management

(b)(5) Deliberative



Related Links:

Learn more about the NOP at www.ams.usda.gov/nop

Learn more about the NOSB at www.ams.usda.gov/nosb

From: [Ramkrishnan.P.B.](#)
To: [Mann, Renee - AMS](#); [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Rakola, Betsy - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#)
Cc: ["Marty Mesh"; ram@qcsinfo.org](#)
Subject: re: Exit Interview, follow up and other issues
Date: Tuesday, April 01, 2014 9:24:21 AM

Miles,

Thank you very much time yesterday.

The proposed suspension on March 14, 2014 to QCS was issued after the NOP conducted an audit of our response. The NOP notice of noncompliance states "This audit is a review of the corrective actions submitted and accompanying objective evidence describing how corrective actions were implemented and how monitoring will be conducted to prevent reoccurrence. After reviewing the evidence submitted, the NOP concluded that QCS has not fulfilled the terms of the settlement agreement. Therefore, the NOP re-issued QCS a Notice of Proposed Suspension."

We never had the opportunity to explain. Like you saw in our presentation yesterday we have been complying and we work hard to comply. This misinformation or miscommunication could have been cleared had there been a "Exit interview" and we had the opportunity to explain. The NOP without giving as an opportunity to explain and without conducting an exit interview of the desk audit, pronounced QCS as guilty of violation of the regulation, issued proposed suspension with only option to appeal. Is in this against the principle of our constitution and NOP regulation for not having a due processes, not having an exit interview, pronouncing someone guilty of violation of the standards? Can we follow the same way with our clients? Agencies such as USICS and IRS sends RFE first "Request for Evidence" before using Notice on Noncompliances

We also received a notice of noncompliance yesterday about " QCS issuing certificate to an operation that was suspended" . QCS checked the NOP website when the application was received and before the certificate was issued. It is part of our SOP and staff follow this. The date that was checked against the NOP website is marked on the file. client did not indicate that he was suspended in his OSP.

On Sep 25, 2013, QCS emailed MS. Mann about these issues "

Dear Ms. Mann,

We recently found many inconsistencies and much incorrect information with regard to QCS clients on the NOP List of Suspended and Revoked Operations:

1. Misspellings of client names (with the result that when certifiers search the list to verify an operation is not on it, they will not find it)
2. Multiple listings of same suspended client
3. QCS clients listed as suspended that are not suspended
4. QCS certified client which did not previously appear on list when searched now appears
5. Incorrect date of suspension

In the recent reinstate of revoked operation " NLI", the NOP's website did not include them. QCS did its due diligence in checking with other certifiers and found they were revoked.

Last week I called and brought to attention Ms. Mann of issues with NOP website. The NOP website list the name of a competing ACA in a country where they don't have clients. Whereas QCS which operates in that country was not listed. We had call from clients asking why we are not listed and wanting to switch to another ACA because we not listed. When the reliability and credibility of NOP's website is in question and we have followed our SOP, checked the NOP website, did not find the client's name issued the certificate, we are getting noncompliance?

My apologies if my email sounds confrontational. It is not my intention. Miles, under your leadership the NOP has transformed into professional, transparent, sound and sensible program. You have set high standards. You have also created an right atmosphere where we can talk, express our concerns and engage in dialogue. We thank you for that. My email today is more expressing concerns and wanting to engage in a dialogue.

We respectfully request NOP to rescind the notice of noncompliance/proposed suspension and we can come to an agreement how to move forward.

Sincerely,
 Ramkrishnan Ph.D., MBA
 Chief Operating Officer

Quality Certification Services

Gainesville, FL 32604

p) (b) (6) f) 352-377-6345

www.qcsinfo.org

This message, including all content and attachments, are intended only for the use of the addressee(s) indicated and may contain information that is privileged, confidential, proprietary and/or exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, or the employee or agent responsible for delivering the message to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution, copying, downloading, storing or forwarding of this communication is prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify the sender immediately via email and permanently delete the message and its attachments.

From: [Harold Austin](#)
To: [\(b\) \(6\)@aol.com](#); tchapman@clifbar.com; [Nick Maravell](#); [Carmela Beck](#); [Mac Stone](#); [Jennifer Taylor \(famu.edu\)](#); tfavre@favrehouse.com; [\(b\) \(6\)@gmail.com](#); [\(b\) \(6\)@gmail.com](#); [Francis Thicke](#); lisa.delima@momsorganicmarket.com; Ashley.swaffar@vitalfarms.com; [Zea Sonnabend](#)
Cc: [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#); [Arsenault, Michelle - AMS](#); [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Lewis, Paul I - AMS](#); [Rakola, Betsy - OSEC](#)
Subject: Re: Fwd: USDA statement
Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 5:39:42 PM

Thank you Jean for sending this out to us and a *special thanks* to Betsy for providing this during our Oral Testimony Presentation today!

I once again shall place myself into the public record to state that: ***I do not know anyone that has been (and still is) more dedicated to organics and what that stands for, than Miles McEvoy!*** I am grateful for the statement provided below and hope that Miles knows that many of us in the organic community stand not only behind him, but beside him. He represents the organic community & the NOP with honor, integrity, and a resolve that we should all be proud of! Miles has seen where organics originated from and where it has grown to. He has been steady through it all and continues to be and I would expect no less from him, because that is the type of person he is. We have all worked too hard to grow "our" part of the organic community to stand idle and allow this constant attack on **Organic** production and what it stands for. Enough is enough! Miles, thank you for hanging in there for the sake of all organics!

With the highest regards,

Harold V. Austin IV

Member of the NOSB & a member of the Organic Community

>>> Jean Richardson [\(b\) \(6\)](#).com > 10/20/2015 1:49 PM >>>

Hi Everyone

In response to the recent misleading Cornucopia "Press Release":

This is the AMS Statement which Betsy Rakola read in to the record at the beginning of Public Comment today

Feel free to circulate it to your stakeholder groups.

Thank you

Jean

USDA takes any complaints regarding our operations seriously, and that is why AMS looks into any formal complaints issued by outside groups. This was the case when the Cornucopia Institute filed a complaint earlier this year. AMS launched a thorough review and ultimately found and determined that the operations were in compliance and there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations. Furthermore, there is no investigation of the National Organic Program or its staff happening by USDA's Inspector General—that is inaccurate. The focus on any one public servant in an attempt to damage his or her credibility is inappropriate and without merit. USDA values and has faith in Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy's leadership of the National Organic Program.

USDA's National Organic Program is the bedrock regulatory program responsible for developing national standards for organically-produced agricultural products. These standards assure consumers that products with the USDA organic seal meet consistent, uniform standards. The USDA organic seal and the NOP program itself have helped organic producers and businesses achieve unprecedented levels of growth for organically produced goods. The retail market for organic products is now valued at more than \$39 billion while USDA organic operations have grown more than 250% since 2002. USDA's National Organic Program is a leading global standard and major factor in this success.

Betsy Rakola

Organic Policy Advisor, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service

From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#)
Subject: RE: FY 2016 Performance Template
Date: Friday, November 20, 2015 7:14:09 PM
Attachments: [FY2016 SES plan - mmcevoy nov16 version.docx](#)

Here you go!

From: Morris, Erin - AMS
Sent: Monday, November 09, 2015 1:33 PM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS; Guo, Ruihong - AMS; Bailey, Douglas - AMS
Subject: FY 2016 Performance Template

Miles/Ruihong/Doug,

Attached is the SES performance template with the new civil rights information included along with a few other minor updates from the Department. Please add in your relevant results driven elements and send it back to me in a word version.

Thanks,

Erin

Erin Morris
Associate Administrator/
Chief Operating Officer
USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Room 3068

(b) (6)

SES Performance Management System Executive Performance Agreement



Part 1. Consultation. <i>I have reviewed this plan and have been consulted on its development.</i>						
Executive's Name (<i>Last, First, MI</i>): McEvoy, Miles, V				Appraisal Pd: 10/01/15 –9/30/16		
Executive's Signature:				Date:		
Title: Associate Administrator				Organization:		
Rating Official's Name (<i>Last, First, MI</i>): Barnes, Rex				CA <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> LT/LE <input type="checkbox"/>		
Rating Official's Signature:				Date:		
Part 2. Progress Review						
Executive's Signature:				Date:		
Rating Official's Signature:				Date:		
Reviewing Official's Signature (<i>Optional</i>):				Date:		
Part 3. Summary Rating						
Initial Summary Rating	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5 Outstanding	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 Exceeds Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 Minimally Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 Unsatisfactory	
Rating Official's Name (<i>Last, First, MI</i>):						
Rating Official's Signature:				Date:		
Executive's Signature:				Date:		
Reviewing Official's Signature (<i>Second-Level Official's Concurrence</i>):				Date:		
Higher Level Review (if applicable)						
<input type="checkbox"/> I request a higher level review. Executive's Initials:				Date:		
Higher Level Review Completed <input type="checkbox"/>				Date:		
Higher Level Reviewer Signature:						
Performance Review Board Recommendation		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
PRB Chair Signature:				Date:		
Annual Summary Rating		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
Appointing Authority Signature:				Date:		
Part 4. Derivation Formula and Calculation of Annual Summary Rating						
Critical Element	Element Rating		Weight	Score		Summary Level Ranges
	Initial	Final (if changed)		Initial	Final (if changed)	
1. Leading Change			15%			475-500 = Level 5 400-474 = Level 4 300-399 = Level 3 200-299 = Level 2 Any CE rated Level 1 = Level 1
2. Leading People			30%			
3. Business Acumen			10%			
4. Building Coalitions			10%			
5. Results Driven			35%			
Total			100%			

Part 5. Critical Elements

Performance Standards for Critical Elements (The performance standard for each critical element is specified below; examples for the top three performance levels can be found in the system description).

- **Level 5:** The executive demonstrates exceptional performance, fostering a climate that sustains excellence and optimizes results in the executive's organization, agency, department or government-wide. This represents the highest level of executive performance, as evidenced by the extraordinary impact on the achievement of the organization's mission. The executive is an inspirational leader and is considered a role model by agency leadership, peers, and employees. The executive continually contributes materially to or spearheads agency efforts that address or accomplish important agency goals, consistently achieves expectations at the highest level of quality possible, and consistently handles challenges, exceeds targets, and completes assignments ahead of schedule at every step along the way.
- **Level 4:** The executive demonstrates a very high level of performance beyond that required for successful performance in the executive's position and scope of responsibilities. The executive is a proven, highly effective leader who builds trust and instills confidence in agency leadership, peers, and employees. The executive consistently exceeds established performance expectations, timelines, or targets, as applicable.
- **Level 3:** The executive demonstrates the high level of performance expected and the executive's actions and leadership contribute positively toward the achievement of strategic goals and meaningful results. The executive is an effective, solid, and dependable leader who delivers high-quality results based on measures of quality, quantity, efficiency, and/or effectiveness within agreed upon timelines. The executive meets and often exceeds challenging performance expectations established for the position.
- **Level 2:** The executive's contributions to the organization are acceptable in the short term but do not appreciably advance the organization towards achievement of its goals and objectives. While the executive generally meets established performance expectations, timelines and targets, there are occasional lapses that impair operations and/or cause concern from management. While showing basic ability to accomplish work through others, the executive may demonstrate limited ability to inspire subordinates to give their best efforts or to marshal those efforts effectively to address problems characteristic of the organization and its work.
- **Level 1:** In repeated instances, the executive demonstrates performance deficiencies that detract from mission goals and objectives. The executive generally is viewed as ineffectual by agency leadership, peers, or employees. The executive does not meet established performance expectations/timelines/targets and fails to produce – or produces unacceptable – work products, services, or outcomes.

Element Rating Level Points

Level 5 = 5 points
Level 4 = 4 points
Level 3 = 3 points
Level 2 = 2 points
Level 1 = 0 points

Critical Element 1. Leading Change	Weight: 15%				
<p>Develops and implements an organizational vision that integrates key organizational and program goals, priorities, values, and other factors. Assesses and adjusts to changing situations, implementing innovative solutions to make organizational improvements, ranging from incremental improvements to major shifts in direction or approach, as appropriate. Balances change and continuity; continually strives to improve service and program performance; creates a work environment that encourages creative thinking, collaboration, and transparency; and maintains program focus, even under adversity.</p>					
<p>Agency-Specific Performance Requirements</p>					
<p>Leads organizational change and motivates managers to incorporate vision, strategic planning and results-driven management in the full range of the organization's activities. Addresses programmatic requirements as necessary to motivate and lead the organization. Strategies are designed and implemented to improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency, and to meet program goals. Program goals are aligned to Agency strategic plans and accomplished within specified timeframes.</p>					
<p>Interests of the organization, employee, and customer/stakeholder are well balanced and priorities are adjusted in response to changing demands. Meets management initiative goals as imposed by regulatory/oversight agencies (e.g. Office of Management and Budget and Office of Personnel Management), and the Department or Agency.</p>					
<p>Leads organization in supporting the Secretary's initiative to improve Departmental responses to important inquiries of USDA's partners, customers, and Legislative Officials and for improved release of information to the press and public. As requested, reports activities and process improvements to the Department's Office of Executive Secretariat, Office of Congressional Relations, and Office of Communications.</p>					
<p>Coordinates with business units to align their individual plans and identify clear measures of accomplishment. Encourages the development and implementation of initiatives or innovative solutions to enhance/improve procedures or services. Encourages employees to take risk, think creatively and work cooperatively with others in the program and Agency.</p>					
<p>Shares information and goals/vision in a way that enhances transparency and encourages collaboration.</p>					
<p>Applicable milestones from the USDA Civil Rights Plan and Strategic Plan are incorporated into the Agency or staff office strategic and annual performance plans. Applicable goals and objectives related to accountability, program delivery, outreach, workforce diversity, employment practices, resources and structure, performance, administrative activities, communications and reporting are met in accordance with Department and Agency policy.</p>					
<p>Develops and implements outreach strategies that enhance the delivery of agricultural services and assistance to underserved populations. Demonstrates an understanding of and commitment to equal employment opportunity and ensures fair and equitable program delivery.</p>					
<p>Ensures subordinate supervisors exercise effective managerial, communication and interpersonal skills to supervise and develop a diverse workforce.</p>					
<p>Promotes business practices and a work environment that allow for the delivery of the highest quality, most efficient service to AMS customers.</p>					
<p>Demonstrates a focus on ensuring civil rights compliance and commitment in the workplace.</p>					
<p>Rating Official Narrative: <i>(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)</i></p>					
<p>Critical Element Rating – Leading Change</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1

Critical Element 2. Leading People**Weight: 30%**

Designs and implements strategies that maximize employee potential, connects the organization horizontally and vertically, and fosters high ethical standards in meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals. Provides an inclusive workplace that fosters the development of others to their full potential; allows for full participation by all employees; facilitates collaboration, cooperation, and teamwork, and supports constructive resolution of conflicts. Ensures employee performance plans are aligned with the organization's mission and goals, that employees receive constructive feedback, and that employees are realistically appraised against clearly defined and communicated performance standards. Holds employees accountable for appropriate levels of performance and conduct. Seeks and considers employee input. Recruits, retains, and develops the talent needed to achieve a high quality, diverse workforce that reflects the nation, with the skills needed to accomplish organizational performance objectives while supporting workforce diversity, workplace inclusion, and equal employment policies and programs.

Agency-Specific Performance Requirements

Maintains a positive organizational environment that fosters diversity, inclusion, innovation, initiative, open and honest communication, and teamwork among employees and peers. Within available resources, ensures employees have the tools and training to do their jobs.

Leads organization to set goals and track results for achieving workforce diversity, recruitment, and retention programs that will help to maximize the hiring and retention of highly qualified employees in underrepresented groups. Upon request by OHRM, reports activities and progress towards workforce diversity achievements.

Seeks employee feedback to identify needs and expectations and considers employee perspective when making decisions affecting workforce or programs. Increases employee participation in feedback opportunities such as the employee survey. Analyze feedback and develop strategies to address areas of opportunity.

Recruits and selects new employees based on organizational goals, budget considerations, and staffing needs. When filling a position, the supervisor engages and collaborates with HR to ensure skills required for the job are identified, posting of the job vacancy is accurate, and assists in identifying contacts for diverse locations or organizations for recruiting purposes. Participates as needed with HR in the proper screening of applications, and appropriate categorization of applicants based on qualifications.

Utilizes flexible hiring authorities when filling a vacancy (e.g., targeted disabilities, student employment, direct hire, appointing veterans, etc.) to ensure diversity in recruitment and hiring.

Successfully transitions new hires into the position by promptly providing an orientation into the workforce and establishing performance elements and standards. Supervisor provides ongoing feedback and coaching, and makes appropriate use of the probationary period to assess the new hire's ability to perform in the position.

Encourages employees to participate in developmental assignments, details, mentoring and training programs, and other Agency programs to develop and retain a highly qualified workforce. Closes competency/skills gap for mission critical positions.

Implements retention strategies that focus on key internal processes (e.g., work environment, employee orientation, executing Individual Development Plans for all employees--subject to bargaining obligations, coaching, development, and mentoring, etc.) that promotes employee growth, supports the health of the workforce and drives the future success of the organization's people and infrastructure.

Manages and controls attrition by developing best practices and retention strategies as well as by developing a succession plan. Assesses current workforce plans to ensure they are up-to-date in order to meet Program/Agency goals and objectives. Works with senior management officials and HR to comply with the workforce planning process as described in the Department's position management policy.

The supervisor establishes subordinate employee performance plans within established timeframes and that align with Agency and Departmental goals and objectives. Communicates to employees how their work supports the Agency mission

and strategic plan/initiatives. Employee performance plans contain clear, results-focused measures and the supervisor provides accurate and timely feedback to determine progress and success in meeting expectations.

The supervisor completes performance plans, progress reviews, and appraisals of subordinate employees by the due dates established by the Department or Agency. Performance plans for each employee must include at least one critical element that is traceable to the Agency's goals and objectives (e.g., Mission Results critical performance element). Provides ongoing feedback and coaching as demonstrated through performance feedback sessions as evidenced by 100% of employees receiving at least one feedback session at the midpoint of the rating period. Appraisals show a fair distribution in ratings among all employees.

Ensures appropriate action is taken to address performance problems in a manner that supports organizational goals and objectives. Ensures subordinate managers and supervisors adhere to the Agency performance management policy with regard to performance appraisal and employee recognition.

Performance and employee feedback data is used as an indicator of compliance and general satisfaction or needed improvement with regard to the planning, developing, monitoring, rating and rewarding of performance.

Utilizes the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) to identify and address issues related to employee engagement, development, and satisfaction. Target: Based on specific information collected from the 2015 FEVS, implements effective and measurable strategies to address FEVS scoring as applicable to my mission area, agency, and individual position.

Creates an environment where people from diverse backgrounds feel respected, recognized, and valued; actively fosters and maintains a work environment free of bullying, sexual harassment, and discrimination as prescribed by Departmental and Federal civil rights regulations and laws. In addition, implements strategies for addressing underrepresentation of minorities, women, and/or persons with disabilities within the workforce.

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

Critical Element Rating – Leading People

Level 5

Level 4

Level 3

Level 2

Level 1

Critical Element 3. Business Acumen	Weight: 10%
Assesses, analyzes, acquires, and administers human, financial, material, and information resources in a manner that instills public trust and accomplishes the organization's mission. Uses technology to enhance processes and decision making. Executes the operating budget; prepares budget requests with justifications; and manages resources.	
<p>Agency-Specific Performance Requirements</p> <p>Human, financial, material, and informational resources are effectively acquired and managed to achieve performance goals. Needs assessments are based on organizational goals and budget realities, and opportunities to reduce program and administrative costs are sought. Management control systems are established/maintained to monitor activities, identify problem areas, and initiate timely corrective action.</p> <p>Explores new partnerships and innovative ways to carry out AMS mission with fewer resources. Leverages budget realities (diminishing resources) and best practices to remain efficient, effective, relevant and valued. Procures, develops and uses resources to efficiently and effectively support AMS programs.</p> <p>Adjusts spending priorities such as travel, training, equipment purchases, and vacancies by improving business processes, adapting and innovating procedures in these areas.</p> <p>Continuously seeks to improve business processes, sharing those efforts with other programs to improve overall Department performance. Fully leverage the expertise and commitment of the workforce to meet challenges and Agency mission.</p> <p>Uses technology innovation and organizational synergies to meet the needs of American agriculture.</p> <p>Evaluates and develops fee schedules that encourage increased efficiency and cost reductions while maintaining high quality services. Develops a long term user fee plan that provides for future adjustments.</p> <p>Manages resources in a manner that fosters an environment that upholds civil rights standards and is inclusive of a diverse workforce.</p>	
Rating Official Narrative: <i>(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)</i>	
Critical Element Rating – Business Acumen	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1

Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions	Weight: 10%
Solicits and considers feedback from internal and external stakeholders or customers. Coordinates with appropriate parties to maximize input from the widest range of appropriate stakeholders to facilitate an open exchange of opinion from diverse groups and strengthen internal and external support. Explains, advocates, and expresses facts and ideas in a convincing manner and negotiates with individuals and groups internally and externally, as appropriate. Develops a professional network with other organizations and identifies the internal and external politics that affect the work of the organization.	
<p>Agency-Specific Performance Requirements</p> <p>Ensures a high degree of responsiveness to organizational leadership, the public, and internal and external customers. Continuously reviews and monitors organizational performance to achieve Agency mission results and considers the customer's point of view. Consults, collaborates and builds partnerships with agencies and other stakeholders, and takes decisive actions in accordance with law, regulation, and Department policy.</p>	

Systematically listens to customers and gathers their feedback, actively seeking to identify their needs and expectations, and effectively communicating those needs and expectations to employees. Ensures employees are prompt, professional, fair and responsible to the circumstances of individual customers to the extent permitted by law and regulation.

Supports AMS customers in making verifiable market-enhancing claims about how their products are produced, processed and packaged.

Collaborates with stakeholders to help them succeed, tell their story and remain competitive in a global marketplace. Leverages the expertise and commitment of the workforce to meet the agency mission and future challenges.

Engages with internal Functional Committees to enhance processes and procedures and improve communication.

Utilizes outreach strategies to network with minority organizations and institutions as well as, advocates for women, minorities, and/or persons with disabilities.

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

Critical Element Rating – Building Coalitions

Level 5

Level 4

Level 3

Level 2

Level 1

Critical Element 5. Results Driven				Weight: 35%		
<p>Agency Goals/Objectives for Current FY: Must have at least 1 result (may have more than 5) This critical element includes specific performance requirements expected of the executive during the appraisal period, focusing on measurable outcomes from the strategic plan or other measurable outputs and outcomes clearly aligned to organizational goals and objectives. At a minimum, the performance plan will include performance requirements (including measures, targets, timelines, or quality descriptors, as appropriate) describing the range of performance at Level 3 for each result specified. It is recommended to also establish the threshold measures/targets for Levels 5 and 2.</p> <p>Alignment--cite relevant goals/objectives, page numbers, from the Strategic Plan, Congressional Budget Justification/Annual Performance Plan, or other organizational planning document in the designated section for each performance requirement specified.</p> <p>As applicable, executives will be appraised on their execution of their agency's civil rights plan.</p>						
<p>Performance Requirement 1: Working Across AMS Programs Work across AMS program areas and other agencies to provide seamless and comparable services to similar customers and to improve relations and agency-wide collaboration; improve programs, services, and business processes.</p>			<p>Strategic Alignment: -Departmental Blueprint for Stronger Service -AMS Strategic Goal 6</p>			
<i>Performance Requirement 1 Rating</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<p>Performance Requirement 2: Cultural Transformation Leads the organization to eliminate barriers to improve operational and service excellence in work-life and wellness, labor relations, process improvement, employee development, talent management, customer focus and community outreach, and hiring reform. Pursues workforce diversity through recruitment, outreach and employee development programs designed to enhance the hiring and retention of highly qualified employees from diverse backgrounds. Supports the strategic objectives and action items contained in the AMS Special Emphasis Assessment Plan.</p> <p>Exercises all of USDA's special hiring authorities designed to increase employment of veterans and individuals with disabilities and targeted disabilities.</p> <p>Actively engages in the transformation of USDA by supporting process improvements in the organization. Engage employees to transform USDA into a model agency.</p> <p>Ensures that activities and timeframes established in the AMS Cultural Transformation Act Plan are met by demonstrating support through allocation of resources and commitment of program area managers to support initiatives.</p>			<p>Strategic Alignment: -Secretary's Cultural Transformation Initiative -Secretary's Management Initiative 1</p>			
<i>Performance Requirement 2 Rating</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<p>Performance Requirement 3: Protect the Integrity of Organic Products Continue rigorous investigations of complaints of alleged violations. Ensure terms of trade arrangements are being met. Ensure complete and thorough audits of USDA accredited certifying agents.</p> <p>Address 90% of appeals cases received in FY 2015 through a decision,</p>			<p>Strategic Alignment: USDA Goal 1 AMS Strategic Goal 4</p>			

<p>settlement, or closure, in less than 180 days.</p> <p>Complete the investigation of 260 or more complaint cases during FY 2016.</p> <p>Work with AMS and USDA other government agencies to implement clear organic regulations, guidance, instructions and policy. Publish 1 proposed rule and 2 final guidance documents</p> <p>Support the work of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) to develop recommendations on organic standards. Support public engagement, transparency, and a fair process in the development of NOSB recommendations. Conduct one NOSB training session and two NOSB public meetings in FY 2016.</p> <p>Continue implementing sunset process by published federal register notice to renew 2016 sunset materials.</p>						
<p><i>Performance Requirement 3 Rating</i></p>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<p>Performance Requirement 4: Support organic market development Maintain organic integrity in a sound and sensible manner. Support affordable, accessible and attainable certification for all organic operations. Provide opportunities for new and beginning farmers to succeed in organic production and marketing. Provide training to certifiers, organic farmers and the organic trade on sound and sensible organic certification.</p> <p>Provide one in-person certifier training session that covers sound and sensible certification practices.</p> <p>Lead efforts to negotiate and finalize organic equivalence arrangements; successfully complete required peer assessments to maintain existing equivalency arrangements.</p> <p>Support projects that implement the USDA Organic Working Group (OWG) objectives for FY2016. All five OWG topic areas show measurable progress towards reaching their goals in supporting organic agriculture.</p>		<p>Strategic Alignment:</p> <p>USDA Goal 1</p> <p>AMS Strategic Goal 4</p>				
<p><i>Performance Requirement 4 Rating</i></p>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<p>Performance Requirement 5: Information Technology Work with certifiers to define and implement quality standards for the list of certified organic operations. Provide quarterly updates to the list of certified operations that includes updates on suspended, revoked and reinstated organic operations.</p> <p>Ensure that all certifiers provide data to the Organic Integrity Database.</p> <p>Build and generate dynamic reports and statistics from the Organic Integrity Database that support updated responses to data calls concerning number of certified operations, statistics for certified operations per state, and statistics related to adverse actions against operations.</p>		<p>Strategic Alignment:</p> <p>USDA Goal 1</p> <p>AMS Strategic Goal 4</p>				

<i>Performance Requirement 5 Rating</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
Rating Official Narrative: <i>(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)</i>					
Performance Requirement 6: Support AMS Signature Process Improvement Support the implementation of the AMS Signature Process Improvement Initiative to improve the effectiveness of the Agency's operations.			Departmental Blueprint for Stronger Service AMS Strategic Goal 6		
<i>Performance Requirement 5 Rating</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<i>Critical Element Rating – Results Driven</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1

Part 6: Summary Rating Narrative (Mandatory)

Part 7: Executive's Accomplishment Narrative (Mandatory)

Part 8: Agency Use

From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Eckhouse, Sara - AMS](#)
Cc: [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#); [Alonzo, Anne - AMS](#)
Subject: Re: Internal working predecisional draft document-not subject to FOIA
Date: Friday, October 16, 2015 3:13:24 PM

Looks good. Thanks.

Miles V McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
USDA National Organic Program

On Oct 16, 2015, at 2:52 PM, "Eckhouse, Sara - AMS" <Sara.Eckhouse@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Miles and Rex—

Please review language below before we send it back to Public Affairs.

DRAFT - Internal and Predecisional

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

From: Jones, Samuel - AMS
Sent: Friday, October 16, 2015 1:36 PM
To: Eckhouse, Sara - AMS; Alonzo, Anne - AMS
Cc: Maloney, Wayne - AMS; Bailey, Shayla - AMS
Subject: Internal working predecisional draft document-not subject to FOIA

DRAFT - Internal and Predecisional

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

Sam Jones-Ellard
Public Affairs Specialist
USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service
(b) (6)

100 Years of USDA Market News: the trusted source – then, now and always
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From: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#)
To: [Cor, Teri - AMS](#); [Balcerzak, Eric - AMS](#)
Cc: [Gilchrist, Clifton - AMS](#); [Satterfield, Rose - AMS](#); [Jimenez, Sonia - AMS](#); [Tharp, Melissa - AMS](#)
Subject: RE: Missing Performance Plans?
Date: Monday, July 06, 2015 11:48:04 AM
Attachments: [Barnes, R SES 2015 Perf Plan.pdf](#)
[McEvoy, M SES 2015 Perf Plan.docx.pdf](#)
[Earnest, D SES 2015 Perf Plan.pdf](#)
[Neal, A SES 2015 Perf Plan.pdf](#)
[Morris E SES 2015 Perf Plan.pdf](#)
[Morris, C SES 2015 Perf Plan.pdf](#)
[Parrott, C SES 2015 Perf Plan.pdf](#)
[Guo, R SES 2015 Perf Plan.pdf](#)
[Bailey, D SES 2015 Perf Plan.pdf](#)
[Coale, D SES 2015 Perf Plan.pdf](#)
[Jimenez, S SES 2015 Perf Plan.pdf](#)

Attached are the SES performance plans.

From: Cor, Teri - AMS
Sent: Monday, July 06, 2015 11:31 AM
To: Balcerzak, Eric - AMS
Cc: Gilchrist, Clifton - AMS; Satterfield, Rose - AMS; Morris, Erin - AMS; Jimenez, Sonia - AMS; Tharp, Melissa - AMS
Subject: RE: Missing Performance Plans?

Ok – Thanks much, Eric.

--Teri

From: Balcerzak, Eric - AMS
Sent: Monday, July 06, 2015 11:30 AM
To: Cor, Teri - AMS
Cc: Gilchrist, Clifton - AMS; Satterfield, Rose - AMS; Morris, Erin - AMS; Jimenez, Sonia - AMS; Tharp, Melissa - AMS
Subject: RE: Missing Performance Plans?

Teri,

The GS 1-3 employees are all seasonal employees, so we will not be receiving any performance plans for that group. I will check on the SESers.

Eric

From: Cor, Teri - AMS
Sent: Monday, July 06, 2015 10:18 AM
To: Balcerzak, Eric - AMS
Cc: Gilchrist, Clifton - AMS; Satterfield, Rose - AMS
Subject: Missing Performance Plans?
Importance: High

Good morning, Eric. Am I missing something? I see on the AGNIS website that 60 performance plans have been downloaded covering GS 4-15; however, I do not see any

for GS-1, GS-2, GS-3, or any for SES. Are they elsewhere on the site?

I am trying to complete my draft of Section 1.1(b) by July 9 for Rose and Cliff's review. Please advise whether you anticipate the missing performance plans can be downloaded before then; or whether I am looking in the wrong folder.

Thank you in advance.

Regards,

Teri Cor
Equal Employment Opportunity Specialist
USDA/AMS/Civil Rights Program
Washington, DC
[REDACTED] (b) (6) (phone)
(202) 690-0476 (fax)

SES Performance Management System Executive Performance Agreement

AMS Only



Part 1. Consultation. *I have reviewed this plan and have been consulted on its development.*

Executive's Name (Last, First, MI): McEvoy, Miles, V	Appraisal Pd: 10/01/14 –9/30/15
Executive's Signature:	Date: 11/14/2014
Title: Associate Administrator	Organization:
Rating Official's Name (Last, First, MI):	CA <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> LT/LE <input type="checkbox"/>
Rating Official's Signature:	Date: 11/14/14

Part 2. Progress Review

Executive's Signature:	Date:
Rating Official's Signature:	Date:
Reviewing Official's Signature (Optional):	Date:

Part 3. Summary Rating

Initial Summary Rating	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5 Outstanding	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 Exceeds Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 Minimally Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 Unsatisfactory
Rating Official's Name (Last, First, MI):					
Rating Official's Signature:			Date:		
Executive's Signature:			Date:		
Reviewing Official's Signature (Second-Level Official's Concurrence):			Date:		

Higher Level Review (if applicable)

<input type="checkbox"/> I request a higher level review. Executive's Initials:	Date:
Higher Level Review Completed <input type="checkbox"/>	Date:
Higher Level Reviewer Signature:	

Performance Review Board Recommendation

	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
PRB Chair Signature:					Date:
Annual Summary Rating	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
Appointing Authority Signature:					Date:

Part 4. Derivation Formula and Calculation of Annual Summary Rating

Critical Element	Element Rating		Weight	Score		Summary Level Ranges
	Initial	Final (if changed)		Initial	Final (if changed)	
1. Leading Change			15%			475-500 = Level 5 400-474 = Level 4 300-399 = Level 3 200-299 = Level 2 Any CE rated Level 1 = Level 1
2. Leading People			30%			
3. Business Acumen			10%			
4. Building Coalitions			10%			
5. Results Driven			35%			
Total			100%			

Part 5. Critical Elements

- **Performance Standards for Critical Elements** (The performance standard for each critical element is specified below; examples for the top three performance levels can be found in the system description).

Level 5: The executive demonstrates exceptional performance, fostering a climate that sustains excellence and optimizes results in the executive's organization, agency, department or government-wide. This represents the highest level of executive performance, as evidenced by the extraordinary impact on the achievement of the organization's mission. The executive is an inspirational leader and is considered a role model by agency leadership, peers, and employees. The executive continually contributes materially to or spearheads agency efforts that address or accomplish important agency goals, consistently achieves expectations at the highest level of quality possible, and consistently handles challenges, exceeds targets, and completes assignments ahead of schedule at every step along the way.
- **Level 4:** The executive demonstrates a very high level of performance beyond that required for successful performance in the executive's position and scope of responsibilities. The executive is a proven, highly effective leader who builds trust and instills confidence in agency leadership, peers, and employees. The executive consistently exceeds established performance expectations, timelines, or targets, as applicable.
- **Level 3:** The executive demonstrates the high level of performance expected and the executive's actions and leadership contribute positively toward the achievement of strategic goals and meaningful results. The executive is an effective, solid, and dependable leader who delivers high-quality results based on measures of quality, quantity, efficiency, and/or effectiveness within agreed upon timelines. The executive meets and often exceeds challenging performance expectations established for the position.
- **Level 2:** The executive's contributions to the organization are acceptable in the short term but do not appreciably advance the organization towards achievement of its goals and objectives. While the executive generally meets established performance expectations, timelines and targets, there are occasional lapses that impair operations and/or cause concern from management. While showing basic ability to accomplish work through others, the executive may demonstrate limited ability to inspire subordinates to give their best efforts or to marshal those efforts effectively to address problems characteristic of the organization and its work.
- **Level 1:** In repeated instances, the executive demonstrates performance deficiencies that detract from mission goals and objectives. The executive generally is viewed as ineffectual by agency leadership, peers, or employees. The executive does not meet established performance expectations/timelines/targets and fails to produce – or produces unacceptable – work products, services, or outcomes.

Element Rating Level Points

Level 5 = 5 points
Level 4 = 4 points
Level 3 = 3 points
Level 2 = 2 points
Level 1 = 0 points

Critical Element 1. Leading Change	Weight: 15%				
<p>Develops and implements an organizational vision that integrates key organizational and program goals, priorities, values, and other factors. Assesses and adjusts to changing situations, implementing innovative solutions to make organizational improvements, ranging from incremental improvements to major shifts in direction or approach, as appropriate. Balances change and continuity; continually strives to improve service and program performance; creates a work environment that encourages creative thinking, collaboration, and transparency; and maintains program focus, even under adversity.</p>					
<p>Agency-Specific Performance Requirements</p> <p>Leads organizational change and motivates managers to incorporate vision, strategic planning and results-driven management in the full range of the organization's activities. Addresses programmatic requirements as necessary to motivate and lead the organization. Strategies are designed and implemented to improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency, and to meet program goals. Program goals are aligned to agency strategic plans and accomplished within specified timeframes.</p> <p>Interests of the organization, employee, and customer/stakeholder are well balanced and priorities are adjusted in response to changing demands. Meets management initiative goals as imposed by regulatory/oversight agencies (e.g. Office of Management and Budget and Office of Personnel Management), and the Department or agency.</p> <p>Leads organization in supporting the Secretary's initiative to improve Departmental responses to important inquiries of USDA's partners, customers, and Legislative Officials and for improved release of information to the press and public. As requested, reports activities and process improvements to the Department's Office of Executive Secretariat, Office of Congressional Relations, and Office of Communications.</p> <p>Coordinates with business units to align their individual plans and identify clear measures of accomplishment. Encourages the development and implementation of initiatives or innovative solutions to enhance/improve procedures or services. Encourages employees to take risk, think creatively and work cooperatively with others in the program and agency.</p> <p>Shares information and goals/vision in a way that enhances transparency and encourages collaboration.</p> <p>Applicable milestones from the USDA Civil Rights Plan and Strategic Plan are incorporated into the program or staff office strategic and annual performance plans. Applicable goals and objectives related to accountability, program delivery, outreach, workforce diversity, employment practices, resources and structure, performance, administrative activities, communications and reporting are met in accordance with Department and agency policy.</p> <p>Develops and implements outreach strategies that enhance the delivery of agricultural services and assistance to underserved populations. Demonstrates understanding of and commitment to equal employment opportunity and ensures fair and equitable program delivery. Strengthens stakeholder relationships by continually drafting, communicating, and delivering educational programs about the benefits and effectiveness of AMS services.</p> <p>Ensures subordinate supervisors exercise effective managerial, communication and interpersonal skills to supervise and develop a diverse workforce.</p>					
<p>Rating Official Narrative: <i>(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)</i></p>					
<p>Critical Element Rating – Leading Change</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1

Critical Element 2. Leading People**Weight: 30%**

Designs and implements strategies that maximize employee potential, connects the organization horizontally and vertically, and fosters high ethical standards in meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals. Provides an inclusive workplace that fosters the development of others to their full potential; allows for full participation by all employees; facilitates collaboration, cooperation, and teamwork, and supports constructive resolution of conflicts. Ensures employee performance plans are aligned with the organization's mission and goals, that employees receive constructive feedback, and that employees are realistically appraised against clearly defined and communicated performance standards. Holds employees accountable for appropriate levels of performance and conduct. Seeks and considers employee input. Recruits, retains, and develops the talent needed to achieve a high quality, diverse workforce that reflects the nation, with the skills needed to accomplish organizational performance objectives while supporting workforce diversity, workplace inclusion, and equal employment policies and programs.

Agency-Specific Performance Requirements

Maintains a positive organizational environment that fosters diversity, inclusion, innovation, initiative, open and honest communication, and teamwork among employees and peers. Within available resources, ensures employees have the tools and training to do their jobs.

Leads organization to set goals and track results for achieving workforce diversity, recruitment, and retention programs that will help to maximize the hiring and retention of highly qualified employees in underrepresented groups. Upon request by OHRM reports activities and progress towards workforce diversity achievements.

Seeks employee feedback to identify needs and expectations and considers employee perspective when making decisions affecting workforce or programs. Increases employee participation in feedback opportunities such as the employee survey. Analyze feedback and develop strategies to address areas of opportunity.

Recruits and selects new employees based on organizational goals, budget considerations, and staffing needs. When filling a position, the supervisor engages and collaborates with HR to ensure skills required for the job are identified, posting of the job vacancy is accurate, and assists in identifying contacts for diverse locations or organizations for recruiting purposes. Participates as needed with HR in the proper screening of applications, and appropriate categorization of applicants based on qualifications.

Utilizes flexible hiring authorities when filling a vacancy (e.g., targeted disabilities, student employment, direct hire, appointing veterans, etc.) to ensure diversity in recruitment and hiring.

Successfully transitions new hires into the position by promptly providing an orientation into the workforce and establishing performance elements and standards. Supervisors provide ongoing feedback and coaching, and make appropriate use of the probationary period to assess the new hire's ability to perform in the position.

Encourages employees to participate in developmental assignments, details, mentoring and training programs, and other agency programs to develop and retain a highly qualified workforce. Closes competency/skills gap for mission critical positions.

Implements retention strategies that focus on key internal processes (e.g., work environment, employee orientation, executing Individual Development Plans for all employees--subject to bargaining obligations, coaching, development, and mentoring, etc.) that promote employee growth, supports the health of the workforce, and drive the future success of the organization's people and infrastructure. Closes competency/skills gap for mission critical positions.

Manages and controls attrition by developing best practices and retention strategies as well as by developing a succession plan. Assesses current workforce plans to ensure they are up-to-date in order to meet Program/Agency goals and objectives. Works with senior management officials and HR to comply with the workforce planning process as described in the Department's position management policy.

Develops employee performance plans within established timeframes and that align with Agency and Departmental goals and objectives. Communicates to employees how their work supports the Agency mission and strategic plan/initiatives.

Employee performance plans contain clear, results-focused measures and ensures supervisors provide accurate and timely feedback to determine progress and success in meeting expectations. Employees are held accountable for their performance in meeting goals.

Ensures that performance plans, progress reviews, and appraisals of employees are conducted by the due dates established by the Department or Agency. Performance plans for each employee must include at least one critical element that is traceable to the agency's goals and objectives (e.g., Mission Results critical performance element). Provides ongoing feedback and coaching as demonstrated through performance feedback sessions as evidenced by 100% of employees receiving at least one feedback session at the midpoint of the rating period. Appraisals show a fair distribution in ratings among all employees.

Ensures appropriate action is taken to address performance problems in a manner that supports organizational goals and objectives. Ensures subordinate managers and supervisors adhere to the Agency performance management policy with regard to performance appraisal and employee recognition.

Performance and employee feedback data is used as an indicator of compliance and general satisfaction or needed improvement with regard to the planning, developing, monitoring, rating and rewarding of performance.

Utilizes the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) to identify and address issues related to employee engagement, development, and satisfaction. Target: Based on specific information collected from the 2014 FEVS, implements effective and measurable strategies to address FEVS scoring as applicable to my mission area, agency, and individual position.

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

Critical Element Rating – Leading People

Level 5

Level 4

Level 3

Level 2

Level 1

Critical Element 3. Business Acumen	Weight: 10%
<p>Assesses, analyzes, acquires, and administers human, financial, material, and information resources in a manner that instills public trust and accomplishes the organization's mission. Uses technology to enhance processes and decision making. Executes the operating budget; prepares budget requests with justifications; and manages resources.</p>	
<p>Agency-Specific Performance Requirements</p> <p>Human, financial, material, and informational resources are effectively acquired and managed to achieve performance goals. Needs assessments are based on organizational goals and budget realities, and opportunities to reduce program and administrative costs are sought. Management control systems are established/maintained to monitor activities, identify problem areas, and initiate timely corrective action.</p> <p>Explores new partnerships and innovative ways to carry out AMS mission with fewer resources. Leverages budget realities (diminishing resources) and best practices to remain efficient, effective, relevant and valued. Procures, develops and uses resources to efficiently and effectively support AMS programs.</p> <p>Adjusts spending priorities such as travel, training, equipment purchases, and vacancies by improving business processes, adapting and innovating procedures in these areas.</p> <p>Evaluates and develops fee schedules that encourage increased efficiency and cost reductions while maintaining high quality services. Develops a long term user fee plan that provides for future adjustments.</p> <p>Continuously seeks to improve business processes, sharing those efforts with other programs to improve overall Department performance. Fully leverage the expertise and commitment of the workforce to meet challenges and the agency mission.</p> <p>Uses technology innovation and organizational synergies to meet the needs of American agriculture.</p> <p>Provides leadership to support Federal and USDA strategic sourcing efforts in support of the Blueprint for Stronger Service and USDA Strategic Plan FY2014-2018: Strategic Goal Number 5. Champions USDA's "Shared First" policy and ensures strategic goals are met or exceeded. Promotes fulfillment of the small business socio-economic goals of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization. Champions biobased and biopreferred policies and ensures compliance with applicable guidance and regulations.</p> <p>As applicable, enhances data accuracy in all acquisition systems and ensures that contractor performance data is reported timely in the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS). Promotes the development of the acquisition workforce through adherence to federal and agency policies and effective hiring, training and development, and succession planning. Ensures acquisition processes comply with federal and departmental policy and regulations while maximizing taxpayer investment, minimizing agency risk, and optimizing customer value.</p>	
<p>Rating Official Narrative: <i>(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)</i></p>	
<p>Critical Element Rating – Business Acumen</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Level 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1</p>

Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions**Weight: 10%**

Solicits and considers feedback from internal and external stakeholders or customers. Coordinates with appropriate parties to maximize input from the widest range of appropriate stakeholders to facilitate an open exchange of opinion from diverse groups and strengthen internal and external support. Explains, advocates, and expresses facts and ideas in a convincing manner and negotiates with individuals and groups internally and externally, as appropriate. Develops a professional network with other organizations and identifies the internal and external politics that affect the work of the organization.

Agency-Specific Performance Requirements

Ensures a high degree of responsiveness to organizational leadership, the public, and internal and external customers. Continuously reviews and monitors organizational performance to achieve agency mission results and considers the customer's point of view. Consults and collaborates and builds partnerships with agencies and other stakeholders, and takes decisive actions in accordance with law, regulation, and Department policy.

Systematically listens to customers and gathers their feedback, actively seeking to identify their needs and expectations, and effectively communicating those needs and expectations to employees. Ensures employees are prompt, professional, fair and responsible to the circumstances of individual customers to the extent permitted by law and regulation.

Collaborates with stakeholders to help them succeed, tell their story, and remain competitive in a global marketplace. Leverages the expertise and commitment of the workforce to meet the agency mission and future challenges.

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

Critical Element Rating – Building Coalitions

 Level 5

 Level 4

 Level 3

 Level 2

 Level 1

Critical Element 5. Results Driven					Weight: 35%
Agency Goals/Objectives for current FY: Must have at least 1 result (may have more than 5)					
This critical element includes specific performance requirements expected of the executive during the appraisal period, focusing on measurable outcomes from the strategic plan or other measurable outputs and outcomes clearly aligned to organizational goals and objectives. At a minimum, the performance plan will include performance requirements (including measures, targets, timelines, or quality descriptors, as appropriate) describing the range of performance at Level 3 for each result specified. It is recommended to also establish the threshold measures/targets for Levels 5 and 2.					
Alignment—cite relevant goals/objectives, page numbers, from the Strategic Plan, Congressional Budget Justification/Annual Performance Plan, or other organizational planning document in the designated section for each performance requirement specified.					
Performance Requirement 1: Working Across AMS Programs			Strategic Alignment:		
Work across AMS program areas and other agencies to provide seamless and comparable services to similar customers and to improve relations and agency-wide collaboration; improve programs, services, and business processes.			-Departmental Blueprint for Stronger Service -AMS Strategic Goal 6		
<i>Performance Requirement 1 Rating</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
Performance Requirement 2: Cultural Transformation			Strategic Alignment:		
Leads the organization to eliminate barriers to improve operational and service excellence in work-life and wellness, labor relations, process improvement, employee development, talent management, customer focus and community outreach, and hiring reform. Pursues workforce diversity through recruitment, outreach and employee development programs designed to enhance the hiring and retention of highly qualified employees from diverse backgrounds.			-Secretary's Cultural Transformation Initiative -Secretary's Management Initiative 1		
Exercises all of USDA's special hiring authorities designed to increase employment of veterans and individuals with disabilities and targeted disabilities.					
Actively engages in the transformation of USDA by supporting process improvements in the organization. Engage employees to transform USDA into a model agency.					
Ensures that activities and timeframes established in the AMS Cultural Transformation Act Plan are met by demonstrating support through allocation of resources and commitment of program area managers to support initiatives.					
<i>Performance Requirement 2 Rating</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
Performance Requirement 3: Protect the Integrity of Organic Products			Strategic Alignment:		
Increase the number of annual complaint case closures over previous years; and reduce the number of average days that complaints and appeals remain open.			USDA Goal 1 AMS Strategic Goal 4		
Continue rigorous investigations of complaints of alleged violations. Ensure terms of trade arrangements are being met. Ensure complete and thorough audits of USDA accredited certifying agents.					
Address 90% of appeals cases received in FY 2015 through a decision,					

settlement, or closure, in less than 180 days.

Complete the investigation of 220 or more complaint cases during FY 2015.

Work with AMS and USDA other government agencies to implement clear organic regulations, guidance, instructions and policy. Publish 2 proposed rules including the aquaculture proposed rule and 2 final guidance documents

Support the work of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) to develop recommendations on organic standards. Support public engagement, transparency, and a fair process in the development of NOSB recommendations. Conduct one NOSB training session and two NOSB public meetings in FY 2015.

Complete implementation of revised sunset process by published federal register notice to renew 2015 sunset materials.

Performance Requirement 3 Rating

Level 5

Level 4

Level 3

Level 2

Level 1

Performance Requirement 4: Support organic market development

Maintain organic integrity in a sound and sensible manner. Support affordable, accessible and attainable certification for all organic operations. Provide opportunities for new and beginning farmers to succeed in organic production and marketing. Provide training to certifiers, organic farmers and the organic trade on sound and sensible organic certification.

Publish 2 new instructions for certifying agents that support sound and sensible certification practices. Provide one in-person certifier training session that covers sound and sensible certification practices.

Lead efforts to negotiate and finalize organic equivalence arrangements; successfully complete required peer assessments to maintain existing equivalency arrangements.

Support projects that implement the USDA Organic Working Group (OWG) objectives for FY2015. All five OWG topic areas show measurable progress towards reaching their goals in supporting organic agriculture.

Strategic Alignment:

USDA Goal 1

AMS Strategic Goal 4

Performance Requirement 4 Rating

Level 5

Level 4

Level 3

Level 2

Level 1

Performance Requirement 5: Information Technology

Improve the quality of the information in the list of certified organic operations. Provide quarterly updates to the list of certified operations that includes updates on suspended, revoked and reinstated organic operations.

Achieve 95% accuracy in match between certifier-submitted annual operation lists and the USDA posted list.

Organic database pilot system delivered and deployed by end of fiscal year 2015 that USDA and the public can generate reports from, and that certifiers can contribute data directly to, replacing the current posted list of certified operations.

Strategic Alignment:

USDA Goal 1

AMS Strategic Goal 4

<i>Performance Requirement 5 Rating</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
Performance Requirement 6: Support AMS Signature Process Improvement Support the implementation of the AMS Signature Process Improvement Initiative to improve the effectiveness of the Agency's operations.				Departmental Blueprint for Stronger Service AMS Strategic Goal 6		
<i>Performance Requirement 6 Rating</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Level 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1						
Rating Official Narrative: <i>(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)</i>						
<i>Critical Element Rating – Results Driven</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1

Part 6: Summary Rating Narrative (Mandatory)

Part 7: Executive's Accomplishment Narrative (Mandatory)

Part 8: Agency Use

From: [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#)
To: [Walker, Natosha - AMS](#)
Subject: Re: More performance reviews
Date: Tuesday, October 28, 2014 3:32:14 PM

Tuckwiller is done. Yes we will need to schedule what we can. Don't worry about Sonia but I also need to do Melissa Bailey.

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 28, 2014, at 2:41 PM, "Walker, Natosha - AMS" <NatoshaL.Walker@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

After looking over my list and the calendar, the following individuals need a performance review:

Clifton Gilchrist
David Tuckwiller
Jim Brownlee
Sonia Jimenz
Arthur Neal
Dana Coale
Charles Parrott
Miles McEvoy

Natosha Walker
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service
Room 3069-S
Phone: (b) (6)
Fax: 202-260-9191
NatoshaL.Walker@ams.usda.gov

From: Barnes, Rex - AMS
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2014 2:19 PM
To: Walker, Natosha - AMS
Subject: Re: Performance review (Sarcone)

Go ahead and see when we can schedule. Check with Anne as well.

Sent from my iPad

On Oct 28, 2014, at 2:12 PM, "Walker, Natosha - AMS" <NatoshaL.Walker@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Rex,

Chris Sarcone asked about scheduling her performance review. Please advise.

Thank you,

Natosha Walker

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Agricultural Marketing Service

Room 3069-S

Phone (b) (6)

Fax: 202-260-9191

NatoshaL.Walker@ams.usda.gov

From: [Chick Coate](#)
To: [Ayers_JoshuaB - AMS](#); [McEvoy Miles - AMS](#); [Michael_Matthew - AMS](#)
Cc: [Scott_Lawrence; Jerome Rigot](#)
Subject: Re: Registered: NOPC-205-15 (b) (6)
Date: Thursday, September 24, 2015 9:03:17 AM

I am in receipt of your September 22, 2015, email regarding NOPC-205-15. I find it outrageous and unacceptable!

1. Scott Lawrence and I provided you indisputable evidence that (b) (6) sold Scott's 2013 300-acre conventional corn crop as organic (b) (6). And more proof will be forthcoming.
2. You stated that "NOP found that (b) (6) conducts business in the State of California and is under the jurisdiction of the California State of Organic Program." Per my previous communication to you, (b) (6) also conducts business outside of California. It is also my understanding that California jurisdiction is not relevant in your statement in that organic products are under federal jurisdiction as of 2002 by acts of Congress.
3. As communicated to NOP, it was clearly established and demonstrated that SCS Global Services conducted a bogus investigation into our complaint that (b) (6) sold conventional crops as organic ... with the crux of our complaint being that (b) (6) sold Scott's 2013 conventional corn crop as organic. The SCS investigation report:
 - a. Was incomplete.
 - b. Was inaccurate.
 - c. Was false.
 - d. Was deliberately misleading and misconstrued to protect SCS's vested interests and and hide their/SCS's wrong-doings.
 - e. Contained outright lies.
 - f. Did not even address our complaint that (b) (6) sold Scott's 2013 conventional corn crop as organic.
4. In regards to SCS, I advised and provided proof to NOP that SCS did not respond to many questions and issues contained in numerous emails sent to Brandon Nauman at SCS regarding their investigation process and report. Instead of responding, Scott Romito, SCS's CFO, sent me an email threatening me with legal action if I ever contacted SCS or any of its employees again. SCS obviously took exception to my questioning their investigation report, did not want to get to the truth and was in a CYA effort to cover-up wrong-doings on their part. SCS should be fined, never allowed to engage in the organic market sector again and shut-down ... with prison sentences considered for the guilty parties involved. The same holds true for California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA).
5. After all Scott and I have communicated to SCS, we not only find it unbelievable and unacceptable that SCS awarded the (b) (6) organic certification for 2015 ... and did so in the name of (b) (6). How can that be? I have repeatedly advised SCS, CDFA and NOP that (b) (6) changed the name of (b) (6) to (b) (6) on January 3, 2014.
6. Your September 22 email also stated that I claimed that (b) (6) "planted conventional seed on his certified organic farm".
 - a. I do not recall making that allegation. Where did you get that information? Please show me where I made that allegation.
 - b. What "certified organic farm" are you referring to? As communicated, (b) (6) does not own any "certified organic farm". As communicated, (b) (6) has stated under oath that he (b) (6) owns no land, owns no farming equipment and was only a part-time laborer for (b) (6), which was owned by (b) (6). And that the property (b) (6) was farming on was property owned by the (b) (6) Trust in which neither (b) (6) nor (b) (6) held any positions nor interests.
 - c. Per SCS's June 18, 2015, investigation report to CDFA, SCS revealed that during one inspection they/SCS found treated seed on the property and stated that the seed had been removed by a later date and that there was no evidence that the treated seed had been sown on the 350 certified organic acres of (b) (6). No evidence? Really? If the seed had been sown on the 350 acres exactly how did/would SCS have determined same? I have provided NOP the proof that (b) (6) and his family have scammed individuals, companies, government agencies, consumers and taxpayers while breaking laws and being involved in criminal activities. That confirms and proves that (b) (6) and his family are not honest and are crooks/criminals.
6. I also find it totally amazing that in the 11 months Scott and I have been communicating information, details, leads and actual proof of our claim that (b) (6) sold Scott's 2013 conventional corn crop as organic, NOP did not contact Scott or me with any questions or asking for any more details regarding what we reported. Not once! And we sent NOP double-digit communications consisting of hard-copy document mailings and emails. As a matter of fact, I called NOP three different times on three different days to ascertain that NOP had received our complaint communications and status of same ... and was told all three times that someone (including Miles McEvoy) would be calling me back. No one from NOP ever called me! So NOP claims that it did an investigation into NOPC-205-15?! Exactly how?! What kind of investigation is that?!

It is very evident to Scott and me that NOP has not done the job for which it is being paid to do with taxpayer money. And by not doing its job, NOP is guilty of aiding and abetting criminal activities which have been reported to them. I don't know if it is incompetence, ineptness, laziness, ignorance or an attempt to cover-up what the facts really are about the organic product story. However, it is a fact that your September 23 email to me is outrageous and unacceptable.

Please consider this a complaint about NOP and forward same to Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture.

Chick Coate
 Phone: (b) (6)

Scott Lawrence
 Phone: (b) (6)

E-Mail (b) (6) .com

E-Mail (b) (6) .com



This is a Registered Email® message from **Ayers JoshuaB - AMS**.

Good Morning Mr. Coate:

The USDA National Organic Program (NOP) completed its review of your complaint against (b) (6). Please see the attached letter. Thank you for your support of the NOP.

Respectfully,



Joshua B. Ayers | Compliance Officer | 202.205.5556 | joshuab.ayers@ams.usda.gov
USDA NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM | 1400 Independence Ave. SW | Washington, DC 20250

[Click here](#) to send a Registered Email® message to anyone.



On Wednesday, September 23, 2015 11:03 AM, Chick Coate <(b) (6) .com> wrote:

You will not believe this! This is unbelievable!

On Wednesday, September 23, 2015 10:29 AM, "Ayers, JoshuaB - AMS" <JoshuaB.Ayers@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Alonzo, Anne - AMS](#)
Cc: [Eckhouse, Sara - AMS](#); [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#); [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#); [Michael, Matthew - AMS](#)
Subject: Re: Statement
Date: Sunday, October 18, 2015 11:20:56 AM

I know (b)(5) Deliberative I think (b)(5) Deliberative

Miles V McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
USDA National Organic Program

On Oct 17, 2015, at 8:04 AM, "Alonzo, Anne - AMS" <Anne.Alonzo@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Internal Deliberative:

(b)(5) Deliberative
(b)(5) Deliberative

Nice weekend!

On Oct 17, 2015, at 7:42 AM, McEvoy, Miles - AMS
<Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Internal Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative
(b)(5) Deliberative
(b)(5) Deliberative
(b)(5) Deliberative
(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

Draft Statement – (b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

Miles V McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program

<Closure to Complainant Aerial Drones.pdf>

From: [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#)
To: [Summers, Bruce - AMS](#)
Subject: Re: Statement re allegations
Date: Monday, October 19, 2015 7:50:33 AM

If I [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 19, 2015, at 7:44 AM, "Summers, Bruce - AMS" <Bruce.Summers@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

[REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative

[REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative

From: Barnes, Rex - AMS
Sent: Monday, October 19, 2015 6:57 AM
To: Summers, Bruce - AMS
Subject: Fwd: Statement re allegations

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "McEvoy, Miles - AMS" <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>
Date: October 17, 2015 at 7:42:34 AM EDT
To: "Alonzo, Anne - AMS" <Anne.Alonzo@ams.usda.gov>, "Eckhouse, Sara - AMS" <Sara.Eckhouse@ams.usda.gov>, "Barnes, Rex - AMS" <Rex.Barnes@ams.usda.gov>
Cc: "Tucker, Jennifer - AMS" <Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov>, "Michael, Matthew - AMS" <Matthew.Michael@ams.usda.gov>
Subject: Statement re allegations

Internal Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative
[REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

Draft Statement – (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

Miles V McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program

From: [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: Re: Stop the bullying
Date: Monday, October 19, 2015 9:19:42 PM

Good for you.

On Oct 19, 2015, at 9:16 PM, "McEvoy, Miles - AMS" <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Attached is some background on the Cornucopia complaints including details of AMS-NOP's review of the complaints, analysis of the photographic evidence, and how we consulted with AMS accredited certifiers on the compliance of these operations with the USDA organic regulations. You will see that AMS-NOP conducted a thorough review and determined that there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations of these certified organic operations.

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted text block]

Thanks,

Miles V McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program

<Cornucopia Complaints.docx>

<Chronology.docx>

From: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#)
To: [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#); [Bailey, Shayla - AMS](#)
Subject: RE: USDA Statement on Complaints
Date: Wednesday, October 21, 2015 11:36:18 AM

Smaller group. Anne [redacted] (b)(5) Deliberative
[redacted] Anne is at MRP staff so [redacted] (b)(5) Deliberative
[redacted]

From: Jones, Samuel - AMS
Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2015 11:17 AM
To: Bailey, Shayla - AMS; Morris, Erin - AMS; Alonzo, Anne - AMS
Cc: Barnes, Rex - AMS
Subject: RE: USDA Statement on Complaints

Thanks, Shayla. I will [redacted] (b)(5) Deliberative . We chatted this morning
[redacted] (b)(5) Deliberative .

Sam Jones-Ellard
Public Affairs Specialist
USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service
[redacted] (b) (6)

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From: Bailey, Shayla - AMS
Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2015 11:01 AM
To: Morris, Erin - AMS; Alonzo, Anne - AMS
Cc: Jones, Samuel - AMS; Barnes, Rex - AMS
Subject: Fwd: USDA Statement on Complaints

FYI... I'm catching up on break [redacted] (b)(5) Deliberative
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

May need [redacted] (b)(5) Deliberative . I have not responded.

--Shayla

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "McEvoy, Miles - AMS" <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>
Date: October 21, 2015 at 9:32:00 AM EDT
To: "Alonzo, Anne - AMS" <Anne.Alonzo@ams.usda.gov>, "Eckhouse, Sara - AMS"

<Sara.Eckhouse@ams.usda.gov>, "Howard, David- OSEC"
<David.Howard@osec.usda.gov>, "Barnes, Rex - AMS" <Rex.Barnes@ams.usda.gov>,
"Rakola, Betsy - OSEC" <Betsy.Rakola@osec.usda.gov>
Cc: "Jones, Samuel - AMS" <Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov>, "Bailey, Shayla - AMS"
<Shayla.Bailey@ams.usda.gov>, "Tucker, Jennifer - AMS"
<Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov>

Subject: USDA Statement on Complaints

There continues to be requests for information regarding the Cornucopia complaints. I've received inquiries from accredited certifying agents and note chatter on social media sites. I'd like [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative

The proposal is to:

- [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative
- [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative
- [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative
- [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative
- [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative

[REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative

USDA Statement on Complaints (10/21/2015)

USDA takes any complaints regarding our operations seriously, and that is why AMS looks into any formal complaints issued by outside groups. This was the case when the Cornucopia Institute filed a complaint earlier this year. AMS launched a thorough review and ultimately found and determined that the operations were in compliance and there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations. Furthermore, there is no investigation of the National Organic Program or its staff happening by USDA's Inspector General—that is inaccurate. The focus on any one public servant in an attempt to damage his or her credibility is inappropriate and without merit. USDA values and has faith in Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy's leadership of the National Organic Program.

USDA's National Organic Program is the bedrock regulatory program responsible for

developing national standards for organically-produced agricultural products. These standards assure consumers that products with the USDA organic seal meet consistent, uniform standards. The USDA organic seal and the NOP program itself have helped organic producers and businesses achieve unprecedented levels of growth for organically produced goods. The retail market for organic products is now valued at more than \$39 billion while USDA organic operations have grown more than 250% since 2002. USDA's National Organic Program is a leading global standard and major factor in this success.

Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

From: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#)
To: [Bailey, Shayla - AMS](#)
Cc: [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#)
Subject: Re: USDA statement
Date: Friday, October 23, 2015 7:39:39 AM

Nope

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 23, 2015, at 7:27 AM, Bailey, Shayla - AMS <Shayla.Bailey@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

(b)(5) Deliberative

--Shayla

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "McEvoy, Miles - AMS" <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>
Date: October 23, 2015 at 7:21:42 AM EDT
To: AMS - Washington DC NOP
<WashingtonDCNOP@ams.usda.gov>
Subject: **USDA statement**

USDA Statement on Complaints (10/21/2015)

USDA takes any complaints regarding our operations seriously, and that is why AMS looks into any formal complaints issued by outside groups. This was the case when the Cornucopia Institute filed a complaint earlier this year. AMS launched a thorough review and ultimately found and determined that the operations were in compliance and there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations. Furthermore, there is no investigation of the National Organic Program or its staff happening by USDA's Inspector General—that is inaccurate. The focus on any one public servant in an attempt to damage his or her credibility is inappropriate and without merit. USDA values and has faith in Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy's leadership of the National Organic Program.

USDA's National Organic Program is the bedrock regulatory program responsible for developing national standards for organically-produced agricultural products. These standards assure consumers that products with the USDA organic seal meet consistent, uniform standards. The USDA organic seal and the NOP program itself have helped organic producers and businesses achieve unprecedented levels of growth for organically produced

goods. The retail market for organic products is now valued at more than \$39 billion while USDA organic operations have grown more than 250% since 2002. USDA's National Organic Program is a leading global standard and major factor in this success.

We plan [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative [REDACTED] Thanks for your support.

Miles V McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program

From: [Bridges, Gregory - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: Responsive Records
Date: Wednesday, December 02, 2015 1:05:24 PM
Attachments: [Responsive Records.pdf](#)
[Responsive Records.xlsx](#)

Hi Miles,

Attached are the records for the FOIAS that deal with your job performance and pay. Next week we can [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative

Greg Bridges
FOIA Officer
AMS

Bridges, Gregory - AMS

From: Avila, Joan - AMS on behalf of McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Wednesday, October 01, 2014 11:48 AM
To: Alonzo, Anne - AMS
Subject: Accepted: Performance Review

Bridges, Gregory - AMS

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS </O=MMS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=MCEVOY, MILES19F09CBD-BE7F-4909-8DAA-6F3FA5E2BC08>
Sent: Tuesday, September 15, 2015 6:35 PM
To: Morris, Erin - AMS; Barnes, Rex - AMS
Subject: Accomplishments version 2
Attachments: SES 2015 Accomp - McEvoy v2.docx

Based on your comments on Monday I've made some adjustments to my accomplishments report. Thanks.

Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

FY 2015 Senior Executive Service (SES) Accomplishment Report
Miles McEvoy - Deputy Administrator, AMS National Organic Program

Critical Element 1. Leading Change

Weight:
15%

(b) (5), (b) (6)

Critical Element 2. Leading People

Weight:
30%

(b) (5), (b) (6)

Critical Element 3. Business Acumen

Weight:
10%

(b) (5), (b) (6)

Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions

**Weight:
10%**

(b) (5), (b) (6)

Critical Element 5. Results Driven – Performance Requirements

**Weight:
35%**

Performance Requirement 1: Working Across AMS Programs: (b) (5), (b) (6)

- (b) (5), (b) (6)
-
-
-

Performance Requirement 2: Cultural Transformation

(b) (5), (b) (6)

(b) (5), (b) (6)

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-

Performance Requirement 3: Protect the Integrity of Organic Products

(b) (5), (b) (6)

(b) (5), (b) (6)

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Performance Requirement 4: Support Organic Market Development

(b) (5), (b) (6)

(b) (5), (b) (6)

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[Redacted content for Performance Requirement 4]

Performance Requirement 5: Information Technology

(b) (5), (b) (6)

(b) (5), (b) (6)

-
-
-
-

[Redacted content for Performance Requirement 5]

Performance Requirement 6: Support AMS Signature Process Improvements

(b) (5), (b) (6)

(b) (5), (b) (6)

-
-
-

[Redacted content for Performance Requirement 6]

Bridges, Gregory - AMS

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS </O=MMS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=MCEVOY, MILES19F09CBD-BE7F-4909-8DAA-6F3FA5E2BC08>
 Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2014 6:39 PM
 To: Swann, Wanda - AMS; Walker, Natosha - AMS
 Subject: FW: Performance Reviews

First choice – Wed., Oct. 8 at 3-4:30 pm
 Second choice – Thurs., Oct. 9 at 11:30-12:30.

Miles V. McEvoy
 Deputy Administrator
 National Organic Program
 1400 Independence Ave. SW
 Washington, DC 20250-0268
 202-720-3252
www.ams.usda.gov/nop

Organic Integrity from Farm to Table, Consumers Trust the Organic Label

From: Morris, Erin - AMS
Sent: Tuesday, September 30, 2014 4:13 PM
To: Bailey, Douglas - AMS; Coale, Dana - AMS; Earnest, Darryl - AMS; Guo, Ruihong - AMS; Jimenez, Sonia - AMS; McEvoy, Miles - AMS; Morris, Craig - AMS; Neal, Arthur - AMS; Parrott, Charles - AMS; Brownlee, Jim - AMS; Gilchrist, Clifton - AMS; Jimenez, Sonia - AMS; Sarcone, Chris - AMS; Tuckwiller, David - AMS
Cc: Swann, Wanda - AMS; Walker, Natosha - AMS
Subject: Performance Reviews

Deputies and Staff Directors,

Over the next few weeks, we'll be scheduling your performance reviews. The available time slots are listed below—please send your first and second choice selections to Natosha and Wanda. Our goal is to have all reviews completed no later than October 23rd. If none of the times listed below work for your schedule, please let me know.

Thanks,

Erin

Erin Morris
 Associate Administrator/Chief Operating Officer
 USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service
 202-690-4024
Erin.Morris@ams.usda.gov

Tues. Oct. 7th

3-4 pm

Weds. Oct. 8th

10-11 am

3-4:30 pm

Thurs. Oct. 9th

11:30 – 12:30 pm

2-3 pm

Weds. Oct. 15th

3:30 – 4:30 pm

Tues. Oct. 21st

10-11 am

11 am – 12 pm

3-4 pm

Weds. Oct. 22nd

2:30 – 3:30 pm

3:30 -- 4:30 pm

Thurs. Oct. 23rd

11:30 – 12:30 pm

2 – 3 pm

Bridges, Gregory - AMS

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS </O=MMS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=MCEVOY, MILES19F09CBD-BE7F-4909-8DAA-6F3FA5E2BC08>
Sent: Monday, March 16, 2015 12:18 PM
To: Barnes, Rex - AMS
Cc: Morris, Erin - AMS
Subject: mid-year accomplishments
Attachments: Miles-MidYr-2015.docx

Miles V McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program

Miles McEvoy – Mid-Year Accomplishments

Leading Change

- (b) (6)
-
-

Leading People

- (b) (6)
-
-

Business Acumen

- (b) (6)
-
-

Building Coalitions

- (b) (6)
-
-
-

Results Driven

- Working across AMS Programs- (b) (6)
- Cultural Transformation (b) (6)

(b) (6)

- **Protect Organic Integrity -** (b) (6)

- **Support organic market development -** (b) (6)

- **Information Technology -** (b) (6)

Bridges, Gregory - AMS

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS </O=MMS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=MCEVOY, MILES19F09CBD-BE7F-4909-8DAA-6F3FA5E2BC08>
Sent: Wednesday, March 04, 2015 12:56 PM
To: Tucker, Jennifer - AMS; JonesKing, Stacy - AMS; Michael, Matthew - AMS; Courtney, Cheri - AMS; Nelson, Kristen - AMS
Subject: mid-year accomplishments

I need to submit my mid-year accomplishments by March 16. Please send me the top 3-5 accomplishments for your division/area by COB Thursday, March 12.

Thanks.

Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

Bridges, Gregory - AMS

Subject: Miles - FY2015 Mid-Year Review
Location: 3069-S

Start: Wed 4/8/2015 10:00 AM
End: Wed 4/8/2015 10:30 AM
Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

Organizer: Barnes, Rex - AMS
Required Attendees: Alonzo, Anne - AMS; McEvoy, Miles - AMS

Bridges, Gregory - AMS

Subject: Miles McEvoy - Performance Review
Location: 3069-S

Start: Wed 10/14/2015 1:30 PM
End: Wed 10/14/2015 2:00 PM
Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

Organizer: Alonzo, Anne - AMS
Required Attendees: Barnes, Rex - AMS; McEvoy, Miles - AMS

Bridges, Gregory - AMS

From: Walker, Natosha - AMS </O=MMS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=WALKER, NATOS00978325-C7CC-4172-8E4C-6C21351956C6A26>
Sent: Thursday, February 05, 2015 10:48 AM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Subject: Performance Plan (McEvoy)
Attachments: Scanned from a Xerox multifunction device.pdf

Good morning,

Please see attached performance plan. Have a great day!

Natosha Walker

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Agricultural Marketing Service

Room 3069-S

Phone: 202-720-4276

Fax: 202-260-9191

NatoshaL.Walker@ams.usda.gov

From: Barnes, Rex - AMS
Sent: Wednesday, February 04, 2015 8:35 AM
To: Walker, Natosha - AMS
Subject: FW: performance plan

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Wednesday, February 04, 2015 8:05 AM
To: Barnes, Rex - AMS
Subject: performance plan

Hi Rex,

It appears that I never received a copy of my performance plan. Please send a copy to me. Thanks.

Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

**SES Performance Management System
Executive Performance Agreement**

AMS Only



Part 1. Consultation. *I have reviewed this plan and have been consulted on its development.*

Executive's Name (Last, First, MI): McEvoy, Miles
 Executive's Signature: *[Signature]*
 Title: Deputy Administrator
 Rating Official's Name (Last, First, MI): Barnes, Rex
 Rating Official's Signature: *[Signature]*

Appraisal Pd. 10/1/13 -9/30/14
 Date: 12/19/2013
 Organization:
 CA NC LT/LE
 Date: 12/19/13

Part 2. Progress Review

Executive's Signature: *[Signature]*
 Rating Official's Signature: *[Signature]*
 Reviewing Official's Signature (Optional):
 Date: 4/15/14
 Date: 4/15/14
 Date:

Part 3. Summary Rating

Initial Summary Rating Level 5 Outstanding Level 4 Exceeds Fully Successful Level 3 Fully Successful Level 2 Minimally Satisfactory Level 1 Unsatisfactory

Rating Official's Name (Last, First, MI): BARNES, REX A.
 Rating Official's Signature: *[Signature]*
 Executive's Signature: *[Signature]*
 Reviewing Official's Signature (Second-Level Official's Concurrence):
 Date: 10-24-14
 Date: 10-24-2014
 Date: 10-27-14

Higher Level Review (if applicable)

I request a higher level review. Executive's Initials: _____ Date: _____
 Higher Level Review Completed Date: _____
 Higher Level Reviewer Signature: _____

Performance Review Board Recommendation

Level 5 Level 4 Level 3 Level 2 Level 1

PRB Chair Signature: _____ Date: _____

Annual Summary Rating Level 5 Level 4 Level 3 Level 2 Level 1

Appointing Authority Signature: _____ Date: _____

Part 4. Derivation Formula and Calculation of Annual Summary Rating

Critical Element	Element Rating		Weight (b) (6)	Score		Summary Level Ranges
	Initial	Final (if changed)		Initial	Final (if changed)	
1. Leading Change						475-500 = Level 5 400-474 = Level 4 300-399 = Level 3 200-299 = Level 2 Any CE rated Level 1 = Level 1
2. Leading People						
3. Business Acumen						
4. Building Coalitions						
5. Results Driven						
Total			100%	(b) (6)		

FY 2014 Senior Executive Service (SES) Accomplishment Report

Miles McEvoy

Deputy Administrator, USDA-AMS National Organic Program

Critical Element 1. Leading Change

Weight:

10%

(b) (6)

Critical Element 2. Leading People

Weight:

30%

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Critical Element 3. Business Acumen

**Weight:
10%**

(b) (6)

Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions

**Weight:
10%**

(b) (6)

Critical Element 5. Results Driven – Performance Requirements Brief Explanation

**Weight:
40%**

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

-
-

[Redacted]

Performance Requirement 2: Protect the Integrity of Organic Products.

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

[Redacted]

Performance Requirement 3: Implement Sound and Sensible Certification Practices.

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

-
-
-
-
-

[Redacted]

Performance Requirement 4: Support Organic Market Development

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

-
-
-

[Redacted]

(b) (6)

-
-
-

Performance Requirement 5: Support Public Involvement

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

-
-
-
-
-
-

Performance Requirement 6: Information Technology Improvements.

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

-
-
-

Bridges, Gregory - AMS

Subject: Performance Review (Miles McEvoy)
Location: 3069-S

Start: Thu 10/9/2014 2:00 PM
End: Thu 10/9/2014 3:00 PM
Show Time As: Tentative

Recurrence: (none)

Meeting Status: Not yet responded

Organizer: Alonzo, Anne - AMS
Required Attendees: McEvoy, Miles - AMS

Deputies and Staff Directors,

Over the next few weeks, we'll be scheduling your performance reviews. The available time slots are listed below— please send your first and second choice selections to Natosha and Wanda. Our goal is to have all reviews completed no later than October 23rd. If none of the times listed below work for your schedule, please let me know.

Thanks,

Erin

Erin Morris
Associate Administrator/Chief Operating Officer
USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service
202-690-4024
Erin.Morris@ams.usda.gov



1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 3071-South, STOP 0201
Washington, DC 20250-0201

JUN - 2 2015

Dr. Carol Goland
Executive Director
Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association
41 Crosswell Road
Columbus, Ohio 43214

Dear Carol:

Thank you for your May 20, 2015, letter to Secretary Vilsack supporting Miles McEvoy's leadership of the Agricultural Marketing Service's National Organic Program (NOP). Secretary Vilsack and I strongly support Miles management and leadership of the NOP.

I share your interest in building and maintaining a strong NOP that balances the diverse interests and voices across the organic community. The Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association (OEFFA) is doing important work to support sound and sensible certification through your current project to encourage organic certification for Plain Farmers. The Agricultural Marketing Service will continue to integrate sound and sensible principles into our work.

I appreciate OEFFA's clear commitment to organic integrity. Thank you again for your letter of support, and for your ongoing work to support organic integrity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rex Barnes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rex Barnes
Associate Administrator



1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 3071-South, STOP 0201
Washington, DC 20250-0201

JUN - 9 2015

Mr. Andy Westlund
Chief Executive Officer
Organically Grown Company
1800-B Prairie Road
Eugene, Oregon 97402

Dear Mr. Westlund:

Thank you for your recent letter to Secretary Vilsack supporting Miles McEvoy's leadership of the Agricultural Marketing Service's National Organic Program (NOP). Secretary Vilsack and I strongly support Miles management and leadership of the NOP.

I share your interest in building and maintaining a strong NOP that balances the diverse interests and voices across the organic community, and can take actions aimed at strengthening organic agriculture.

I appreciate your leadership and clear commitment to increasing business opportunities and organic trade. Thank you again for your letter of support, and for your ongoing work to support organic integrity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rex Barnes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rex Barnes
Associate Administrator



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

JUL 01 2015

Ms. Mary Yurlina
Director of Certification Services
Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
P.O. Box 170
294 Crosby Brook Road
Unity, Maine 04988

Dear Ms. Yurlina:

Thank you for your letter of May 22, 2015, cosigned by Ted Quaday, indicating your support for Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy, National Organic Program (NOP). I strongly support his continued management of the NOP.

I share your interest in building and maintaining a strong NOP that balances the diverse interests and voices across the organic community, and I support building a program that can take the necessary actions aimed at strengthening organic agriculture. Thank you for sharing your thoughts on the recent accomplishments of the NOP and how they have enhanced organic integrity and the work of your organization.

The Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association is doing important work to support organic farmers and organic agriculture.

Thank you again for writing in support of Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy and for your ongoing work to support organic integrity. A similar letter will be sent to Mr. Ted Quaday.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Vilsack".

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

JUL 01 2015

Mr. Ted Quaday
Executive Director
Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association
P.O. Box 170
294 Crosby Brook Road
Unity, Maine 04988

Dear Mr. Quaday:

Thank you for your letter of May 22, 2015, cosigned by Mary Yurlina, indicating your support for Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy, National Organic Program (NOP). I strongly support his continued management of the NOP.

I share your interest in building and maintaining a strong NOP that balances the diverse interests and voices across the organic community, and I support building a program that can take the necessary actions aimed at strengthening organic agriculture. Thank you for sharing your thoughts on the recent accomplishments of the NOP and how they have enhanced organic integrity and the work of your organization.

The Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association is doing important work to support organic farmers and organic agriculture.

Thank you again for writing in support of Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy and for your ongoing work to support organic integrity. A similar letter will be sent to Ms. Mary Yurlina.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Vilsack".

Thomas J. Vilsack
Secretary



1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 3071-South, STOP 0201
Washington, DC 20250-0201

JUN 16 2015

Ms. Valerie Lawrence Henderson
10800 Portofino Place
Los Angeles, California 90077

Dear Ms. Henderson:

In your correspondence dated May 18, 2015, you outlined your concerns about the current management and oversight of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service National Organic Program. Your letter detailed your dissatisfaction with the direction of the program, and you called for a change in leadership.

I am proud of the National Organic Program (Program) and its leadership. Working hand-in-hand with the National Organic Standards Board (Board), the Program engages the public to facilitate transparent dialogue both during public meetings and during the rulemaking process. The Program has increased its speed of response to Board recommendations over the past five years, while it also adhered to the Organic Foods Production Act and the USDA organic regulations. The Program has mechanisms in place that ensure that technical report writers have no conflicts of interest and writers are well qualified to complete analyses responsibly. The Program responds to enforcement-related requests, while it also protects due process rights of farms and businesses. The Program's leaders work tirelessly to protect organic integrity, and they have my full support.

The National Organic Program offers many opportunities for public comment. We encourage you to use those forums to voice both your support and your concerns about proposed Program changes in the future.

Similar letters will be sent to Mr. Charles Henderson, Mr. Wolf Linkman and Mr. Walter Faria. Thank you for your support of organic agriculture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rex Barnes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rex Barnes
Associate Administrator



1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 3071-South, STOP 0201
Washington, DC 20250-0201

JUN 16 2015

Mr. Charles Henderson
10800 Portofino Place
Los Angeles, California 90077

Dear Mr. Henderson:

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Similar letters will be sent to Ms. Valerie Lawrence Henderson, Mr. Wolf Linkman and Mr. Walter Faria. Thank you for your support of organic agriculture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rex Barnes". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Rex Barnes
Associate Administrator



1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 3071-South, STOP 0201
Washington, DC 20250-0201

JUN 16 2015

Mr. Walter Faria
10800 Portofino Place
Los Angeles, California 90077

Dear Mr. Faria:

In your correspondence dated May 18, 2015, you outlined your concerns about the current management and oversight of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service National Organic Program. Your letter detailed your dissatisfaction with the direction of the program, and you called for a change in leadership.

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Similar letters will be sent to Ms. Valerie Lawrence Henderson, Charles Henderson and Mr. Wolf Linkman. Thank you for your support of organic agriculture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rex Barnes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rex Barnes
Associate Administrator



1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 3071-South, STOP 0201
Washington, DC 20250-0201

JUN 16 2015

Mr. Wolf Linkman
10800 Portofino Place
Los Angeles, California 90077

Dear Mr. Linkman:

In your correspondence dated May 18, 2015, you outlined your concerns about the current management and oversight of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service National Organic Program. Your letter detailed your dissatisfaction with the direction of the program, and you called for a change in leadership.

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The National Organic Program offers many opportunities for public comment. We encourage you to use those forums to voice both your support and your concerns about proposed Program changes in the future.

Similar letters will be sent to Mr. Walter Faria, Ms. Valerie Lawrence Henderson and Mr. Charles Henderson. Thank you for your support of organic agriculture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rex Barnes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rex Barnes
Associate Administrator

tmp7E01
From: Will Fantle <wfantle@cornucopia.org>
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2015 9:54 AM
To: AGSEC - OES
Cc: president@whitehouse.gov
Subject: Change in the management of the National Organic Program
Attachments: Sec Vilsack letter-2015-FINAL.pdf

Importance: High

Dear Secretary Vilsack -

Please find the attached letter calling for change at the National Organic Program.

You may contact us at your convenience should you have comments, questions or a desire to discuss any of the issues raised within.

Sincerely,

Will Fantle
The Cornucopia Institute
715-839-7731



CORNUCOPIA
INSTITUTE

April 24, 2015

The Hon. Thomas J. Vilsack
Room 200-A Whitten Building
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

It is with extreme reluctance that The Cornucopia Institute calls upon you to replace the current management and oversight at the National Organic Program (NOP) with a qualified professional dedicated to carrying out the intent and spirit of the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA) — an individual who is highly respected by the organic industry. We were among the many in the organic community who sincerely welcomed the changes, and new personnel, you brought to the organic program in 2009.

But that bright promise has dimmed, and many important organic industry participants have grown severely disappointed by the direction taken by NOP management over the past several years. It is the opinion of many, including The Cornucopia Institute, that the deep fissures that have developed are now undermining the public/private partnership with the organic sector that Congress envisioned upon passage of OFPA 25 years ago.

This growing divide is threatening the credibility and reputation of the organic label, which has already been downgraded by the largest consumer public interest group, Consumers Reports.

Among the troubling developments are:

- The usurpation of National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) governance and authority by NOP staff;
- The unilateral imposition of dramatic changes to the Sunset review process for synthetic and non-organic materials intended for temporary use in organics;
- The rejection and dismissal of well-reasoned concerns raised by the NOSB, after serious deliberations and stakeholder input, on nanotechnology, hydroponics, aquaculture and other issues;
- A long track record of unacceptable delays in implementing enforcement actions, failure to share names of operations, fines and penalties with the public, and delegating investigative functions to certifiers (some of whom may have contributed to the violations by either incompetence or as co-conspirators); and
- The newly invoked cloaking in anonymity of authors of scientific technical reviews for the NOSB (a public body), so as to mask public scrutiny of credentials and possible conflicts of interest.

Board of Directors
Helen Keas
Organic Livestock Producer
Durand, Wisconsin

Kevin Engelbert
Nation's First Certified Organic Dairy
Former NOSB Member
Nichols, New York

Barry Plam, PhD
Conservation Consultant
Former NOSB Member
Polson, MT

Roger Featherstone
Director - Arizona
Mining Reform Coalition
Tucson, Arizona

William Hoar
Wildlife Conservationist
Ashland, Wisconsin

Dave Miser
Organic Dairy Producer
Cedar Summit Farm
New Prague, Minnesota

Goldie Caughlan
Organic Food Activist
PCC Natural Markets (retired)
Former NOSB Member
Seattle, Washington

Mitch Blumenthal
Global Organic Specialty Source, Inc.
Organic Produce Distributor
Sarasota, Florida

Policy Advisory Panel
Francis Thicke, PhD
Organic Dairy Producer
Radonca Dairy
NOSB Member
Fairfield, Iowa

Michael James
Restaurateur/Urban Activist
The Heartland Cafe
Chicago, Illinois

Tony Azevedo
Organic Dairyman/Agri-tourism
San Joaquin Valley, California

Tom Willey
T & D Willey Farms
Organic Vegetable Grower/CSA
Madera, California

Jim Gerritsen
Organic Vegetable Grower
President, OSGATA
Bridgewater, Maine

Amanda Love
Natural Foods Chef/Educator
The Barefoot Cook
Austin, Texas

Cameron Melberg
Organic Livestock Producer/Feed Mill
Austin, Texas

Cofounders
Will Fastle
Research Director

Mark A. Kastel
Senior Farm Policy Analyst

Other Staff
Linley Dixon, PhD
Farm and Food Policy Analyst

Jirline Rigot, PhD
Farm and Food Policy Analyst

Jason Cole
Research Associate

Gayle Nielsen
Membership Coordinator

Melody Macnill
Data Analyst and
Research Specialist

Therese Lauridsen
Membership Assistant

Elizabeth Wolf
Communications and
Development Director

Zuri Allen
Social Media Specialist

Jeremy Vosman
Webmaster / IT support

Celeste Gibson
Accountant

Organic agriculture has proven to be one of the true bright spots in agriculture over the past 25 years. It has created new opportunities for family-scale farmers to make a decent living, and has literally connected millions of consumers in a more conscious, environmentally sound and health-affirming approach to procuring food. Consumer hunger for this type of food and agriculture is demonstrated by the dramatic growth in the marketplace for organics, now close to a \$40 billion a year industry.

However, the great future potential for organic agriculture is endangered by both arbitrary actions and cases of inaction by NOP management. Furthermore, the disrespectful behavior towards the power vested by Congress in the NOSB, and organic stakeholders involved in the collaborative process, threatens to alienate consumers and farmers from the well-deserved cache that organics has earned in the market.

We are bringing these concerns to your attention because you have the ability to make the needed changes regarding NOP oversight and management. We know that not all organic stakeholders share the concerns we are bringing forward for your review (many of these issues have actually been applauded by the agribusiness sector). But we also know that many in the organic community do share our concerns, and that the fissures occurring in organics are growing wider by the day. You have an opportunity to address this situation and make the proper corrections. We encourage you to do so.

Sincerely,



Will Fantle
Codirector

cc: President Barack Obama



Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association

COMMON GROUND COUNTRY FAIR

May 22, 2015

The Honorable Thomas Vilsack
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

As representatives of organic farmers in Maine we write today to voice our support for the strong body of work Miles McEvoy has produced as National Organic Program Deputy Administrator.

The Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA) functions as an organic advocacy and farmer training organization with 11,000 members. Its wholly-owned subsidiary, MOFGA Certification Services, LLC, certifies more than 450 organic farms and processors. Both entities routinely interact with the National Organic Program leadership, staff and regulatory programs. It is through this history of interaction that we feel confident in our support for Miles McEvoy's contributions to the NOP and organic agriculture.

Mr. McEvoy has proven to be an able program administrator, hiring talented staff members, navigating complex bureaucracies, articulating clear goals and moving to achieve completion of challenging programmatic objectives. Under Mr. McEvoy's direction, the NOP has produced rules on pasture and origin of livestock as well as guidance on compost production and the use of chlorine. Thanks to Mr. McEvoy and his staff, certifiers are now doing regular analytical screens for prohibited pesticides on certified products, meeting target numbers for unannounced inspections, and doing a better job of material input review.

Mr. McEvoy has led his team in opening the door to on-going communication with MOFGA and other organizations advocating on behalf of organic farmers and processors while ensuring that those same entities adhere to the National Organic Program standards. We have hosted Mr. McEvoy twice in Maine and have conducted several telephone conversations with him regarding National Organic Program improvements. We applaud this additional degree of interaction with certifiers and other organic farming advocates.

*P.O. Box 170 • 294 Crosby Brook Road • Unity, Maine 04988-0170
Phone: (207) 568-4142 • Fax: (207) 568-4141
mofga@mofga.org • www.mofga.org*

While we may not agree with Mr. McEvoy on every regulatory decision, we do appreciate much of what he has been able to accomplish as well as his commitment to engaging certifiers and advocates in robust discussion regarding the future of the organic program.

For all of the reasons cited above, we urge you to disregard those harsh critics who have issued disparaging commentary regarding Mr. McEvoy's performance at the head of the National Organic Program. We do not agree with their assessment and believe the National Organic Program should remain in Mr. McEvoy's competent hands. We hope you will agree.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Ted Quaday
Executive Director, MOFGA

(b) (6)

Mary Yurlina
Director, MOFGA Certification Services

cc:

Edward Avalos, Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs
Anne Alonzo, AMS Administrator
Miles McEvoy, Deputy Administrator, National Organic Program



Organically Grown Company

Employee and Grower Owned • Promoting Health through Organic Agriculture as a Leading Sustainable Organization

Honorable Tom Vilsack
 Secretary of Agriculture
 U.S. Department of Agriculture
 1400 Independence Avenue SW
 Washington, DC 20250-3700

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Organically Grown Company (OGC), an employee and grower-owned business, is the largest organic produce distributor in the Pacific Northwest. We work with more than 300 growers and vendors, serving over 500 retail, wholesale and restaurant customers located throughout Oregon and Washington, as well as other western states and Canada from our facilities in Portland and Eugene, Oregon, and Kent, Washington. We have been an actively engaged leader in the organic movement and trade since 1978, dedicating both staff and financial resources to support organic trade organizations, education and research. Our mission is *"Promoting health through organic agriculture as a leading sustainable organization."*

We are writing to express our disagreement with a recent call for removal of Miles McEvoy, Deputy Administrator of the National Organic Program. While we understand the concerns raised about the manner in which recent changes were made to the National Organic Program's Sunset process for periodic review of materials on the National List, we do not agree that this merits a call for new leadership at the National Organic Program. Instead, we support a reconsideration of the Sunset Policy using a process that allows for a public comment period on this important topic.

In our experience, Miles McEvoy has a solid track record of leading the National Organic Program, instituting many policies and programs that have been helpful to the organic trade, strengthening the infrastructure of the NOP, and increasing enforcement.

A few examples:

- Prioritized work on a database of certified operations that will facilitate real-time verification of certification status which is critically important to the fresh produce sector;

- Enacted the Sound and Sensible Initiative, which has improved the organic regulatory system, by streamlining the certification process and making it accessible to more growers, thereby helping to address the need to increase the supply of organic product;
- Increased staffing within the NOP, including many workers who have direct experience with certification and other aspects of organic production;
- Increased the emphasis on oversight of the NOP's own accreditation system through internal audits and a proposal to the National Organic Standards Board for establishing the Peer Review Panel;
- Has worked to clarify the process for filing a complaint and implementing systems for taking enforcement actions;
- Increased communications with organic stakeholders through the *Organic Insider* and the *NOP Handbook*;
- Has Promoted the USDA's Organic Cost Share program in order to ensure that certification costs don't discourage those who want to pursue organic certification.

As a business that monitors the activities and successes of the National Organic Program, the National Organic Standards Board and the organic trade in general, we admire Miles McEvoy for what he has accomplished and feel that there is currently no one in the trade who is better suited for this role.

Thank you for your consideration.

(b) (6)

Andy Westlund

CEO, Organically Grown Company



1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 3071-South, STOP 0201
Washington, DC 20250-0201

Mr. Andy Westlund
Chief Executive Officer
Organically Grown Company
1800-B Prairie Road
Eugene, Oregon 97402

Dear Mr. Westlund:

Thank you for your recent letter to Secretary Vilsack supporting Miles McEvoy's leadership of the Agricultural Marketing Service's National Organic Program (NOP). Secretary Vilsack and I strongly support Miles management and leadership of the NOP.

I share your interest in building and maintaining a strong NOP that balances the diverse interests and voices across the organic community, and can take actions aimed at strengthening organic agriculture.

I appreciate your leadership and clear commitment to increasing business opportunities and organic trade. Thank you again for your letter of support, and for your ongoing work to support organic integrity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rex Barnes".

Rex Barnes
Associate Administrator



1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 3071-South, STOP 0201
Washington, DC 20250-0201

JUN - 9 2015

Mr. Andy Westlund
Chief Executive Officer
Organically Grown Company
1800-B Prairie Road
Eugene, Oregon 97402

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rex Barnes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rex Barnes
Associate Administrator



Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250-3700

May 25, 2015

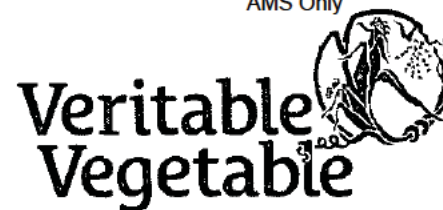
Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are writing to express our disagreement with a recent call for removal of Mr. Miles McEvoy, Deputy Administrator of the National Organic Program. While we understand many of the concerns raised about the manner in which recent changes were made to the National Organic Program's Sunset process for periodic review of materials on the National List, we do not agree that this merits a call for new Leadership at the National Organic Program. Instead, we support a reconsideration of the Sunset Policy using a process that allows for a public comment period on this important topic.

Our company strongly supports a vibrant organic produce industry. As an organic produce distributor with over 40 years of experience, Veritable Vegetable purchases, transports, and supplies the highest quality organic fruits and vegetables. We deliver throughout California, and parts of Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico and Colorado; we ship to Hawaii. We contribute to an equitable food system by supporting over 220 small to mid-size organic growers, increasing access to fresh, organic produce through relationships with over 500 independent stores, co-ops, restaurants, corporate campuses, schools and wholesalers. We strengthen communities, and advocate for sound policy.

We are unique in our commitment to make every business decision based on our values. We support our community by donating approximately 10% of our annual revenue each year through produce and service donations, memberships and event sponsorships. Veritable Vegetable is a certified B Corporation, using the power of business to solve social and environmental challenges. VV envisions a sustainable food system that values the true costs associated with growing and moving food from farm to table; farmers have access to land and receive fair payment for their labor, all workers are treated equitably, food is grown and moved with minimal impact to the environment, and all people have equal access to fresh, healthy foods.

I personally worked with Mr. McEvoy on the Organic Certifiers Council, going back to the early 1990s. As manager of the Washington State Organic Program we found him to be a tireless advocate for strict and reasonable organic standards while also sensitive to the issues facing small to mid-size farmers and larger producers alike. Mr. McEvoy has a solid track record of leading the National Organic Program, instituting many policies and programs that have helped the organic trade, strengthening the infrastructure of the NOP, and increasing enforcement.



We believe his work has led to many accomplishments, including: support of The Sound and Sensible Initiative which improved the organic regulatory system by streamlining the certification process and making it accessible to more growers; increase of staffing within the NOP, including many workers who have direct experience with certification and other aspects of organic production; and improvement of communications with organic stakeholders through the *Organic Insider* and the *NOP Handbook*. He's also increased the emphasis on oversight of the NOP's own accreditation system through internal audits and a proposal to the National Organic Standards Board for establishing the Peer Review Panel. He has prioritized work on a database of certified operations to facilitate real-time verification of certification status, which is critically important to the fresh produce sector. Finally, his work to promote the USDA's Organic Cost Share program has helped ensure that certification costs don't discourage those wanting to pursue organic certification.

As a business that is directly impacted by the activities and successes of the National Organic Program, the National Organic Standards Board and the organic trade in general we would like you to reconsider your recent call to remove Mr. McEvoy from his current role. We value all that Mr. McEvoy has accomplished and feel there is currently no one in the industry more suited for this role.

Thank you for your consideration

(b) (6)

Bj Nygrens

Co-Owner and Director of Purchasing



1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 3071-South, STOP 0201
Washington, DC 20250-0201

JUN 09 2015

Mr. Bu Nygrens
Co-Owner and Director of Purchasing
Veritable Vegetable
1100 Cesar Chaves Street
San Francisco, California 94124

Dear Mr. Nygrens:

Thank you for your recent letter to Secretary Vilsack indicating your support for Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy, National Organic Program. Secretary Vilsack and I strongly support his continued management of the National Organic Program (NOP).

We share your interest in building and maintaining a strong NOP that balances the diverse interests and voices across the organic community. Thank you for sharing your thoughts on the recent accomplishments of the NOP and how they have enhanced organic integrity and your business activities.

We appreciate your clear commitment to making business decisions based on your values. The community service and donations of agricultural produce by Veritable Vegetable is commendable. The U.S. Department of Agriculture shares your interests in providing families, schools, food banks, and communities with access to nutritious, domestically produced foods.

Thank you again for your letter of support, and for your ongoing work to support organic integrity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rex Barnes".

Rex Barnes
Associate Administrator



FOIA Request #2016-AMS-00347-F Requested Information

SES Level in 2014	ES00
SES Level in 2015	ES00
Total Net Pay for 2014	\$108,754.92
Bonus money paid 2014	\$10,216.00

From: [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: SES 2015 Accomp - McEvoy (Draft for Review)
Date: Monday, September 07, 2015 5:58:13 PM
Attachments: [SES 2015 Accomp - McEvoy.docx](#)
Importance: High

Miles – here are your draft accomplishments – due to Rex and Erin on 9/14 (next Monday).

Welcome back.

Jenny

FY 2015 Senior Executive Service (SES) Accomplishment Report
Miles McEvoy - Deputy Administrator, AMS National Organic Program

Critical Element 1. Leading Change

Weight:
15%

- (b) (6)
-
-
-

Critical Element 2. Leading People

Weight:
30%

- (b) (6)
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Critical Element 3. Business Acumen

Weight:
10%

- (b) (6)
-
-
-

Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions

**Weight:
10%**

- (b) (6)
-
-
-
-
-

Critical Element 5. Results Driven – Performance Requirements

**Weight:
35%**

Performance Requirement 1: Working Across AMS Programs: (b) (6)

- (b) (6)
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Performance Requirement 2: Cultural Transformation (b) (6)

- (b) (6)
-

(b) (6)

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Performance Requirement 5: Information Technology (b) (6)

(b) (6)

-
-
-
-

Performance Requirement 6: Support AMS Signature Process Improvements (b) (6)

(b) (6)

-
-
-

From: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#)
To: [Summers, Bruce - AMS](#); [Tharp, Melissa - AMS](#); [Jimenez, Sonia - AMS](#); [Turpin, Jennifer - AMS](#)
Subject: SES Accomplishments
Date: Thursday, August 25, 2016 2:38:45 PM
Attachments: [McEvoy-2016Accomplishments.docx](#)
[FY2016 Annual Accomplishments-ANeal-FINAL.DOCX](#)
[AMS SES PERFORMANCE INPUT FOR BAILEY FY2016 2016-08-24.docx](#)
[2016 Accomplishments - Jimenez - Annual 082316.docx](#)
[Ruihong Guo 2016 Accomplishment Report Final 8-23-2016.docx](#)
[2016 CWP Annual Performance Accomplishments Report.docx](#)
[SES SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS - Earnest 2016.docx](#)
[Performance Accomplishments AMS LPS v8 082316.docx](#)

Sending these to a few folks for different purposes. Dana, Elanor's, and mine are still forthcoming.

SES Performance Accomplishments Report – FY 2016

McEvoy, Miles V.	Deputy Administrator	AMS National Organic Program
------------------	----------------------	------------------------------

Critical Element 1 – Leading Change (Weight 15%):
(b) (6)

Critical Element 2 – Leading People (Weight 30%):
(b) (6)

Critical Element 3 – Business Acumen (Weight 10%):
(b) (6)

Critical Element 4 – Building Coalitions (Weight 10%):
(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Critical Element 5 – Results Driven (Weight 35%):

Performance Requirement 1 – Working Across AMS Programs: (b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 2 – Cultural Transformation: (b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 3 – Protect Integrity of Organic Products:

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 4 – Support Organic Market Development:

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 5 – Information Technology:

(b) (6)
(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 6: Support AMS Signature Process Improvements:

(b) (6)
(b) (6)

Text below this point is template ST/SL text that cannot be deleted.

Choose an item. **Performance Accomplishments Report – FY 2016**

Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Element 1 - Choose an item.: Click here to enter text.		
Element 2 - Choose an item.: Click here to enter text.		
Element 3 - Choose an item.: Click here to enter text.		
Element 4 - Choose an item.: Click here to enter text.		
Optional Critical Element(s) : Click here to enter text.		

Choose an item. **Performance Accomplishments Report – FY 2016**

Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
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Element 1 – Choose an item.: Accomplishments for Element 1 – Table Format

Exceeds	Met	Did Not Meet	Performance Goal/Measure	Provide a brief and concise statement explaining how the result exceeded the goal/measure or why it was not met.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
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Element 2 – Choose an item.: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Element 3 – Choose an item.: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Element 4 – Choose an item.: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Optional Critical Element(s): [Click here to enter text.](#)

From: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#)
To: [Tharp, Melissa - AMS](#)
Subject: SES Info
Date: Wednesday, August 05, 2015 1:17:56 PM
Attachments: [Morris, C. SES 2014 Perf App.pdf](#)
[Barnes, R. SES 2014 Perf App.pdf](#)
[Morris, E. SES 2014 Perf App.pdf](#)
[Guo, R. SES 2014 Perf App.pdf](#)
[McEvoy, M. SES 2014 Perf App.pdf](#)
[Parrott, C. SES 2014 Perf App.PDF](#)
[Coale, D. SES 2014 Perf App.pdf](#)
[Neal, A. SES 2014 Perf App.pdf](#)
[Earnest, D. SES 2014 Perf App.pdf](#)
[Bailey, D. SES 2014 Perf App.pdf](#)
[Alonso, A. SES 2014 Signed Perf App.pdf](#)
[Copy of 2014 SES Ratings.xlsx](#)

Here you go!

Erin Morris
Associate Administrator/
Chief Operating Officer
USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Room 3068
202-690-4024

SES Performance Management System Executive Performance Agreement



Part 1. Consultation. *I have reviewed this plan and have been consulted on its development.*

Executive's Name (Last, First, MI): McEvoy, Miles	Appraisal Pd. 10/1/13 -9/30/14
Executive's Signature:	Date: 12/19/2013
Title: Deputy Administrator	Organization:
Rating Official's Name (Last, First, MI): Barnes, Rex	CA <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> LT/LE <input type="checkbox"/>
Rating Official's Signature:	Date: 12/19/13

Part 2. Progress Review

Executive's Signature:	Date: 4/15/14
Rating Official's Signature:	Date: 4/15/14
Reviewing Official's Signature (Optional):	Date:

Part 3. Summary Rating

	(b) (6) Level 5 Outstanding	(b) (6) Level 4 Exceeds Fully Successful	(b) (6) Level 3 Fully Successful	(b) (6) Level 2 Minimally Satisfactory	(b) (6) Level 1 Unsatisfactory
Rating Official's Name (Last, First, MI):	BARNES, REX A.				
Rating Official's Signature:	Date: 12-24-14				
Executive's Signature:	Date: 10-24-2014				
Reviewing Official's Signature (Second-Level Official's Concurrence):	Date: 10-27-14				

Higher Level Review (if applicable)

I request a higher level review. Executive's Initials: _____ Date: _____

Higher Level Review Completed Date: _____

Higher Level Reviewer Signature: _____

Performance Review Board Recommendation	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
PRB Chair Signature: _____	Date: _____				
Annual Summary Rating	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
Appointing Authority Signature: _____	Date: _____				

Part 4. Derivation Formula and Calculation of Annual Summary Rating

Critical Element	Element Rating		Weight	Score		Summary Level Ranges
	Initial	Final (if changed)		Initial	Final (if changed)	
1. Leading Change	(b) (6)		10	(b) (6)		475-500 = Level 5 400-474 = Level 4 300-399 = Level 3 200-299 = Level 2 Any CE rated Level 1 = Level 1
2. Leading People			30			
3. Business Acumen			10			
4. Building Coalitions			10			
5. Results Driven			40			
Total			100%			

NAME	Pay	Leading Change (10%)	Leading People (30%)	Business Accumen (10%)	Building Coalitions (10%)	Results Driven (40%)	Total
Bailey	175715	(b) (6)	(b) (6)	(b) (6)	(b) (6)	(b) (6)	(b) (6)
Coale	168070						
Earnest	177013						
Guo	167001						
Morris, C	181500						
Morris, E	167001						
McEvoy	170259						
Neal	167001						
Parrott	171299						
Barnes	181500						

NAME	Pay	Rating Pay adjustment	Perf. Award	\$	Total percent
Barnes	181,500	(b) (6)	8	14,520.00	9
Morris, C	181,500	(b) (6)	8	14,520.00	9
Coale	168,070		5	8,403.50	9
Earnest	177,013		6	10,620.78	9
McEvoy	170,259		6	10,215.54	8
Guo	167,001		5	8,350.05	7
Neal	167,001		5	8,350.05	7
Morris, E	167,001		0	0.00	3
Bailey	175,715		0	0.00	3
Parrott	171,299		0	0.00	3

1,726,359

82,865.23

74,979.92

From: [Mischa Popoff](#)
To: "[Coral Beach](#)"; cbeach@thepacker.com; "[Tom Karst](#)"; "[Greg Johnson](#)"; "[Chris Koger](#)"
Cc: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); "[Mark Kastel](#)"; "[Michael Olson](#)"; "[Thorne, Valerie](#)"; Kim@ams.usda.gov; "[Ahramjian, Lisa](#)"; "[Joel B. Pollak](#)"; "[Bill Marler](#)"; "[Gretchen Goetz](#)"; ronnie@organicconsumers.org
Subject: USDA clears organic program leader in ethics review
Date: Monday, November 02, 2015 11:20:10 AM

The only reason Mark Kastel and *The Cornucopia Institute* are [going after](#) Miles McEvoy is because of Miles' long-standing, principled stand on organic field testing.

Organic testing unnerves professional activists like Kastel because they know that a whopping 43% of all organic food sold in America tests positive for prohibited pesticides due to fraud.

Miles was at the helm of the first organic certifying agency in America to routinely test organic food, the WSDA Organic Program. And when he was tapped to lead the USDA's National Organic Program by the Obama Administration in 2009, he wasted no time in laying out a plan to bring the same no-nonsense approach to certifying organic food to Washington DC.

Unfortunately, Miles faced many roadblocks, and has only been able to convince the USDA's 80 for-profit and not-for-profit agencies to agree to test just 5% of the end-product they certify. But even that is too much testing for organic activists who rely on the royalty payments paid on every bushel of certified-organic food as their main source of income.

In short, if Miles ever manages to institute mandatory, across-the-board organic field testing for all farms and processing facilities certified under the USDA's NOP, organic "watchdog" groups like Ronnie Cummins' *Organic Consumers Association* and Kastel's *Cornucopia Institute* will have to find a different way to keep their salaries topped up.

The irony is that by trying to make organic certification a more ethical process, Miles McEvoy has been accused of being unethical.

All the best.

Mischa Popoff, B.A. (Hons.) U. of S.
 Former USDA contract organic inspector
 Author of [Is it Organic?](#) *The inside story of the organic industry*

Some people won't like this book, but you will

Policy Advisor for [The Heartland Institute](#)

Research Associate for [The Frontier Centre for Public Policy](#)

Royse City TX USA

(b) (6)

For consulting and expert testimony, visit polyphase.us

For public speaking engagements, please contact the [National Speakers Bureau](#)

From: [The Cornucopia Institute](#)
To: Miles.McEvoy@usda.gov
Bcc: [McEvoy Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: USDA Organic Program Divisive/In Crisis: Obama/Vilsack asked for New Leadership
Date: Friday, April 24, 2015 10:29:34 AM

Share     

Cornucopia Institute | PRESS RELEASE

APRIL
24,
2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
 Contact Mark Kastel, 608-625-2042

Prominent Government Watchdog Asks Obama Administration to Remove Organic Leadership at USDA National Organic Program Divisive and in Crisis

<http://www.cornucopia.org/2015/04/prominent-government-watchdog-asks-obama-administration-to-remove-organic-leadership-at-usda/>

CORNUCOPIA, WIS The nation's preeminent organic industry watchdog, [The Cornucopia Institute](#), sent a [letter](#) today to the White House, and to USDA Secretary Thomas J. Vilsack, requesting a change in leadership at the regulator's National Organic Program (NOP). A radical shift in the unique public-private governance in the organic sector, established by Congress in 1990, has created deep fissures within the organic community and, more recently, resulted in 15 organic stakeholders, including Cornucopia, [suing the USDA](#).

Previous administrations faced plenty of criticism from organic advocates. However, during the Clinton and Bush years, USDA officials were universally viewed as respecting the purview of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB). [This 15-member, multi-stakeholder body](#) was established by Congress to review all synthetic/non-organic ingredients and materials used in organic farming and food production. Congress also mandated that the USDA Secretary seek the counsel of the NOSB on all aspects of implementing the [Organic Foods Production Act \(OFPA\)](#).

"Although the USDA ignored some of the NOSB recommendations in the past, until recently they never went 180 degrees in the opposite direction in deference to the preferences of powerful corporate interests," said Kevin Engelbert, a former NOSB member from Nichols, New York. "And they never reversed the 23-year tradition of allowing the NOSB the autonomy to create their own procedure manual, set their own agenda and create their own workplan."

The Cornucopia Institute, established in 2004, with 10,000 members, is thought to represent more certified organic farmers than any other organization in the nation. Mr. Engelbert and his family were the first certified organic dairy farmers in the United States.

In 2009, President Obama and Mr. Vilsack were universally praised for their choice of appointing Miles McEvoy, a former organic official with the state of Washington, to lead the NOP. Yet, after an extended honeymoon, public sentiment has taken a decisive turn toward disappointment and controversy in recent years, brought to a head by several unilateral decisions made by the USDA without collaborating, as had been the custom, with the NOSB.

Although many organic industry observers were already becoming disillusioned with the approach during the Obama/Vilsack administration, Mr. McEvoy threw gasoline on the fire, in the fall of 2013, when he unilaterally [reversed](#) the "Sunset" procedure. Mandated by Congress, this procedure required the NOSB to review every synthetic material/ingredient approved for use in organics every five years.

Dr. Barry Flamm, a conservation expert and former chairman of the NOSB later lamented, "I thought we had improved the Sunset process during my tenure on the Board. Besides taking the teeth out of the Sunset provisions, the reversal is a real affront to all of us who believed in the public governance process that Congress built into the organic law."

Under the old procedure, synthetics were reviewed every five years and then sunsetted off the National List unless voted to be relisted if appropriate. Under the new USDA procedures, these materials will instead stay on the list in perpetuity unless the NOSB takes action to remove them (and in a complete reversal, the removal of a material will require a two-thirds super-majority to remove a material).

Although the change in the Sunset provisions, bypassing the NOSB, was supported by many of the corporate agribusinesses that have invested in organics, by a number of the major certifiers who oversee their operations, and by industry lobbyists, it was universally viewed as a *stick in the eye* by farmers, consumers and public interest groups that have been able to collaborate on the process in the past.

In addition to "gutting the Sunset procedure," as The Cornucopia Institute referred to it, a diverse subset of organic stakeholders have also expressed grave concern about several other positions the USDA has taken in direct conflict with the direction of the NOSB. These include:

Nanotechnology

In 2010, the NOSB made clear, in a resolution, that inadequate science currently existed enabling it to conclude that food, or food packaging, manufactured through nanotechnology, was safe for human consumption or appropriate for inclusion in certified organic food products. They recommended a more thorough examination and asked the USDA for technical assistance to conduct a more thorough examination, including convening a symposium on the subject. Instead, five years later the NOP unilaterally decided against any moratorium on organic food containing nanoparticles and instead ruled to allow them to be petitioned for use on a case-by-case basis, like any other synthetic or non-organic substance.

Hydroponics

Also in 2010, the NOSB clearly stated that U.S. organic law required organic plants to be grown in soil with federal regulations focusing on enhancing soil fertility, thus positively impacting the nutritional content of organic food. Growing plants in water, or air, using a narrow mixture of natural and synthetic nutrients, in the opinion of the Board, does not meet the letter or spirit of OFPA. However, the NOP, and some major U.S. certifiers, are allowing giant, multimillion-dollar installations to grow plants indoors, under artificial lighting, and labeling the products *organic* without even identifying their origin as hydroponic.

Aquaculture

At the bequest of economically powerful agribusiness lobbyists, the USDA has charged ahead pushing the NOSB to approve a myriad of synthetic inputs, without even having in place a regulatory framework for how organic aquaculture would be managed. Many advocacy groups have challenged whether or not open net fish farming in the oceans could be done without environmental degradation.

Organic Regulatory Theater

At the next NOSB meeting, beginning April 27, the volunteer panel faces the unrealistic task of carefully reviewing approximately 200 synthetics and materials that will Sunset in 2016 and 2017, in addition to a number of broader policy issues. In the past when the workload has exceeded the NOSB's capacity, the USDA has scheduled a third meeting during the year and/or added extra days to NOSB gatherings. This has not happened despite this year's workload grossly exceeding what the NOSB, and oversight groups like The Cornucopia Institute, can realistically examine.

Enforcement

When Miles McEvoy took over as staff director of the NOP, the new Deputy Administrator publicly stated that the organic industry was now entering "the age of enforcement." Yet major fraud investigations have languished and some perpetrators have even received favorable treatment and anonymity during his tenure. "We have giant factory farms, like Shamrock Dairy in Arizona, which the USDA has found to have violated the law, still operating more than six years after legal complaints were originally filed," said Mark A. Kastel, the Institute's Codirector. "If it weren't for the work of The Cornucopia Institute, this 'pending' enforcement action would still be secret."

Despite the potential deterrent effect, the USDA has systematically refused to publicize the full background, nature of violations, and names of any companies or farms under investigation – even after these entities were found to have broken the law and were fined or otherwise penalized.

In what appears to be a serious ethical lapse, at a recent USDA training for accredited organic certifiers, Mr. McEvoy appeared to coach attendees on damage control tactics concerning organic livestock factory farms that have been the target of recent outside investigations and accused of violating organic law. The take-away message by certification officials from what Mr. McEvoy said was that industry watchdogs were "bashing **your** operations." [emphasis added]

"Since the NOP is responsible for not only investigating the alleged improprieties at these factory farms, but also overseeing the performance of the certifiers that inspect those operations, the apparent bias is extremely troubling," added Kastel.

This is not the first time The Cornucopia Institute has called upon the USDA Secretary to change management at the NOP for what appears to be inappropriate favoritism and collaboration with the corporate sector.

Cornucopia, in 2009, collaborated with a *Washington Post* investigation exposing a sweetheart deal between a powerful industry lobbyist and Dr. Barbara Robinson, then head of the USDA's organic program. She allegedly illegally approved materials for use in organics, overruling her staff and bypassing the NOSB. Cornucopia subsequently called upon both President Obama and USDA Secretary Vilsack to remove Dr. Robinson, which ultimately occurred later that year.

"For those of us who were practicing organic agriculture prior to Congress authorizing the USDA to oversee this industry, the behavior of current management at the NOP is a big disappointment," said Helen Kees, Cornucopia's Board President and an organic beef and vegetable producer from Wisconsin. "The authority of the NOSB has been undermined, and it doesn't really matter whether Miles McEvoy is the chief architect or just willingly carrying out orders. The organic community needs an independent voice that can be universally respected to head this important regulatory body," Kees asserted.

-30-

MORE

In the past, the process by which the NOSB operated was developed by the Board itself, in collaboration with organic stakeholders, after being officially noticed in the Federal Register.

"The Policy Procedure Manual (PPM) was developed by the Board, after extensive public input, and approved by the USDA during the Bush administration," according to former NOSB Chairman Dr. Flamm.

During his five years on the NOSB, Dr. Flamm also served for four years as the chairman of the Policy Subcommittee, which developed the NOSB's PPM.

"You don't need to take The Cornucopia Institute's word alone in supporting the thesis that the USDA has overstepped their legal authority and undermined the unique

process Congress set up to assure organic stakeholders that corporations would not wield undue influence in promulgating organic law," Cornucopia's Kastel added.

Last year, in a blunt letter, the two primary authors of the enabling legislation, the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990, Representative Peter DeFazio and the Senate's longest-serving member, Patrick Leahy, both clearly expressed that, in their unique position to judge, the edict reversing the Sunset procedures clearly violated the will of Congress.

The two congressional leaders were echoed in another letter to Secretary Vilsack, by three prominent past chairman of the NOSB: James Riddle, founder of [Independent Organic Inspectors Association](#); Jeff Moyer, a longtime organic farming educator/leader with the Rodale Institute; and Dr. Barry Flamm, a natural resource and environmental consultant, the first certified organic cherry producer in Montana, and board secretary of The Cornucopia Institute.

More Organic Regulatory Theater

Since the NOSB was designed to have broad industry representation, and is not a scientific panel, Congress gave the body the authority to engage scientific experts to do Technical Reviews of synthetics and other materials up for consideration. This part of the law has never been respected. Instead, the USDA has hand-picked the contractors. In the earlier history of the organic program, they chose agribusiness executives and consultants to review materials petitioned by corporate agribusiness. This was a clear conflict of interest, thoroughly outlined in Cornucopia's white paper, [The Organic Watergate](#).

Currently, the USDA is contracting nonprofit organizations funded by corporate agribusiness to conduct the materials reviews. In one case, the nonprofit wing of the powerful industry lobby group, the Organic Trade Association, is preparing Technical Reviews for the NOSB.

"This is a clear conflict of interest and the proverbial fox watching the organic chicken coop," stated Cornucopia's Kastel. "A further cloak of secrecy the USDA has donned, regarding the conflicts exposed in *The Organic Watergate report*, is that the agency is now refusing to disclose the names of the scientists writing the Technical Reviews for this public body —this makes critiquing potential conflicts of interest impossible."

Along with the nearly insurmountable workload imposed on the NOSB by the USDA, the agency has refused to spend adequate dollars to pay for Technical Reviews the NOSB has requested. Instead, NOP officials are touring the country in what some have charged is an expensive public relations campaign selling organics. "This leaves the NOSB ill-equipped to rigorously review many of the synthetic and non-organic materials that are up for review and that were not properly scrutinized when they were added to the National List in the first place," stated Kastel.



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The Cornucopia Institute

is a nonprofit organization engaged in research and educational activities supporting the ecological principles and economic wisdom underlying sustainable and organic agriculture. Through research and investigations on agricultural and food issues, The Cornucopia Institute provides needed information to family farmers, consumers, stakeholders involved in the good food movement, and the media.

P.O. Box 126 Cornucopia, Wisconsin 54827
TEL: [608-625-2000](tel:608-625-2000) | FAX: [866-861-2214](tel:866-861-2214) | www.cornucopia.org



From: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#)
To: [Walker, Natosha - AMS](#)
Cc: [Summers, Bruce - AMS](#)
Subject: Emailing: SES Rating Official Narrative Template morris, craig final, SES Rating Official Narrative Template bailey, doug final, SES Rating Official Narrative Template neal, arthur final, SES Rating Official Narrative Template Guo Ruihong final, SES Ratin
Date: Tuesday, October 25, 2016 2:13:08 PM
Attachments: [SES Rating Official Narrative Template morris, craig final.docx](#)
[SES Rating Official Narrative Template bailey, doug final.docx](#)
[SES Rating Official Narrative Template neal, arthur final.docx](#)
[SES Rating Official Narrative Template Guo Ruihong final.docx](#)
[SES Rating Official Narrative Template Mcevoy, Miles final.docx](#)
[SES Rating Official Narrative Template jimenez, sonia final.docx](#)
[SES Rating Official Narrative Template parrott, charles final.docx](#)

Natosha,

I had to get clarification from Dana on the last element for a few folks. Please work from the attached versions.

Thanks,

Erin

Instructions for the Rating Official Narrative (Mandatory for SES Performance): Rating officials are required to: 1) provide an overall narrative for the initial summary rating as noted below, 2) indicate the element rating by choosing from the drop down menu, 3) provide a justification for any critical element rated Level 5 (Outstanding) or below Level 3 (Minimally Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory), and 4) attach the completed narrative to the SES performance plan. This document will be included as part of the executive's official performance appraisal.

Executive's Name: <u>McEvoy, Miles</u>
Rating Official's Name: <u>Coale, Dana</u>
Part 6: Summary Rating Narrative (Complete for all Summary Rating Levels) :

Element Ratings and Rating Official Narrative	
Critical Element 1. Leading Change (Weight – 15%)	Element Rating: (b) (6)
Narrative:	
Critical Element 2. Leading People (Weight – 30%)	Element Rating: (b) (6)
Narrative:	
Critical Element 3. Business Acumen (Weight – 10%)	Element Rating: (b) (6)
Narrative:	
Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions (Weight – 10%)	Element Rating: (b) (6)
Narrative:	
Critical Element 5. Results Driven (Weight – 35%)	Element Rating: (b) (6)
<p>Rating officials are required to rate each performance requirement for the Results Driven element by assessing the senior executive's accomplishments for each performance requirement against the performance standards. In addition, both individual and organizational performance needs to be considered. To determine the element rating, the rating official will use the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outstanding – All performance requirements for Results Driven are rated Outstanding. • Exceeds Fully Successful – A majority of the performance requirements for Results Driven are rated at least Exceeds Fully Successful or Outstanding with none below Fully Successful. • Fully Successful – A majority of the performance requirements for Results Driven are rated at least Fully Successful with none below Fully Successful. • Minimally Satisfactory – One or more performance requirements for Results Driven are rated Minimally Satisfactory. • Unsatisfactory – One or more performance requirements for Results Driven are rated Unsatisfactory. <p>When no majority exists, the rating official will use all performance information to determine the rating of the critical elements (applies to Levels 3 and 4).</p>	<p>Performance Requirement 1: (b) (6)</p> <p>Performance Requirement 2: (b) (6)</p> <p>Performance Requirement 3: (b) (6)</p> <p>Performance Requirement 4: (b) (6)</p> <p>Performance Requirement 5: (b) (6)</p> <p>Performance Requirement 6: (b) (6)</p> <p>Performance Requirement 7: (b) (6)</p> <p>Performance Requirement 8: (b) (6)</p> <p>Performance Requirement 9: (b) (6)</p>

Narrative:	

From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)
Subject: Fwd: Your Team
Date: Wednesday, October 26, 2016 8:26:39 PM

Miles McEvoy
NOP Deputy Administrator
Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Bridges, Gregory - AMS" <Gregory.Bridges@ams.usda.gov>
Date: October 26, 2016 at 5:58:16 PM EDT
To: "McEvoy, Miles - AMS" <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>
Cc: "Michael, Matthew - AMS" <Matthew.Michael@ams.usda.gov>, "Schurkamp, Lynnea - AMS" <Lynnea.Schurkamp@ams.usda.gov>, "Thornblad, Kristin - AMS" <Kristin.Thornblad@ams.usda.gov>
Subject: Your Team

Hi Miles:

I wanted to commend your team for the work they have done on FOIA this year. NOP faced many challenges this past fiscal. From my perspective, I can say that Kristin, Trish, and Lynnea have worked very hard with very tight deadlines and arduous circumstances. Their dedication has helped us to comply with all the deadlines for FOIA litigation.

I especially want to highlight Matthew. He has been my primary point of contact for all NOP FOIA matters while also overseeing compliance. Although both these roles are demanding of his time, he has dedication to working on responses never decreased. In addition, his knowledge of the NOP program and records has given both me and OGC and understanding of the NOP program that we wouldn't have otherwise.

I know there is still more progress to be made on improving the FOIA process for NOP. But the progress that been made thus far has been because the hard working people on your team.

Thanks,

Greg Bridges
FOIA Officer
USDA Agricultural Marketing Service
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
3943-S

Stop 0202
Washington, D.C. 20250

(b) (6)

From: [Bailey, Shayla - AMS](#)
To: [Starmer, Elanor - AMS](#)
Cc: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: Re: NOSB issue - need a Holding Statement
Date: Tuesday, October 18, 2016 9:59:48 PM

We will [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative

This is [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative Politico typically hits us at night with requests for comment for their morning ag pro piece(s).

I need [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative

--Shayla

Shayla Mae Bailey
Agricultural Marketing Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
202-720-9771

(b) (6)

On Oct 18, 2016, at 9:55 PM, Starmer, Elanor - AMS <Elanor.Starmer@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

[REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative

Thanks.

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 18, 2016, at 9:53 PM, Bailey, Shayla - AMS <Shayla.Bailey@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

How about this for the second paragraph instead:

[REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

--Shayla

Shayla Mae Bailey
Agricultural Marketing Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
202-720-9771

(b) (6)

On Oct 18, 2016, at 9:38 PM, Starmer, Elanor - AMS
<Elanor.Starmer@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Thanks, Shayla. I would (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

Miles, (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

Thanks,
Elanor

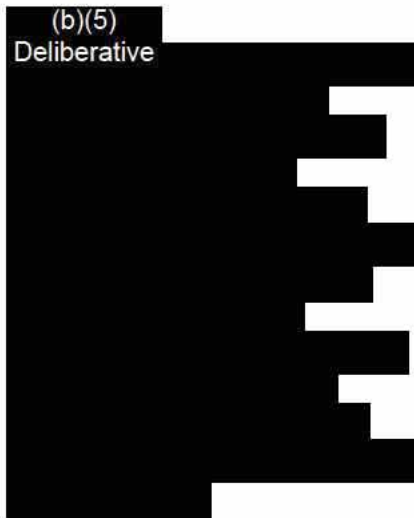
Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 18, 2016, at 9:26 PM, Bailey, Shayla - AMS
<Shayla.Bailey@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Modified statement below (with my edits
and edits from OC):

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

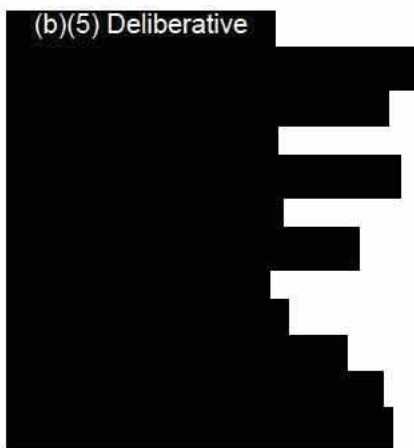
(b)(5)
Deliberative



(b)(5) Deliberative



(b)(5) Deliberative



--Shayla

Shayla Mae Bailey
Agricultural Marketing Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

202-720-9771

(b) (6)

On Oct 18, 2016, at 3:38 PM, Starmer, Elanor - AMS
<Elanor.Starmer@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

My only concern (b)(5)
Deliberative
.

Elanor Starmer
Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
(b) (6)
elanor.starmer@ams.usda.gov

From: Bailey, Shayla - AMS
Sent: Tuesday, October 18, 2016
3:33 PM
To: Starmer, Elanor - AMS;
McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Subject: RE: NOSB issue - need a
Holding Statement

(b)(5) Deliberative
.
.
.
.
.
.
.

From: Starmer, Elanor - AMS
Sent: Tuesday, October 18, 2016
3:31 PM
To: Bailey, Shayla - AMS
<Shayla.Bailey@ams.usda.gov>;
McEvoy, Miles - AMS
<Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>
Subject: RE: NOSB issue - need a
Holding Statement

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative . I will
be on the call.

Elanor Starmer
Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
(b) (6)
elanor.starmer@ams.usda.gov

From: Bailey, Shayla - AMS
Sent: Tuesday, October 18, 2016
3:28 PM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS;
Starmer, Elanor - AMS
Subject: Fwd: NOSB issue - need a
Holding Statement

FYI. Our draft. I tried (b)(5)
Deliberative
Thanks!

--Shayla

Shayla Mae Bailey
Agricultural Marketing Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
202-720-9771
(b) (6)

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Jones,
Samuel - AMS"
<Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov>

Date: October 18,
2016 at 3:24:11 PM
EDT

To: "Mabry, Brian -
OSEC"
<Brian.Mabry@oc.usda.gov>,
"Bailey, Shayla -
AMS"
<Shayla.Bailey@ams.usda.gov>

Subject: RE: NOSB
issue - need a
Holding Statement

Hi Brian,

Here is our draft.
Thanks!

Proposed
Statement:

(b)(5)
Deliberative
[Redacted text block]

(b)(5)
Deliberative
[Redacted text block]

(b)(5)
Deliberative
[Redacted text block]

(b)(5)
Deliberative
[Redacted text block]

(b)(5) Deliberative

*Sam Jones-
Ellard*
Public Affairs
Specialist
USDA |
Agricultural
Marketing Service
(b) (6)

*Follow us on Twitter
[@USDA_AMS](#) or read
[our stories on the USDA
blog.](#)*

From: Mabry, Brian -
OSEC
Sent: Tuesday,
October 18, 2016
1:44 PM
To: Bailey, Shayla -
AMS
<Shayla.Bailey@ams.usda.gov>;
Jones, Samuel - AMS
<Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov>

Subject: NOSB issue
- need a Holding
Statement
Importance: High

I'm sure (b)(5)
Deliberative
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative

for New
Management
at
USDA
National
Organic
Program

Secret Documents
Released: Reading
Room Established
for Material
Obtained from
USDA through
Federal Lawsuits

CORNUCOPIA,
Wisconsin - The
Cornucopia
Institute has
delivered to the
USDA more than
5,000 individually
signed letters from
farmers and
consumers calling
for new
management of
the National
Organic Program
(NOP). The
Wisconsin-based
organic food and
farm policy
research group
collected the
letters from

concerned organic
advocates across
the country.

"This is one more
indication of the
growing
dissatisfaction
with Deputy
Administrator
Miles McEvoy's
direction and
oversight of the
rapidly growing
organic industry,"
said Mark Kastel,
who acts as
Cornucopia's
Senior Farm
Policy Analyst.

The Cornucopia
Institute, along
with many other
public interest
groups, has been
highly critical of
what they describe
as a "corporate
takeover" of the
regulatory process
that Congress
designed
specifically to
protect organic
rulemaking from
the influence of
agribusiness
lobbyists.

"Under the
direction of
Deputy
Administrator

McEvoy, the independence of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB), an expert policy panel convened by Congress to act as a buffer between lobbyists, like the powerful Organic Trade Association, and USDA policymakers has been seriously undermined,” stated Dr. Barry Flamm, a Montana farmer, scientist, and past chairperson of the NOSB.

In the [cover letter](#) to USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack, the organization cited several areas where USDA management is failing. These include:

- A serious lack of enforcement activities on major fraud and alleged violations of organic regulations

occurring
with
“factory
farm”
livestock
activities —
all cloaked
in secrecy.

- Turning a
blind eye
towards the
questionable
authenticity
of the flood
of organic
imports
coming into
this country
from China,
India, a
number of
former
Soviet Bloc
states and
Central
America
that have
effectively
shut
American
organic
grain
farmers out
of the U.S.
market.
- Allowing, in
violation of
the law,
giant
industrial-
scale
soilless
production

of organic
produce
(hydroponic
and other
management
systems),
along with
ignoring
NOSB
prohibitions
on
nanotechnology,
using
conventional
livestock on
organic
dairies, and
other issues.

- Usurpation
of NOSB
governance
and
authority by
USDA/NOP
staff and
other
violations of
the Organic
Foods
Production
Act
(Cornucopia
has a federal
lawsuit
being
adjudicated
that charges
the USDA
with
appointing
agribusiness
executives
to the NOSB

in seats
Congress
had
specifically
earmarked
for
stakeholders
who “own
or operate
an organic
farm”).

- Unilateral changes to the Sunset review process for synthetic and non-organic materials, making it difficult for unnecessary or harmful substances to be removed from organics when agribusinesses lobby for them (the USDA is currently [involved in litigation](#) with Cornucopia and other stakeholders on this Sunset

issue).

"We want organics to live up to the true meaning envisioned by the founders of this movement," Kastel added. "For both organic farmers and organic consumers, that means sound environmental stewardship, humane animal husbandry, wholesome and nutritious food derived from excellent soil fertility, and economic justice for those who produce our food. The USDA needs to act to preserve consumer trust in the organic label."

Due in part to the issues that Cornucopia is spotlighting, Consumer Reports has downgraded the credibility of the USDA organic label from its previous top-tier ranking.

“The corporations that are part of the Organic Trade Association, like Driscoll’s, General Mills (Cascadian Farms, Muir Glenn, Annie’s), WhiteWave (Horizon, Silk, Earthbound Farms, Wallaby) and Clif Bar, have the power to trade the credibility of the organic seal for short-term profit. The USDA needs to step in and protect the public,” Kastel stated.

The Cornucopia Institute is continuing to encourage organic stakeholders to join in this campaign by printing, signing, and returning a proxy letter, which can be accessed at <https://www.cornucopia.org/2015/09/sign-the-proxy-letter-remove-current-usda-organic-management/>.

**Nine Lawsuits
Filed over**

Secrecy and Alleged Violations of the Freedom of Information Act

Relatedly, Cornucopia has filed nine federal lawsuits against the USDA concerning the agency's failure to comply with access to public records under the federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The documents are now housed on the Cornucopia website in its [FOIA Reading Room](#) for public viewing.

"We have, over the years, made FOIA requests to the USDA to learn more about organic fraud enforcement and better understand decision making on organic issues," explained Will Fantle, Cornucopia's Codirector.

Originally passed in 1966 and

amended over the years, the Freedom of Information Act pushes the federal government towards transparency, compelling federal agencies to provide the public with documents and communications. The Obama administration had pledged to increase transparency, but they have been [harshly criticized for their failure](#) to do so by many civil society groups and [transparency advocates](#).

Over the past several years, Cornucopia's FOIA requests have, the group contends, become increasingly meaningless. According to Fantle, the FOIA requests are characterized by years-long delays in response time, even though the

government is legally bound to reply within 20 days. In addition, Cornucopia has found abuse of legal exceptions used by the USDA to essentially "black out" (redact) the majority of text before publicly sharing documents.

One of Cornucopia's unanswered FOIAs dated from 2012. This request relates to a factory farm enforcement action taken by the USDA against Shamrock Dairy in Arizona. The Shamrock case was opened by the USDA in 2008 when Cornucopia filed a formal legal complaint alleging organic law violations, by milking conventional and organic cows in the desert with a modicum of required pasture land. Since filing a lawsuit in early

2016, Cornucopia has received, and is reviewing, almost 2,000 pages of documents related to this request.

While the USDA confirmed that Shamrock Dairy was milking thousands of cows in violation of the organic standards, and proposed sanctions against the operation and its certifier, Quality Assurance International (QAI), both organizations remain in the organic business today.

Cornucopia initially requested documents on the Shamrock scandal because the USDA failed to inform the public as to how they could legally allow this giant scofflaw to continue in operation.

“In a democracy, private citizens and public interest

groups should not have to invest their money hiring lawyers to enforce their rights to documents that, by law, they are entitled to,” stated Fantle.

Cornucopia said it hopes the current administration will take action to correct the allegations of ethical improprieties and mismanagement at the National Organic Program, bringing in new management that respects Congress’s intent to protect the public when it passed the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990.

###

The Cornucopia Institute, a Wisconsin-based nonprofit farm policy research group, is dedicated to the fight for economic justice for the family-scale

farming
community. Their
Organic Integrity
Project acts as a
corporate and
governmental
watchdog assuring
that no
compromises to
the credibility of
organic farming
methods and the
food it produces
are made in the
pursuit of profit.
Their web page
can be viewed at
www.cornucopia.org.

From: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Jimenez, Sonia - AMS](#)
Cc: [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#); [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#)
Subject: Complaints
Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 10:34:02 AM
Attachments: [Cornucopia Complaints Briefing.docx](#)
[Cornucopia Complaints - TPS.docx](#)

Miles/Sonia,

We still [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] Please fill in the missing pieces of the attached
chronology and send it back to Sam and I.

Thanks,

Erin

Cornucopia Complaints Briefing - 2015

Background: Any member of the public may file a complaint alleging violations of the USDA organic regulations. Guidance on how to file a complaint is available on the AMS website. AMS' National Organic Program (NOP) reviews all complaints received and conducts investigations when there is evidence of violations of the USDA organic regulations. In December 2014, the Cornucopia Institute filed complaints against 14 certified organic operations. (b)(5) Deliberative

[Redacted]

- (b)(5) Deliberative
- (b)(5) Deliberative

Chronology

(b)(5) Deliberative	(b)(5) Deliberative
	(b)(5) Deliberative
	(b)(5) Deliberative
	(b)(5) Deliberative
	(b)(5) Deliberative (b)(5) Deliberative (b)(5) Deliberative

- (b)(5) Deliberative
- (b)(5) Deliberative
- (b)(5) Deliberative

SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

Organic Talking Points – Cornucopia Complaints

Talking Points:

- (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

- (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

- (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

If asked

- (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [AMS - NOPCompliance](#)
Subject: FW: An open letter concerning federal organic regulation violations
Date: Monday, February 10, 2014 2:43:23 PM
Attachments: [Open letter on ID dairy FINAL.pdf](#)

Please review and prepare response.

Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

From: Will Fantle [mailto:wfantle@cornucopia.org]
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2014 1:47 PM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS; AMS - Office Of The AMS Administrator
Cc: kastel@cornucopia.org
Subject: An open letter concerning federal organic regulation violations

Please find the attached open letter.

You may contact us at your convenience regarding this matter.

Will Fantle
[The Cornucopia Institute](#)
715-839-7731



CORNUCOPIA
I N S T I T U T E

February 10, 2014

USDA National Organic Program
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Room 2646, Ag Stop 0268
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. McEvoy and Ms. Alonzo,

The Cornucopia Institute is calling your attention to the consistent lack of serious attention paid to enforcement of specific organic regulations concerning §205.240, the pasture practice standard, and its application at the former Dean Foods/WhiteWave factory-scale dairy located in Paul, ID. In December, ownership and operation of the dairy was transferred to John Reitsma, who lives in Twin Falls, Idaho.

In 2005 and in 2006, The Cornucopia Institute filed legal complaints with the NOP alleging the illegal confinement of the thousands of cows in the dairy herd at this operation (then owned by Dean Foods). Based on correspondence from the USDA, and the review of records obtained through a FOIA, complaints were closed by the NOP without a site visit and investigation.

The performance and the National Organic Program, during both the Bush and Obama administrations, should be an embarrassment to all USDA political appointees and staff. It appears that the NOP is making accommodations for industrial-scale dairies, and their owners and commercial patrons, to operate outside of the spirit and letter of the law while materially damaging the ability of family-scale farmers to compete in the marketplace.

Our latest complaint alleges a continued pattern of abuse of the pasture practice standard and mandated access to the outdoors. Thousands of cows are being milked at the facility are being milked three times a day with the animals confined between two of the three milking sessions.

Furthermore, reports from more than one individual intimately involved in the operation state that a percentage of the lactating cows, "high producers," are being milked four times per day and being afforded no access to pasture whatsoever. It was reported to us that Dean/WhiteWave management claimed that they could "average" the entire herd in an effort to meet the 30% minimum dry matter intake.

Averages might be appropriate if their use was not to intentionally subvert the intent of the standards which require all livestock to have access to the outdoors and for all ruminants to have access to pasture.

We once again reiterate our interest in having the department carefully scrutinize the work of the operation's certifier, Quality Assurance International (QAI), to ascertain whether or not they were part of a conspiracy to undermine the integrity of the certification process on dairies.

It is unclear, based on the testimony we have received, whether the high production animals were afforded the minimum 120 days on pasture or if the farm operators were using the same averaging technique and violating the standards in that regard as well.

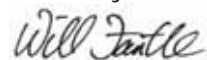
As you know, there are provisions to "temporarily" confine cattle, primarily due to health or environmental factors. Confining cattle in order to increase milk production, or because the size of the milk herd (currently 2400) requires walking too far to access fresh pasture, would not be one of the legally allowed exemptions from requiring "access to pasture."

We also submit that there is no statute of limitations regarding the allegations previously raised by Cornucopia in the complaints filed in 2005 and 2006 regarding this particular dairy and its operation. We request that NOP investigators closely scrutinize the current management practices in place at the Paul, ID dairy and examine past records regarding management practices to ensure compliance with all pertinent organic regulations and apply appropriate penalties if justified.

Should Cornucopia's allegations prove true, the lack of judicious enforcement by the USDA will have allowed major corporate agribusiness concerns to use their ill-gotten gains to develop commanding market shares and place their competitors, purchasing milk from ethical family-scale farmers, at a competitive disadvantage.

We request that you keep Cornucopia apprised of the status of your investigation and contact us for corroborating information.

Sincerely,



Will Fantle, Codirector
The Cornucopia Institute

From: [Mark Kastel](#)
To: [Miles McEvoy \(Miles.McEvoy@usda.gov\)](mailto:Miles.McEvoy@usda.gov)
Bcc: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: FW: Memo to Certifiers on "Brand Name" Instruction Implementation
Date: Friday, August 22, 2014 12:52:49 PM

Dear Miles,

I want to make sure we are accurately portraying what you are doing.

Does the last paragraph on your memo mean that you do not intend to enforce your newly announced interpretation regarding using the word "organic" in a namebrand, when the product is not actually certified organic, if the label has already been approved by the certifier but not yet introduced to the marketplace?

How liberal and accommodating we would allow certifiers to be in creating the timeline, after an annual review, for modifying their labels? Here's an example, what if the company had just recently had their review, maybe in early August. They will have almost a year notice, since your pronouncement that this is no longer acceptable, to shift their approach to labeling. Are you going to allow a certifier like QAI to give a company like Newman's Own Organics an additional year, after their next review?

Obviously the scenario would be different for a company that is receiving their annual review this week having just learned of the NOP's newly announced enforcement approach.

Please advise,

Mark

Mark A. Kastel
The Cornucopia Institute
Kastel@cornucopia.org
608-625-2042 Voice
866-861-2214 Fax



P.O. Box 126
Cornucopia, WI 54827
www.cornucopia.org

From: USDA National Organic Program [mailto:organicinfo@ams.usda.gov]
Sent: Friday, August 22, 2014 10:37 AM

To: Mark Kastel

Subject: Memo to Certifiers on "Brand Name" Instruction Implementation

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The USDA Organic Insider



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Our Vision

Organic Integrity from
Farm to Table
Consumers Trust the
Organic Label

Announcement

August 22, 2014

Dear Mark,

The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is pleased to share a memo to accredited certifying agents regarding the National Organic Program (NOP) Instruction: Use of Brand or Company Names Containing the Word "Organic."

Memo to Accredited Certifying Agents

On August 14, 2014, the National Organic Program (NOP) issued an instruction clarifying the requirements for the use of brand names containing the word "organic" on the labeling of agricultural products. This memo to accredited certifying agents shares aspects to be considered during the instruction's implementation.

[Memo to Accredited Certifying Agents](#)

[Instruction: Use of Brand or Company Names Containing the Word "Organic"](#)

About the Agricultural Marketing Service

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) facilitates the competitive and efficient marketing of agricultural products. Through its National Organic Program, AMS facilitates trade and ensures the integrity of organic agricultural products by consistently implementing organic standards and enforcing compliance with the regulations throughout the world. [Learn more.](#)

About the USDA Organic Insider

The USDA Organic Insider informs the organic community on a wide range of functions, including regulatory updates, requests for public comments, and USDA programs and services.

You are receiving this email because you elected to receive selected updates from the Agricultural Marketing Service. You may manage your profile to receive additional updates or unsubscribe at any time by using the links below.

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USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave., SW | Room 2646, Ag Stop 0268 | Washington | DC | 20250

From: [Jean Richardson](#)
To: [Tracy Favre](#); [Calvin Walker](#); [Nick Maravell](#); [Mac Stone](#); [Jennifer E. Taylor](#); [Colehour Bondera](#); [Francis Thicke](#); [Tom Chapman](#); [Ashely Swaffar](#); [Lisa de Lima](#); [Zea Sonnabend](#); [Carmela Beck](#); [Harold Austin](#)
Cc: [Rakola, Betsy - OSEC](#); [Lewis, Paul I - AMS](#); [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#); [Arsenault, Michelle - AMS](#)
Subject: Fwd: USDA statement
Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 4:49:26 PM

Hi Everyone

In response to the recent misleading Cornucopia "Press Release":

This is the AMS Statement which Betsy Rakola read in to the record at the beginning of Public Comment today

Feel free to circulate it to your stakeholder groups.

Thank you

Jean

USDA takes any complaints regarding our operations seriously, and that is why AMS looks into any formal complaints issued by outside groups. This was the case when the Cornucopia Institute filed a complaint earlier this year. AMS launched a thorough review and ultimately found and determined that the operations were in compliance and there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations. Furthermore, there is no investigation of the National Organic Program or its staff happening by USDA's Inspector General—that is inaccurate. The focus on any one public servant in an attempt to damage his or her credibility is inappropriate and without merit. USDA values and has faith in Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy's leadership of the National Organic Program.

USDA's National Organic Program is the bedrock regulatory program responsible for developing national standards for organically-produced agricultural products. These standards assure consumers that products with the USDA organic seal meet consistent, uniform standards. The USDA organic seal and the NOP program itself have helped organic producers and businesses achieve unprecedented levels of growth for organically produced goods. The retail market for organic products is now valued at more than \$39 billion while USDA organic operations have grown more than 250% since 2002. USDA's National Organic Program is a leading global standard and major factor in this success.

Betsy Rakola

Organic Policy Advisor, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service

From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#); [Rakola, Betsy - OSEC](#); [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)
Subject: O-Dairy
Date: Wednesday, October 21, 2015 9:36:22 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image007.png](#)
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[image010.png](#)
[image011.png](#)
[image012.png](#)
[image013.png](#)
[image014.png](#)
[image018.png](#)

FYI

Subject: Fwd: [NODPA-ODAIRY] FW: [ODAIRY] Press Release: USDA Organic Director Subject of Ethics Investigation

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Hans Eisenbeis <hans.eisenbeis@ORGANICVALLEY.COOP>

Date: October 20, 2015 at 7:04:40 PM CDT

To: <ODAIRY@LISTSERV.NODPA.COM>

Subject: Re: [NODPA-ODAIRY] FW: [ODAIRY] Press Release: USDA Organic Director Subject of Ethics Investigation

Reply-To: Organic Dairy Producers <ODAIRY@LISTSERV.NODPA.COM>

Apologies for not including my signature file in my post. I am speaking for myself here, not for Organic Valley.

The list is undoubtedly smart enough to decide what is fact and what is wishful thinking, and to decide for itself what exactly CI is trying to accomplish using this list-serv.

In my personal opinion, Miles is a good man who doesn't deserve to be libeled in this way. Free speech is a great thing, but you don't get to just make stuff up when you are speaking publicly about a person's reputation. There is an actual law about that.

Hans Eisenbeis

Communications Manager

CROPP Cooperative | [Organic Valley](#) | [Organic Prairie](#)

From: Organic Dairy Producers [<mailto:ODAIRY@LISTSERV.NODPA.COM>] **On Behalf Of** Will Fantle
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 6:54 PM
To: ODAIRY@LISTSERV.NODPA.COM
Subject: Re: [NODPA-ODAIRY] FW: [ODAIRY] Press Release: USDA Organic Director Subject of Ethics Investigation

Hello all –

We stand by all the facts we conveyed in the news release.

The post below questioning it is from an Organic Valley employee – who did not identify himself. Many large agribusinesses, members of the Organic Trade Association, have been less than friendly to the work we do on behalf of farmers exposing corruption in our industry. Organic Valley's chief legal counsel, one of the key proponents of the organic checkoff, is the current president of the Board of Directors of the OTA.

Should it be any surprise that a government agency which has been influenced by corporate lobbyists would attempt to "spin" the facts?

We certainly would not encourage NODPA's list to censor anyone's voice, there's plenty of room for debate on these issues.

Will Fantle
Codirector
The Cornucopia Institute

From: Organic Dairy Producers [<mailto:ODAIRY@LISTSERV.NODPA.COM>] **On Behalf Of** Hans Eisenbeis
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 6:17 PM
To: ODAIRY@LISTSERV.NODPA.COM
Subject: Re: [NODPA-ODAIRY] FW: [ODAIRY] Press Release: USDA Organic Director Subject of Ethics Investigation

This is simply not true, according to the USDA.

I don't know if the admins of ODAIRY can or will take disciplinary action against whoever posted this misinformation, but the list and Cornucopia are treading on very dangerous ground as far as libel law is concerned.

USDA takes any complaints regarding our operations seriously, and that is why AMS looks into any formal complaints issued by outside groups. This was the case when the Cornucopia

Institute filed a complaint earlier this year. AMS launched a thorough review and ultimately found and determined that the operations were in compliance and there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations. Furthermore, there is no investigation of the National Organic Program or its staff happening by USDA's Inspector General—that is inaccurate. The focus on any one public servant in an attempt to damage his or her credibility is inappropriate and without merit. USDA values and has faith in Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy's leadership of the National Organic Program.

USDA's National Organic Program is the bedrock regulatory program responsible for developing national standards for organically-produced agricultural products. These standards assure consumers that products with the USDA organic seal meet consistent, uniform standards. The USDA organic seal and the NOP program itself have helped organic producers and businesses achieve unprecedented levels of growth for organically produced goods. The retail market for organic products is now valued at more than \$39 billion while USDA organic operations have grown more than 250% since 2002. USDA's National Organic Program is a leading global standard and major factor in this success.

From: Organic Dairy Producers [<mailto:ODAIRY@LISTSERV.NODPA.COM>] **On Behalf Of** Edward Maltby

Sent: Sunday, October 18, 2015 2:40 PM

To: ODAIRY@LISTSERV.NODPA.COM

Subject: [NODPA-ODAIRY] FW: [ODAIRY] Press Release: USDA Organic Director Subject of Ethics Investigation

To: Independent Odairy on Yahoo (Odairy@yahoogroups.com)

Subject: [ODAIRY] PressRelease: USDA Organic Director Subject of Ethics Investigation

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The Cornucopia Institute



CORNUCOPIA
INSTITUTE

NEWS RELEASE

October 16, 2015







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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Mark Kastel, 608-625-2042
Leader of USDA Organic Program Subject of Ethics Investigation

Industry Watchdog Re-files Legal Complaints against 13 “Factory Farms”

<http://www.cornucopia.org/2015/10/leader-of-usda-organic-program-subject-of-ethics-investigation/>

CORNUCOPIA, WIS — After a request to the USDA’s Office of Inspector General (OIG), sworn law enforcement agents from the regulatory agency’s Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) have begun an ethics investigation into the conduct of the head bureaucrat at USDA’s National Organic Program, The Cornucopia Institute reported.

Miles McEvoy, AMS Deputy Administrator, is under scrutiny for allegedly failing to enforce federal organic standards, giving favorable treatment to corporate agribusiness interests, and undermining the integrity of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB), an advisory body authorized by Congress to help oversee the organic industry.

An AMS law enforcement officer flew to Wisconsin earlier this year to interview Cornucopia’s two codirectors, Will Fantle and Mark Kastel, and take sworn statements. More recently, the agent also met with Mr. Kastel, conducting an extensive interview, in Staunton, Virginia.

“This began with a formal letter to the OIG alleging that Mr. McEvoy was making inappropriate, agribusiness-favorable decisions in closing formal legal complaints Cornucopia had filed,” Cornucopia’s Kastel explained. “Now it has expanded based on serious concerns about ethical lapses in carrying out his job overseeing the NOSB under the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA).”

The complaints Cornucopia filed, which Mr. McEvoy closed without an investigation, contained hundreds of [aerial photographs of 13 industrial-scale livestock facilities](#) documenting what Cornucopia described as “illegal confinement practices” for thousands of dairy cattle and hundreds of thousands of laying hens. Cornucopia also said the USDA was looking into Mr. McEvoy’s activities in carrying out his responsibility to administer the USDA’s responsibility to oversee the activity of the nation’s independent organic certifiers, working as agents on behalf of the USDA.

[Elements of the USDA’s McEvoy investigation are further outlined in the “More” section at the end of this release.]

In order to hold onto his position, which reportedly pays \$175,000 a year (FOIA pending), and after



enduring months of criticism and lawsuits by organic stakeholders, Mr. McEvoy reportedly solicited letters of support from several individuals and organizations in the organic industry. Some of the requests were allegedly made to individuals with affiliations in organic certification, an area over which he and the USDA are directly charged with oversight. This could potentially be viewed as coercive of someone in a subordinate position.



Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy

Image source: USDA

“If you have business before the National Organic Program, hoping to have approved a synthetic ingredient for your product, as an example, or you run a certification program whose future depends on receiving the blessing of Mr. McEvoy and his staff, you might feel pressured to affirmatively respond, even if you don’t agree with his management at the NOP,” stated Cornucopia’s Research Director, Will Fantle. The regulations governing the conduct of FACA panels, like the NOSB, are explicitly designed to insulate them from undue influence by agency personnel assuring their independence. At the spring 2014 meeting of the NOSB in San Antonio, Texas, Mr. McEvoy abruptly interrupted the proceedings, in the middle of a vote on a parliamentary issue challenging his authority, and gaveled the meeting closed for a recess. He had

[Click on images below to view larger versions.]



no legal right to chair the meeting.

After conferring on the phone with USDA officials in Washington, Mr. McEvoy approached one of the NOSB members and threatened that if the board member did not withdraw his motion, Mr. McEvoy would shut down the semiannual meeting and send everyone home. The board member relented after the intimidation and threat, materially changing the outcome of the meeting. Under Mr. McEvoy the NOP has also systematically appropriated the NOSB's authority to set its own agendas and work plans, and to control the rules governing their meetings. The subject of lawsuits, this disrespectful treatment of the organic community and the volunteers that Congress empowered to formulate organic policy, is a stark departure from the behavior of the Clinton and Bush administrations. "The National Organic Program has overstepped its statutory authority by usurping NOSB responsibility over its procedures, work plans, board meeting management, and public input into changes in



policy," said Jay Feldman, Executive Director of Beyond Pesticides and former member of the National Organic Standards Board.

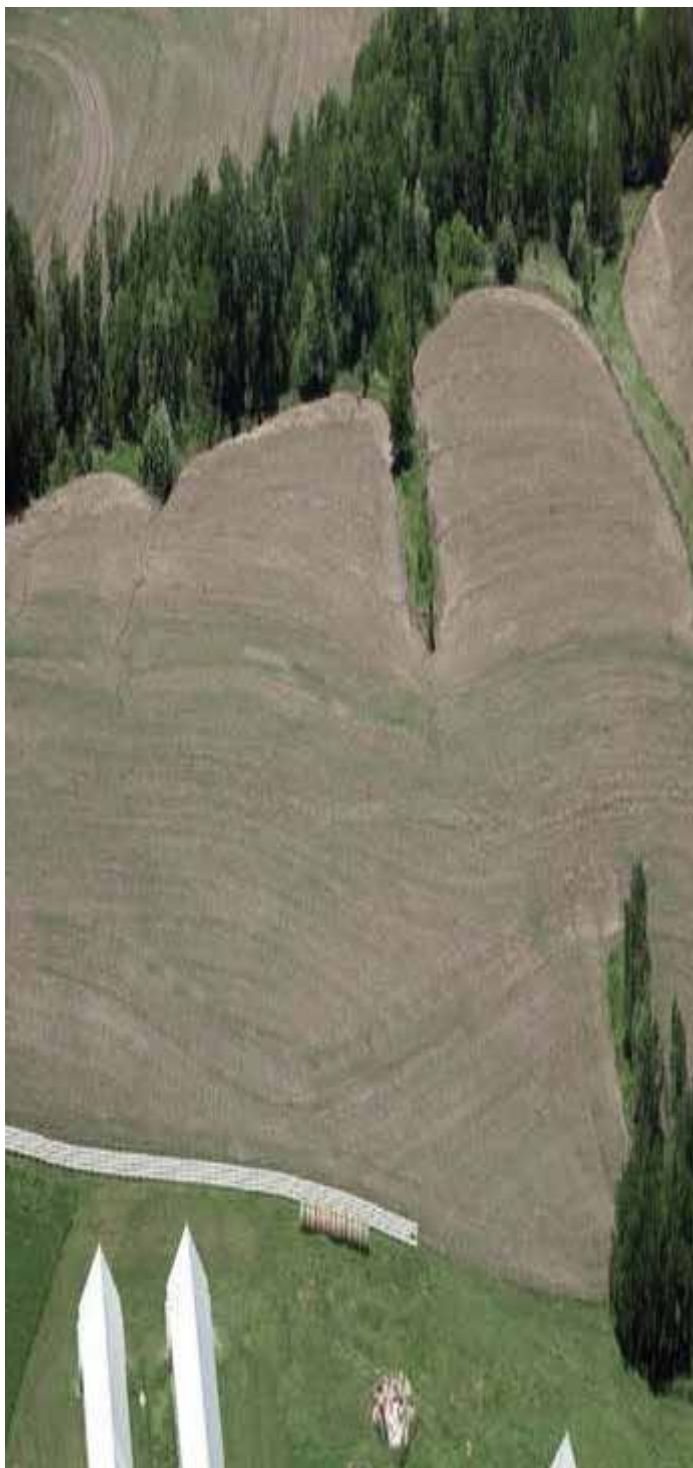
Cornucopia also announced that it had filed formal legal complaints against the USDA-accredited certifiers of 13 giant industrial-scale livestock facilities. These were the same factory farms that Mr. McEvoy's NOP had dismissed prior complaints about in late 2014 without even investigating.

It was the second time the department had cleared the giant organic dairy and egg laying operations, confining thousands of animals each. According to Freedom of Information Act records, Mr. McEvoy personally visited some of the operations that Cornucopia had accused of serious violations of law. He stated they were "in compliance." But his investigative staff were never given the green light to thoroughly audit the factory farms.

"The USDA ignored the evidence we presented, and refused to interview expert witnesses with first-hand knowledge, instead solely depending on the word of the organic certifying agencies



Thousands of cows on an Aurora "organic" dairy in Texas that do not appear to be managed, as the law requires, to promote their natural instinctive behaviors.



theoretically inspecting these operations,” Kastel said. “These violations were so flagrant in nature that we decided to invest thousands of dollars in hiring professional aerial photography crews around the country—after all, one picture *is* worth a thousand words.”

“The NOP also ignored the photographic evidence, and the additional state regulatory documents we submitted at the end of 2014, again refusing to investigate,” Kastel added. When assuming his position at the organic program, Mr. McEvoy declared that this is “the age of enforcement.” Yet the organic program, under this direction, closed Cornucopia’s complaints without ever opening an investigation. Instead, the department simply confirmed with their respective certifiers that all the operations were in “good standing.” Kastel added, “It is our contention, after visiting some of these operations, and viewing the photographs, satellite imagery, and state regulatory filings, that many of them should have never received organic certification in the first place. By virtue of this, some of the certifiers Mr.



McEvoy is deferring to could very well be co-conspirators. Solely depending on them when questions of impropriety of this nature come forward is thoroughly inappropriate and naive.” The Cornucopia Institute



No birds outdoors at any of the 40 barns in Tecumseh, Nebraska producing the certified organic Smart Chicken brand. Photo illustrates fencing with all gates open, beautifully manicured, freshly mowed grass, all doors closed, with no signs of birds ever being out.

said it has collected hundreds of [proxy letters](#) from certified organic farmers, business operators, and other industry stakeholders asking USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack to remove Mr. McEvoy from his position of authority at the National Organic Program.

-30-

MORE:

It should be noted that The Cornucopia Institute has an impressive track record of filing past meritorious legal complaints with the USDA. These have resulted in the decertification of and/or sanctions against a number of major agribusinesses alleged to be violating the organic standards, including Aurora Dairy (Colorado/Texas); the 10,000-cow Vander Eyk Dairy (California); Shamrock Dairy (Arizona), currently under appeal; Promiseland Livestock (Missouri/Nebraska); and others.

Other Ethical Problems with FACA Oversight:

1. Mr. McEvoy confirmed his knowledge of rumors, from authoritative sources on the NOSB itself, of an extramarital affair between a member of the NOSB and a powerful lawyer and lobbyist working on behalf of a major agribusiness petitioning the body to approve the addition of a synthetic nutraceutical for use in organics. That board member played an instrumental role in publicly advocating for the addition of the material on the National List of approved substances in organics. Mr. McEvoy is accused of not taking any action to investigate the allegation of this inappropriate outside influence on a FACA board.
2. In the past, under FACA rules, the USDA afforded the National Organic Standards Board the authority to set its own procedures for conduct of the board’s work. This was done by empowering a Policy and Procedures Subcommittee of the NOSB. The byproduct of their work resulted in a draft of a Policy and Procedure Manual (PPM), which was publicly noticed in the Federal Register and opened to comment by industry stakeholders and other citizens. After the draft was refined, it was officially approved and adopted by the USDA.

After Mr. McEvoy took the reins at the NOP, he threw out the PPM and arbitrarily and capriciously changed many of the rules, including how synthetic materials are reviewed by the board. This was done without notice to the NOSB or publication, for comment, in the Federal Register. He also disbanded the Policy and Procedure Subcommittee, which was later reestablished after wholesale criticism from the organic community.

“Actions by the NOP over the last couple of years have caused a slipping of organic integrity and a devaluing of the organic seal,” stated Dr. Barry Flamm. He added, “The first step for recovery would be to restore the 8/12 version of the Policy and Procedure Manual, including the vital sunset procedures. The organic community should be united on this, not at war—

that makes no sense!”

Dr. Flamm is uniquely qualified to comment on the alleged illegalities in Mr. McEvoy’s unilateral changes to the NOSB’s procedures. In addition to being a past chairman of the NOSB, Dr. Flamm also chaired its Policy and Procedure Subcommittee. This subcommittee authored, in collaboration with industry stakeholders and the public, the codified PPM that Mr. McEvoy threw out. Dr. Flamm currently sits on the board of directors of The Cornucopia Institute.

Violating the Intent of Congress (the Organic Foods Production Act)

1. Congress explicitly gave the NOSB the authority to choose outside, independent scientists to advise the board in their decision-making concerning potentially approving synthetic ingredients or farm inputs. Often, these synthetics were approved for temporary use until organic alternatives could be developed. Since the NOSB is not a scientific body, Congress recognized the fact that they would need well-informed and unbiased advice.

However, the USDA, instead of the board, has been selecting the contractors and scientists who are doing the reviews. An in-depth analysis by The Cornucopia Institute, published in [The Organic Watergate](#), outlined that, instead of impartial academics, all too often the contracted outside reviewers were current or former agribusiness executives or consultants to *Big Food* interests.

Under Mr. McEvoy, the solution to the documented conflicts of interest was not to do away with the perceived conflicts, or to respect the congressional intent by allowing the NOSB to choose their own advisers, but rather to make the names of the scientists authoring the Technical Reviews a secret from the public. Now, neither Cornucopia nor other industry stakeholders, or even the NOSB members themselves, can determine if the authors are professionally qualified to perform review functions or if conflicts of interest exist.

2. Mr. McEvoy has also been accused of being too cozy with the industry’s leading lobby group, the Organic Trade Association, and with the certifiers themselves, which he is charged with overseeing.

3. As an example, subsequent to the filing of the “flyover” complaint against 13 organic concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs), Mr. McEvoy appeared at a national meeting of accredited certifying agencies (ACAs). Instead of articulating the department’s intent to thoroughly examine Cornucopia’s formal legal complaints, he coached the certifiers on damage control issues in case of media inquiries concerning what he referred to as “their clients.”

The Age of Enforcement or Sweetheart Deals for Major Agribusinesses?

In addition to the 13 legal [complaints](#) that Cornucopia has once again filed, which focus on allegedly illegally operated factory farms, there is a history under Mr. McEvoy of depending on certifiers to do the investigations when they themselves might be culpable of aiding and abetting violations of the organic standards.

Cornucopia, based on regulatory language, decided to refile their complaints against the certifiers since the regulations mandate that the NOP “shall” investigate all formal legal complaints involving *certifiers*; however, the regulations give the program discretion as to

whether or not to investigate complaints against *organic operations* themselves.

Based on FOIA documents obtained from the USDA, Mr. McEvoy has also been criticized for undue secrecy in the enforcement process of federal organic regulations. Not publicly releasing the names of operations found to have committed violations, the size of their individual fines, and what specifically the NOP has found them guilty of, has eliminated the deterrent effect upon other would-be scofflaws in the organic industry.

The program has also been accused of negotiating sweetheart deals with violators, signing a series of consent agreements, instead of imposing fines or banning them from organic commerce.

This cloak of secrecy has deprived the public of determining whether the NOP is doing an adequate job of enforcing the law.

An [Action Alert](#) from The Cornucopia Institute, with instructions on how to submit the proxy to Secretary Vilsack calling for the removal of National Organic Program direct Miles McEvoy, is available at: <http://www.cornucopia.org/2015/09/sign-the-proxy-letter-remove-current-usda-organic-management/>

Having trouble viewing this? [Click here for a web version.](#)

Read recent [Press Releases](#) from The Cornucopia Institute.

The Cornucopia Institute

is a nonprofit organization engaged in research and educational activities supporting the ecological principles and economic wisdom underlying sustainable and organic agriculture. Through research and investigations on agricultural and food issues, The Cornucopia Institute provides needed information to family farmers, consumers, stakeholders involved in the good food movement, and the media.

P.O. Box 126 Cornucopia, Wisconsin 54827

TEL: [608-625-2000](tel:608-625-2000) | FAX: [866-861-2214](tel:866-861-2214) | www.cornucopia.org

Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

From: [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#)
To: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#); [Bailey, Shayla - AMS](#); [Maloney, Wayne - AMS](#)
Subject: RE: Capital Press: Organic administrator faces backlash
Date: Thursday, October 22, 2015 10:36:07 AM
Attachments: [cp_response.docx](#)

Capital Press sent the attached questions along to AMS for response. I worked with Miles on the attached response that I will share with OC for review. Thanks!

Sam Jones-Ellard
 Public Affairs Specialist
 USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service
 (b) (6)

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From: Jones, Samuel - AMS
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2015 9:04 AM
To: Alonzo, Anne - AMS; Morris, Erin - AMS; Barnes, Rex - AMS; Summers, Bruce - AMS; Eckhouse, Sara - AMS
Subject: Capital Press: Organic administrator faces backlash

FYI...shared with Miles as well.

[Organic administrator faces backlash](#)

Many organic groups that once praised USDA deputy administrator Miles McEvoy are now fighting his policies in federal court.

When Miles McEvoy was put in charge of the USDA's National Organic Program in 2009, the appointment was strongly applauded by organic and environmental groups.

Six years later, some of those same organizations are facing off against McEvoy in federal court over his administration of the program.

While the criticisms of his policies are numerous, most boil down to the allegation that McEvoy has weakened independent oversight of the program to make life easier for large agribusiness firms.

"There is a decisive split in the organic community and McEvoy is right in the middle of it," said Mark Kastel, co-founder of the Cornucopia Institute, an organic watchdog group, who once praised the deputy administrator as "a true believer, not a PR figurehead."

Prior to joining USDA, McEvoy was instrumental in shaping the organic inspection program at the Washington State Department of Agriculture and was involved in launching other organic programs and organizations.

"I don't know if we had higher expectations than McEvoy deserved or if he changed," Kastel says now.

A spokesperson for USDA said the agency "values and has faith in Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy's leadership of the National Organic Program."

The program thoroughly investigates any complaints about non-compliance with organic protocols and it's inaccurate that USDA's internal auditors are investigating McEvoy or his department, as claimed by the Cornucopia Institute, the spokesperson said.

A major point of contention is McEvoy's decision to change the decision-making process for which synthetic substances are allowed to remain in organic production.

Traditionally, synthetic substances were removed from the list of approved organic materials unless two-thirds of the members of the National Organic Standards Board voted to retain them.

In 2013, the USDA changed the procedure so that two-thirds of the board must vote to remove a substance. In effect, a nine-person majority of the 15-member board can vote to remove a substance and its use would still be allowed.

Earlier this year, a lawsuit was filed against McEvoy and his superiors at USDA for allegedly violating administrative law by implementing the new rule without public comment.

Among the 14 plaintiffs were the Cornucopia Institute, the Organic Consumers Association and the environmental groups Center for Food Safety, Beyond Pesticides and Food & Water Watch.

A federal judge recently dismissed the case, ruling the plaintiffs lack legal standing to challenge the rule, but they will be allowed to re-file their complaint to correct the issues identified by the judge.

The dispute over synthetic materials is just one example of heavy-handedness during McEvoy's tenure at USDA, Kastel said.

Kastel said McEvoy has disregarded recommendations by NOSB to prohibit the use of nanotechnology and hydroponics in organic production, failed to sufficiently investigate large livestock farms for compliance with organic rules and concealed the identities of scientists who review the safety of materials.

It's possible that McEvoy is simply carrying out orders from USDA leaders, but he is implementing these policies with zeal and a "big smile on his face," Kastel said.

"We have a government agency operating by fiat," said Jay Feldman, executive director of Beyond Pesticides. "Miles just happens to be the man at the helm."

Beyond Pesticides is involved in another lawsuit against McEvoy and USDA that alleges the agency has unlawfully permitted compost that's contaminated with pesticides to be used in organic production.

A federal judge recently rejected USDA's motion to dismiss the case.

Feldman said the National Organic Program under the Bush administration ignored recommendations by NOSB but at least followed procedures that allowed for public input on policies.

The situation under the Obama administration is "clearly worse. It's a clear violation of process and law," he said. "This is just bad for business because it undercuts public trust."

It appears that McEvoy is acting at the behest of large corporations that want to capitalize on the growing popularity of organics, said Barry Flamm, a former chairman of the NOSB who once considered McEvoy a "breath of fresh air."

"Organic has grown. It has become a money-maker," said Flamm.

McEvoy's policies seem aimed at removing obstacles to the way he wants to run the National Organic Program, such as when he disbanded a key policy-setting committee, stripped the NOSB of the ability to

set its own agenda and otherwise undermined the board's authority.

"I was totally shocked, surprised and angry," Flamm said. "They really cut back on the public transparency. All these changes were made unilaterally."

#

1) The voting procedures for the sunset of synthetic materials were changed in violation of administrative law to make it easier to keep such materials on the organic list.

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

2) Similarly, the agency has allowed the use of contaminated compost in violation of administrative law.

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

3) Mr. McEvoy has sought to undermine the authority of NOSB to set its own agenda and influence NOP policy by disregarding recommendations or disbanding/replacing committees that set policy.

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

1. (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]
2. (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]
3. (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]
4. (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]
5. (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]
6. (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]
7. (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]
8. (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative

4) Mr. McEvoy is motivated by pressure to appease large agribusiness elements in the organic industry and has reduced transparency in the NOP.

(b)(5) Deliberative

- (b)(5) Deliberative

- (b)(5) Deliberative

- (b)(5) Deliberative

- (b)(5) Deliberative

From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#)
Cc: [Walker, Natosha - AMS](#)
Subject: RE: SES Accomplishments
Date: Wednesday, August 24, 2016 2:22:28 PM
Attachments: [McEvoy-2016Accomplishments.docx](#)

Sorry. I forgot to send this yesterday.

Miles

From: Morris, Erin - AMS
Sent: Tuesday, August 02, 2016 4:21 PM
To: AMS - All Deputy Administrators <AllDeputyAdministrators@ams.usda.gov>
Subject: SES Accomplishments

All,

As I mentioned in staff earlier this week, Elanor's accomplishments are due to MRP at the beginning of September. Therefore, we need them from all of the SES no later than August 23rd. Please note that the template we are required to use has been slightly modified. Please see the attached document and carefully read all of the instructions. The template that we must use is also imbedded in this document. You will be given an opportunity to modify your accomplishments before they are sent to the PRB, but what you send us on the 23rd should be as close to final as possible so that we can utilize them to develop Elanor's accomplishments. When you submit them, please send them to me and cc Natosha Walker. If you or your staff have any questions, please let me know.

Thanks,

Erin

Erin Morris
Associate Administrator/
Chief Operating Officer
USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Room 3068

(b) (6)

SES Performance Accomplishments Report – FY 2016

McEvoy, Miles V.	Deputy Administrator	AMS National Organic Program
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Critical Element 1 – Leading Change (Weight 15%):

(b) (6)

Critical Element 2 – Leading People (Weight 30%):

(b) (6)

Critical Element 3 – Business Acumen (Weight 10%):

(b) (6)

Critical Element 4 – Building Coalitions (Weight 10%):

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Critical Element 5 – Results Driven (Weight 35%):

Performance Requirement 1 – Working Across AMS Programs: (b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 2 – Cultural Transformation: (b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 3 – Protect Integrity of Organic Products:

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 4 – Support Organic Market Development:

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 5 – Information Technology:

(b) (6)
(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 6: Support AMS Signature Process Improvements:

(b) (6)
(b) (6)

Text below this point is template ST/SL text that cannot be deleted.

Choose an item. **Performance Accomplishments Report – FY 2016**

Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Element 1 - Choose an item.: Click here to enter text.		
Element 2 - Choose an item.: Click here to enter text.		
Element 3 - Choose an item.: Click here to enter text.		
Element 4 - Choose an item.: Click here to enter text.		
Optional Critical Element(s) : Click here to enter text.		

Choose an item. **Performance Accomplishments Report – FY 2016**

Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
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Element 1 – Choose an item.: Accomplishments for Element 1 – Table Format

Exceeds	Met	Did Not Meet	Performance Goal/Measure	Provide a brief and concise statement explaining how the result exceeded the goal/measure or why it was not met.
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Element 2 – Choose an item.: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Element 3 – Choose an item.: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Element 4 – Choose an item.: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Optional Critical Element(s): [Click here to enter text.](#)

From: [Swann, Wanda - AMS](#) on behalf of [Alonzo, Anne - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: Performance Review (Miles McEvoy)

Deputies and Staff Directors,

Over the next few weeks, we'll be scheduling your performance reviews. The available time slots are listed below—please send your first and second choice selections to Natosha and Wanda. Our goal is to have all reviews completed no later than October 23rd. If none of the times listed below work for your schedule, please let me know.

Thanks,

Erin

Erin Morris
Associate Administrator/Chief Operating Officer
USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service

(b) (6)
Erin.Morris@ams.usda.gov <mailto:Erin.Morris@ams.usda.gov>

From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#)
Cc: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#)
Subject: mid-year accomplishments
Date: Monday, March 16, 2015 12:17:54 PM
Attachments: [Miles-MidYr-2015.docx](#)

Miles V McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program

Miles McEvoy – Mid-Year Accomplishments

Leading Change

- (b) (6)
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Leading People

- (b) (6)
-
-

Business Acumen

- (b) (6)
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Building Coalitions

- (b) (6)
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Results Driven

- (b) (6)
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(b) (6)

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From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)
Subject: final draft of accomplishments
Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2015 6:35:59 PM
Attachments: [SES 2015 Accomp - McEvoy v2.docx](#)

Thanks so much for your help!

Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

FY 2015 Senior Executive Service (SES) Accomplishment Report
Miles McEvoy - Deputy Administrator, AMS National Organic Program

Critical Element 1. Leading Change

Weight:
15%

- (b) (6)
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Critical Element 2. Leading People

Weight:
30%

- (b) (6)
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Critical Element 3. Business Acumen

Weight:
10%

(b) (6)

Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions

**Weight:
10%**

(b) (6)

Critical Element 5. Results Driven – Performance Requirements

**Weight:
35%**

Performance Requirement 1: Working Across AMS Programs:

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 2: Cultural Transformation

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

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Performance Requirement 3: Protect the Integrity of Organic Products

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

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Performance Requirement 4: Support Organic Market Development

(b) (6)

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(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 5: Information Technology

(b) (6)

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(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 6: Support AMS Signature Process Improvements

(b) (6)

-
-
-

(b) (6)

From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#)
Cc: [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)
Subject: RE: Capital Press Inquiry
Date: Thursday, October 22, 2015 10:03:13 AM
Attachments: [NOSB improvements.docx](#)

See attached

From: Jones, Samuel - AMS
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2015 8:53 AM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Cc: Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: RE: Capital Press Inquiry

We could [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative

[REDACTED] Thanks.

[Organic administrator faces backlash](#)

Many organic groups that once praised USDA deputy administrator Miles McEvoy are now fighting his policies in federal court.

When Miles McEvoy was put in charge of the USDA's National Organic Program in 2009, the appointment was strongly applauded by organic and environmental groups.

Six years later, some of those same organizations are facing off against McEvoy in federal court over his administration of the program.

While the criticisms of his policies are numerous, most boil down to the allegation that McEvoy has weakened independent oversight of the program to make life easier for large agribusiness firms.

"There is a decisive split in the organic community and McEvoy is right in the middle of it," said Mark Kastel, co-founder of the Cornucopia Institute, an organic watchdog group, who once praised the deputy administrator as "a true believer, not a PR figurehead."

Prior to joining USDA, McEvoy was instrumental in shaping the organic inspection program at the Washington State Department of Agriculture and was involved in launching other organic programs and organizations.

"I don't know if we had higher expectations than McEvoy deserved or if he changed," Kastel says now.

A spokesperson for USDA said the agency "values and has faith in Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy's leadership of the National Organic Program."

The program thoroughly investigates any complaints about non-compliance with organic protocols and it's inaccurate that USDA's internal auditors are investigating McEvoy or his department, as claimed by the Cornucopia Institute, the spokesperson said.

A major point of contention is McEvoy's decision to change the decision-making process for which

synthetic substances are allowed to remain in organic production.

Traditionally, synthetic substances were removed from the list of approved organic materials unless two-thirds of the members of the National Organic Standards Board voted to retain them.

In 2013, the USDA changed the procedure so that two-thirds of the board must vote to remove a substance. In effect, a nine-person majority of the 15-member board can vote to remove a substance and its use would still be allowed.

Earlier this year, a lawsuit was filed against McEvoy and his superiors at USDA for allegedly violating administrative law by implementing the new rule without public comment.

Among the 14 plaintiffs were the Cornucopia Institute, the Organic Consumers Association and the environmental groups Center for Food Safety, Beyond Pesticides and Food & Water Watch.

A federal judge recently dismissed the case, ruling the plaintiffs lack legal standing to challenge the rule, but they will be allowed to re-file their complaint to correct the issues identified by the judge.

The dispute over synthetic materials is just one example of heavy-handedness during McEvoy's tenure at USDA, Kastel said.

Kastel said McEvoy has disregarded recommendations by NOSB to prohibit the use of nanotechnology and hydroponics in organic production, failed to sufficiently investigate large livestock farms for compliance with organic rules and concealed the identities of scientists who review the safety of materials.

It's possible that McEvoy is simply carrying out orders from USDA leaders, but he is implementing these policies with zeal and a "big smile on his face," Kastel said.

"We have a government agency operating by fiat," said Jay Feldman, executive director of Beyond Pesticides. "Miles just happens to be the man at the helm."

Beyond Pesticides is involved in another lawsuit against McEvoy and USDA that alleges the agency has unlawfully permitted compost that's contaminated with pesticides to be used in organic production.

A federal judge recently rejected USDA's motion to dismiss the case.

Feldman said the National Organic Program under the Bush administration ignored recommendations by NOSB but at least followed procedures that allowed for public input on policies.

The situation under the Obama administration is "clearly worse. It's a clear violation of process and law," he said. "This is just bad for business because it undercuts public trust."

It appears that McEvoy is acting at the behest of large corporations that want to capitalize on the growing popularity of organics, said Barry Flamm, a former chairman of the NOSB who once considered McEvoy a "breath of fresh air."

"Organic has grown. It has become a money-maker," said Flamm.

McEvoy's policies seem aimed at removing obstacles to the way he wants to run the National Organic Program, such as when he disbanded a key policy-setting committee, stripped the NOSB of the ability to set its own agenda and otherwise undermined the board's authority.

"I was totally shocked, surprised and angry," Flamm said. "They really cut back on the public transparency. All these changes were made unilaterally."

###

Sam Jones-Ellard
Public Affairs Specialist
USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service

(b) (6)

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From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2015 8:25 PM
To: Jones, Samuel - AMS
Cc: Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: Re: Capital Press Inquiry

I'm (b)(5) Deliberative

Miles V McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
USDA National Organic Program

On Oct 21, 2015, at 8:11 PM, "Jones, Samuel - AMS" <Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Thank you!

Sam Jones-Ellard
Public Affairs Specialist
USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service
(b) (6)

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From: Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2015 8:00 PM
To: Jones, Samuel - AMS; McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Subject: Re: Capital Press Inquiry

Just as a first pass, Here's my try on a response to highlighted question.

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

On Oct 21, 2015, at 7:45 PM, "Jones, Samuel - AMS" <Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Yes. Miles mentioned he was reviewing so (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]. Thanks!

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 21, 2015, at 7:41 PM, Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
<Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Sorry, I lost the bubble. (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

On Oct 21, 2015, at 1:07 PM, "Jones, Samuel - AMS"
<Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

I added stuff in. (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted] Thanks!

1) The voting procedures for the sunset of synthetic materials were changed in violation of administrative law to make it easier to keep such materials on the organic list.

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

2) Similarly, the agency has allowed the use of contaminated compost in violation of administrative law.

(b)(5) Deliberative

3) Mr. McEvoy has sought to undermine the authority of NOSB to set its own agenda and influence NOP policy by disregarding recommendations or disbanding/replacing committees that set policy.

4) Mr. McEvoy is motivated by pressure to appease large agribusiness elements in the organic industry and has reduced transparency in the NOP.

(b)(5) Deliberative

- (b)(5) Deliberative
- (b)(5) Deliberative
- (b)(5) Deliberative

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- (b)(5) Deliberative

5) I am assuming that Mr. McEvoy will disagree with these characterizations. If so, why does he believe groups like Cornucopia Institute and Beyond Pesticides, which previously praised him, are now so critical?

(b)(5) Deliberative

Sam Jones-Ellard
Public Affairs Specialist
USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service
(b) (6)

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From: Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2015 12:32 PM
To: Rakola, Betsy - OSEC; Jones, Samuel - AMS
Cc: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Subject: RE: Capital Press Inquiry

Here are the current accomplishments.

From: Rakola, Betsy - OSEC
Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2015 11:43 AM
To: Jones, Samuel - AMS
Cc: McEvoy, Miles - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: Re: Capital Press Inquiry

Seems like (b)(5) Deliberative

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative

On q 3, I think (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Betsy Rakola
Organic Policy Advisor, USDA Agricultural
Marketing Service

On Oct 21, 2015, at 11:37 AM, Jones, Samuel -
AMS <Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Hi all,

In addition to the most recent
cleared statement, Capital Press
sent along the questions below.
They need responses by 3PM
today. Mind taking a look and
seeing if there is anything else
we should provide? Thanks so
much.

1) The voting procedures for the
sunset of synthetic materials
were changed in violation of
administrative law to make it
easier to keep such materials on
the organic list.

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
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[Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

2) Similarly, the agency has allowed the use of contaminated compost in violation of administrative law.

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

3) Mr. McEvoy has sought to undermine the authority of NOSB to set its own agenda and influence NOP policy by disregarding recommendations or disbanding/replacing committees that set policy.

4) Mr. McEvoy is motivated by pressure to appease large agribusiness elements in the organic industry and has reduced transparency in the NOP.

5) I am assuming that Mr. McEvoy will disagree with these characterizations. If so, why does he believe groups like Cornucopia Institute and Beyond Pesticides, which previously praised him, are now so critical?

Should not answer.

Sam Jones-Ellard
Public Affairs Specialist
USDA | Agricultural Marketing
Service

(b) (6)

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[read our stories on the USDA blog.](#)*

From: [Bailey, Shayla - AMS](#)
To: [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#)
Cc: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#)
Subject: Fwd: Stop the bullying
Date: Monday, October 19, 2015 9:59:17 PM
Attachments: [Cornucopia Complaints.docx](#)
[ATT00001.htm](#)
[Chronology.docx](#)
[ATT00002.htm](#)

Here is the draft Miles provided tonight. Please (b)(5) Deliberative

--Shayla

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "McEvoy, Miles - AMS" <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>
Date: October 19, 2015 at 9:16:23 PM EDT
To: "Alonzo, Anne - AMS" <Anne.Alonzo@ams.usda.gov>, "Barnes, Rex - AMS" <Rex.Barnes@ams.usda.gov>, "Eckhouse, Sara - AMS" <Sara.Eckhouse@ams.usda.gov>, "Rakola, Betsy - OSEC" <Betsy.Rakola@osec.usda.gov>, "Herrick, Matthew - OC" <Matthew.Herrick@oc.usda.gov>, "Morris, Erin - AMS" <erin.morris@ams.usda.gov>, "Bailey, Shayla - AMS" <Shayla.Bailey@ams.usda.gov>
Cc: "Tucker, Jennifer - AMS" <Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov>
Subject: Stop the bullying

Attached is some background on the Cornucopia complaints including details of AMS-NOP's review of the complaints, analysis of the photographic evidence, and how we consulted with AMS accredited certifiers on the compliance of these operations with the USDA organic regulations. You will see that AMS-NOP conducted a thorough review and determined that there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations of these certified organic operations.

(b)(5) Deliberative

Thanks,

Miles V McEvoy

Deputy Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program

Cornucopia Complaints

Talking Points

- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

Brief Chronology

(b)(5) Deliberative	(b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
	(b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
	(b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
	(b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
	(b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

(b)(5)
Deliberative

SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

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	(b)(5) Deliberative	
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From: [Taylor, Jameelah - AMS](#) on behalf of [Alonzo, Anne - AMS](#)
To: [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#); [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: Miles McEvoy - Performance Review

From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#); [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#)
Subject: FY16 Performance Plan
Date: Thursday, October 22, 2015 3:58:17 PM
Attachments: [FY2016 SES plan - mmcevoy.docx](#)

Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

SES Performance Management System Executive Performance Agreement



Part 1. Consultation. <i>I have reviewed this plan and have been consulted on its development.</i>						
Executive's Name (<i>Last, First, MI</i>): McEvoy, Miles, V				Appraisal Pd: 10/01/15 –9/30/16		
Executive's Signature:				Date:		
Title: Associate Administrator				Organization:		
Rating Official's Name (<i>Last, First, MI</i>): Barnes, Rex				CA <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> LT/LE <input type="checkbox"/>		
Rating Official's Signature:				Date:		
Part 2. Progress Review						
Executive's Signature:				Date:		
Rating Official's Signature:				Date:		
Reviewing Official's Signature (<i>Optional</i>):				Date:		
Part 3. Summary Rating						
Initial Summary Rating	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5 Outstanding	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 Exceeds Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 Minimally Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 Unsatisfactory	
Rating Official's Name (<i>Last, First, MI</i>):						
Rating Official's Signature:				Date:		
Executive's Signature:				Date:		
Reviewing Official's Signature (<i>Second-Level Official's Concurrence</i>):				Date:		
Higher Level Review (if applicable)						
<input type="checkbox"/> I request a higher level review. Executive's Initials:				Date:		
Higher Level Review Completed <input type="checkbox"/>				Date:		
Higher Level Reviewer Signature:						
Performance Review Board Recommendation		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
PRB Chair Signature:				Date:		
Annual Summary Rating		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
Appointing Authority Signature:				Date:		
Part 4. Derivation Formula and Calculation of Annual Summary Rating						
Critical Element	Element Rating		Weight	Score		Summary Level Ranges
	Initial	Final (if changed)		Initial	Final (if changed)	
1. Leading Change			15%			475-500 = Level 5 400-474 = Level 4 300-399 = Level 3 200-299 = Level 2 Any CE rated Level 1 = Level 1
2. Leading People			30%			
3. Business Acumen			10%			
4. Building Coalitions			10%			
5. Results Driven			35%			
Total			100%			

Part 5. Critical Elements

- **Performance Standards for Critical Elements** (The performance standard for each critical element is specified below; examples for the top three performance levels can be found in the system description).

Level 5: The executive demonstrates exceptional performance, fostering a climate that sustains excellence and optimizes results in the executive's organization, agency, department or government-wide. This represents the highest level of executive performance, as evidenced by the extraordinary impact on the achievement of the organization's mission. The executive is an inspirational leader and is considered a role model by agency leadership, peers, and employees. The executive continually contributes materially to or spearheads agency efforts that address or accomplish important agency goals, consistently achieves expectations at the highest level of quality possible, and consistently handles challenges, exceeds targets, and completes assignments ahead of schedule at every step along the way.
- **Level 4:** The executive demonstrates a very high level of performance beyond that required for successful performance in the executive's position and scope of responsibilities. The executive is a proven, highly effective leader who builds trust and instills confidence in agency leadership, peers, and employees. The executive consistently exceeds established performance expectations, timelines, or targets, as applicable.
- **Level 3:** The executive demonstrates the high level of performance expected and the executive's actions and leadership contribute positively toward the achievement of strategic goals and meaningful results. The executive is an effective, solid, and dependable leader who delivers high-quality results based on measures of quality, quantity, efficiency, and/or effectiveness within agreed upon timelines. The executive meets and often exceeds challenging performance expectations established for the position.
- **Level 2:** The executive's contributions to the organization are acceptable in the short term but do not appreciably advance the organization towards achievement of its goals and objectives. While the executive generally meets established performance expectations, timelines and targets, there are occasional lapses that impair operations and/or cause concern from management. While showing basic ability to accomplish work through others, the executive may demonstrate limited ability to inspire subordinates to give their best efforts or to marshal those efforts effectively to address problems characteristic of the organization and its work.
- **Level 1:** In repeated instances, the executive demonstrates performance deficiencies that detract from mission goals and objectives. The executive generally is viewed as ineffectual by agency leadership, peers, or employees. The executive does not meet established performance expectations/timelines/targets and fails to produce – or produces unacceptable – work products, services, or outcomes.

Element Rating Level Points

Level 5 = 5 points
Level 4 = 4 points
Level 3 = 3 points
Level 2 = 2 points
Level 1 = 0 points

Critical Element 1. Leading Change**Weight: 15%**

Develops and implements an organizational vision that integrates key organizational and program goals, priorities, values, and other factors. Assesses and adjusts to changing situations, implementing innovative solutions to make organizational improvements, ranging from incremental improvements to major shifts in direction or approach, as appropriate. Balances change and continuity; continually strives to improve service and program performance; creates a work environment that encourages creative thinking, collaboration, and transparency; and maintains program focus, even under adversity.

Agency-Specific Performance Requirements

Demonstrates a focus on ensuring civil rights compliance and commitment in the workplace.

Leads organizational change and motivates managers to incorporate vision, strategic planning and results-driven management in the full range of the organization's activities. Addresses programmatic requirements as necessary to motivate and lead the organization. Strategies are designed and implemented to improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency, and to meet program goals. Program goals are aligned to agency strategic plans and accomplished within specified timeframes.

Interests of the organization, employee, and customer/stakeholder are well balanced and priorities are adjusted in response to changing demands. Meets management initiative goals as imposed by regulatory/oversight agencies (e.g. Office of Management and Budget and Office of Personnel Management), and the Department or agency.

Leads organization in supporting the Secretary's initiative to improve Departmental responses to important inquiries of USDA's partners, customers, and Legislative Officials and for improved release of information to the press and public. As requested, reports activities and process improvements to the Department's Office of Executive Secretariat, Office of Congressional Relations, and Office of Communications.

Coordinates with business units to align their individual plans and identify clear measures of accomplishment. Encourages the development and implementation of initiatives or innovative solutions to enhance/improve procedures or services. Encourages employees to take risk, think creatively and work cooperatively with others in the program and agency.

Shares information and goals/vision in a way that enhances transparency and encourages collaboration.

Applicable milestones from the USDA Civil Rights Plan and Strategic Plan are incorporated into the program or staff office strategic and annual performance plans. Applicable goals and objectives related to accountability, program delivery, outreach, workforce diversity, employment practices, resources and structure, performance, administrative activities, communications and reporting are met in accordance with Department and agency policy.

Develops and implements outreach strategies that enhance the delivery of agricultural services and assistance to underserved populations. Demonstrates understanding of and commitment to equal employment opportunity and ensures fair and equitable program delivery. Strengthens stakeholder relationships by continually drafting, communicating, and delivering educational programs about the benefits and effectiveness of AMS services.

Ensures subordinate supervisors exercise effective managerial, communication and interpersonal skills to supervise and develop a diverse workforce.

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

Critical Element Rating – Leading Change Level 5 Level 4 Level 3 Level 2 Level 1**Critical Element 2. Leading People****Weight: 30%**

Designs and implements strategies that maximize employee potential, connects the organization horizontally and vertically, and fosters high ethical standards in meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals. Provides an inclusive workplace that fosters the development of others to their full potential; allows for full participation by all employees; facilitates collaboration, cooperation, and teamwork, and supports constructive resolution of conflicts. Ensures employee performance plans are aligned with the organization's mission and goals, that employees receive constructive feedback, and that employees are realistically appraised against clearly defined and communicated performance standards. Holds employees accountable for appropriate levels of performance and conduct. Seeks and considers employee input. Recruits, retains, and develops the talent needed to achieve a high quality, diverse workforce that reflects the nation, with the skills needed to accomplish organizational performance objectives while supporting workforce diversity, workplace inclusion, and equal employment policies and programs.

Agency-Specific Performance Requirements

Creates an environment where people from diverse backgrounds feel respected, recognized, and valued; actively fosters and maintains a work environment free of bullying, sexual harassment, and discrimination as prescribed by Departmental and Federal civil rights regulations and laws. In addition, implements strategies for addressing underrepresentation of minorities, women, and/or persons with disabilities within the workforce.

Maintains a positive organizational environment that fosters diversity, inclusion, innovation, initiative, open and honest communication, and teamwork among employees and peers. Within available resources, ensures employees have the tools and training to do their jobs.

Leads organization to set goals and track results for achieving workforce diversity, recruitment, and retention programs that will help to maximize the hiring and retention of highly qualified employees in underrepresented groups. Upon request by OHRM reports activities and progress towards workforce diversity achievements.

Seeks employee feedback to identify needs and expectations and considers employee perspective when making decisions affecting workforce or programs. Increases employee participation in feedback opportunities such as the employee survey. Analyze feedback and develop strategies to address areas of opportunity.

Recruits and selects new employees based on organizational goals, budget considerations, and staffing needs. When filling a position, the supervisor engages and collaborates with HR to ensure skills required for the job are identified, posting of the job vacancy is accurate, and assists in identifying contacts for diverse locations or organizations for recruiting purposes. Participates as needed with HR in the proper screening of applications, and appropriate categorization of applicants based on qualifications.

Utilizes flexible hiring authorities when filling a vacancy (e.g., targeted disabilities, student employment, direct hire, appointing veterans, etc.) to ensure diversity in recruitment and hiring.

Successfully transitions new hires into the position by promptly providing an orientation into the workforce and establishing performance elements and standards. Supervisors provide ongoing feedback and coaching, and make appropriate use of the probationary period to assess the new hire's ability to perform in the position.

Encourages employees to participate in developmental assignments, details, mentoring and training programs, and other agency programs to develop and retain a highly qualified workforce. Closes competency/skills gap for mission critical positions.

Implements retention strategies that focus on key internal processes (e.g., work environment, employee orientation, executing Individual Development Plans for all employees--subject to bargaining obligations, coaching, development, and mentoring, etc.) that promote employee growth, supports the health of the workforce, and drive the future success of the organization's people and infrastructure. Closes competency/skills gap for mission critical positions.

Manages and controls attrition by developing best practices and retention strategies as well as by developing a succession plan. Assesses current workforce plans to ensure they are up-to-date in order to meet Program/Agency goals and objectives. Works with senior management officials and HR to comply with the workforce planning process as described in the Department's position management policy.

Develops employee performance plans within established timeframes and that align with Agency and Departmental goals and objectives. Communicates to employees how their work supports the Agency mission and strategic plan/initiatives. Employee performance plans contain clear, results-focused measures and ensures supervisors provide accurate and timely feedback to determine progress and success in meeting expectations. Employees are held accountable for their performance in meeting goals.

Ensures that performance plans, progress reviews, and appraisals of employees are conducted by the due dates established by the Department or Agency. Performance plans for each employee must include at least one critical element that is traceable to the agency's goals and objectives (e.g., Mission Results critical performance element). Provides ongoing feedback and coaching as demonstrated through performance feedback sessions as evidenced by 100% of employees receiving at least one feedback session at the midpoint of the rating period. Appraisals show a fair distribution in ratings among all employees.

Ensures appropriate action is taken to address performance problems in a manner that supports organizational goals and objectives. Ensures subordinate managers and supervisors adhere to the Agency performance management policy with regard to performance appraisal and employee recognition.

Performance and employee feedback data is used as an indicator of compliance and general satisfaction or needed improvement with regard to the planning, developing, monitoring, rating and rewarding of performance.

Utilizes the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) to identify and address issues related to employee engagement, development, and satisfaction. Target: Based on specific information collected from the 2014 FEVS, implements effective and measurable strategies to address FEVS scoring as applicable to my mission area, agency, and individual position.

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

<i>Critical Element Rating – Leading People</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
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Critical Element 3. Business Acumen**Weight: 10%**

Assesses, analyzes, acquires, and administers human, financial, material, and information resources in a manner that instills public trust and accomplishes the organization's mission. Uses technology to enhance processes and decision making. Executes the operating budget; prepares budget requests with justifications; and manages resources.

Agency-Specific Performance Requirements

Manages resources in a manner that fosters an environment that upholds civil rights standards and is inclusive of a diverse workforce.

Human, financial, material, and informational resources are effectively acquired and managed to achieve performance goals. Needs assessments are based on organizational goals and budget realities, and opportunities to reduce program and administrative costs are sought. Management control systems are established/maintained to monitor activities, identify problem areas, and initiate timely corrective action.

Explores new partnerships and innovative ways to carry out AMS mission with fewer resources. Leverages budget realities (diminishing resources) and best practices to remain efficient, effective, relevant and valued. Procures, develops and uses resources to efficiently and effectively support AMS programs.

Adjusts spending priorities such as travel, training, equipment purchases, and vacancies by improving business processes, adapting and innovating procedures in these areas.

Evaluates and develops fee schedules that encourage increased efficiency and cost reductions while maintaining high quality services. Develops a long term user fee plan that provides for future adjustments.

Continuously seeks to improve business processes, sharing those efforts with other programs to improve overall Department performance. Fully leverage the expertise and commitment of the workforce to meet challenges and the agency mission.

Uses technology innovation and organizational synergies to meet the needs of American agriculture.

Provides leadership to support Federal and USDA strategic sourcing efforts in support of the Blueprint for Stronger Service and USDA Strategic Plan FY2014-2018: Strategic Goal Number 5. Champions USDA's "Shared First" policy and ensures strategic goals are met or exceeded. Promotes fulfillment of the small business socio-economic goals of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization. Champions biobased and biopreferred policies and ensures compliance with applicable guidance and regulations.

As applicable, enhances data accuracy in all acquisition systems and ensures that contractor performance data is reported timely in the Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System (CPARS). Promotes the development of the acquisition workforce through adherence to federal and agency policies and effective hiring, training and development, and succession planning. Ensures acquisition processes comply with federal and departmental policy and regulations while maximizing taxpayer investment, minimizing agency risk, and optimizing customer value.

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

Critical Element Rating – Business Acumen

 Level 5

 Level 4

 Level 3

 Level 2

 Level 1

Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions**Weight: 10%**

Solicits and considers feedback from internal and external stakeholders or customers. Coordinates with appropriate parties to maximize input from the widest range of appropriate stakeholders to facilitate an open exchange of opinion from diverse groups and strengthen internal and external support. Explains, advocates, and expresses facts and ideas in a convincing manner and negotiates with individuals and groups internally and externally, as appropriate. Develops a professional network with other organizations and identifies the internal and external politics that affect the work of the organization.

Agency-Specific Performance Requirements

Utilizes outreach strategies to network with minority organizations and institutions, as well as, advocates for women, minorities, and/or persons with disabilities.

Ensures a high degree of responsiveness to organizational leadership, the public, and internal and external customers. Continuously reviews and monitors organizational performance to achieve agency mission results and considers the customer's point of view. Consults and collaborates and builds partnerships with agencies and other stakeholders, and takes decisive actions in accordance with law, regulation, and Department policy.

Systematically listens to customers and gathers their feedback, actively seeking to identify their needs and expectations, and effectively communicating those needs and expectations to employees. Ensures employees are prompt, professional, fair and responsible to the circumstances of individual customers to the extent permitted by law and regulation.

Collaborates with stakeholders to help them succeed, tell their story, and remain competitive in a global marketplace. Leverages the expertise and commitment of the workforce to meet the agency mission and future challenges.

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

Critical Element Rating – Building Coalitions Level 5 Level 4 Level 3 Level 2 Level 1

Critical Element 5. Results Driven				Weight: 35%		
<p>Agency Goals/Objectives for current FY: Must have at least 1 result (may have more than 5) This critical element includes specific performance requirements expected of the executive during the appraisal period, focusing on measurable outcomes from the strategic plan or other measurable outputs and outcomes clearly aligned to organizational goals and objectives. At a minimum, the performance plan will include performance requirements (including measures, targets, timelines, or quality descriptors, as appropriate) describing the range of performance at Level 3 for each result specified. It is recommended to also establish the threshold measures/targets for Levels 5 and 2.</p> <p>Alignment--cite relevant goals/objectives, page numbers, from the Strategic Plan, Congressional Budget Justification/Annual Performance Plan, or other organizational planning document in the designated section for each performance requirement specified.</p>						
<p>Performance Requirement 1: Working Across AMS Programs As applicable, SEs will be appraised on execution of AMS' civil rights plan.</p> <p>Work across AMS program areas and other agencies to provide seamless and comparable services to similar customers and to improve relations and agency-wide collaboration; improve programs, services, and business processes.</p>			<p>Strategic Alignment: -Departmental Blueprint for Stronger Service -AMS Strategic Goal 6</p>			
<i>Performance Requirement 1 Rating</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<p>Performance Requirement 2: Cultural Transformation Leads the organization to eliminate barriers to improve operational and service excellence in work-life and wellness, labor relations, process improvement, employee development, talent management, customer focus and community outreach, and hiring reform. Pursues workforce diversity through recruitment, outreach and employee development programs designed to enhance the hiring and retention of highly qualified employees from diverse backgrounds. Supports the strategic objectives and action items contained in the AMS Special Emphasis Assessment Plan.</p> <p>Exercises all of USDA's special hiring authorities designed to increase employment of veterans and individuals with disabilities and targeted disabilities.</p> <p>Actively engages in the transformation of USDA by supporting process improvements in the organization. Engage employees to transform USDA into a model agency.</p> <p>Ensures that activities and timeframes established in the AMS Cultural Transformation Act Plan are met by demonstrating support through allocation of resources and commitment of program area managers to support initiatives.</p>			<p>Strategic Alignment: -Secretary's Cultural Transformation Initiative -Secretary's Management Initiative 1</p>			
<i>Performance Requirement 2 Rating</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<p>Performance Requirement 3: Protect the Integrity of Organic Products Continue rigorous investigations of complaints of alleged violations. Ensure terms of trade arrangements are being met. Ensure complete and thorough audits of USDA accredited certifying agents.</p> <p>Address 90% of appeals cases received in FY 2015 through a decision, settlement, or closure, in less than 180 days.</p>			<p>Strategic Alignment: USDA Goal 1 AMS Strategic Goal 4</p>			

<p>Complete the investigation of 260 or more complaint cases during FY 2016.</p> <p>Work with AMS and USDA other government agencies to implement clear organic regulations, guidance, instructions and policy. Publish 1 proposed rule and 2 final guidance documents</p> <p>Support the work of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) to develop recommendations on organic standards. Support public engagement, transparency, and a fair process in the development of NOSB recommendations. Conduct one NOSB training session and two NOSB public meetings in FY 2016.</p> <p>Continue implementing sunset process by published federal register notice to renew 2016 sunset materials.</p>						
<i>Performance Requirement 3 Rating</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<p>Performance Requirement 4: Support organic market development Maintain organic integrity in a sound and sensible manner. Support affordable, accessible and attainable certification for all organic operations. Provide opportunities for new and beginning farmers to succeed in organic production and marketing. Provide training to certifiers, organic farmers and the organic trade on sound and sensible organic certification.</p> <p>Provide one in-person certifier training session that covers sound and sensible certification practices.</p> <p>Lead efforts to negotiate and finalize organic equivalence arrangements; successfully complete required peer assessments to maintain existing equivalency arrangements.</p> <p>Support projects that implement the USDA Organic Working Group (OWG) objectives for FY2016. All five OWG topic areas show measurable progress towards reaching their goals in supporting organic agriculture.</p>				<p>Strategic Alignment:</p> <p>USDA Goal 1</p> <p>AMS Strategic Goal 4</p>		
<i>Performance Requirement 4 Rating</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<p>Performance Requirement 5: Information Technology Work with certifiers to define and implement quality standards for the list of certified organic operations. Provide quarterly updates to the list of certified operations that includes updates on suspended, revoked and reinstated organic operations.</p> <p>Ensure that all certifiers provide data to the Organic Integrity Database.</p> <p>Build and generate dynamic reports and statistics from the Organic Integrity Database that support updated responses to data calls concerning number of certified operations, statistics for certified operations per state, and statistics related to adverse actions against operations.</p>				<p>Strategic Alignment:</p> <p>USDA Goal 1</p> <p>AMS Strategic Goal 4</p>		

<i>Performance Requirement 5 Rating</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
Rating Official Narrative: <i>(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)</i>					
Performance Requirement 6: Support AMS Signature Process Improvement Support the implementation of the AMS Signature Process Improvement Initiative to improve the effectiveness of the Agency's operations.			Departmental Blueprint for Stronger Service AMS Strategic Goal 6		
<i>Performance Requirement 5 Rating</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<i>Critical Element Rating – Results Driven</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1

Part 6: Summary Rating Narrative (Mandatory)

Part 7: Executive's Accomplishment Narrative (Mandatory)

Part 8: Agency Use

From: [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Cc: [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)
Subject: Miles2015.docx
Date: Thursday, March 12, 2015 10:39:28 AM
Attachments: [Miles2015.docx](#)

Hi Miles,

Attached is the accomplishment list you requested - I categorized the accomplishments according to the performance requirements we had for you last year.

Please let me know if you need anything further.

Thanks

Cheri

Performance Requirement 2: Protect the Integrity of Organic Products

- (b) (6)

Performance Requirement 3: Implement Sound and Sensible Certification Practices

- (b) (6)

Performance Requirement 4: Support Organic Market Development

- (b) (6)
-
-
-

Commented [CC-A1] 1/19
(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 5: Support public involvement

Performance Requirement 5: Information Technology

- (b) (6)

Building Coalitions

Leads Change

- (b) (6)
-

From: [Bradley, Mark - AMS](#)
To: trudy.bialic@pccsea.com
Cc: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Avila, Joan - AMS](#)
Subject: RE: complaints coming in
Date: Wednesday, May 21, 2014 3:10:49 PM

Hi Trudy,
I've requested a meeting on Miles' calendar as discussed for 3:00 pm DC time for tomorrow, May 22. I'll let you know if there are any changes due to schedule conflicts.
Nice talking to you...
Thanks,
Mark



Mark A. Bradley | Assistant to the Deputy Administrator | 202.690.0725 | FAX 202.205.7808 | Cell
(b) (6)
USDA – AMS – NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM | 1400 Independence Ave. SW | Washington, DC 20250
Organic Integrity from Farm to Table, Consumers Trust the Organic Label
Register to receive NOP Announcements - <http://bit.ly/NOPOrganicInsiderRegistration>

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Wednesday, May 21, 2014 6:48 AM
To: Bradley, Mark - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Cc: Avila, Joan - AMS
Subject: RE: complaints coming in

Mark – Please set up a conference call with Trudy to discuss. Thanks.

Miles V McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

From: Bradley, Mark - AMS
Sent: Monday, May 19, 2014 3:19 PM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: RE: complaints coming in

Miles – Jenny suggested (b)(5) Deliberative
...Thanks. Mark

Hi Trudy –

(b)(5) Deliberative
(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted text block]

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted text block]

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted text block]

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted text block]

Thanks,

Mark



Mark A. Bradley | Assistant to the Deputy Administrator | 202.690.0725 | FAX 202.205.7808 | Cell
(b) (6)

USDA – AMS – NATIONAL ORGANIC PROGRAM | 1400 Independence Ave. SW | Washington, DC 20250

Organic Integrity from Farm to Table, Consumers Trust the Organic Label

Register to receive NOP Announcements - <http://bit.ly/NOPOrganicInsiderRegistration>

From: Trudy Bialic [<mailto:trudy.bialic@pccsea.com>]
Sent: Friday, May 02, 2014 5:28 PM
To: Avila, Joan - AMS
Subject: RE: complaints coming in

Thank you, Joan,

I appreciate your reply and if possible, could use a bit more clarification to make it square with my reading of the Organic Food Production Act.

Your reply did not address the fact that OFPA gave *unique* authority and powers to the NOSB, unlike any other federal advisory board. No other advisory board to the federal government has the powers granted to NOSB by OFPA. It appears that USDA's attempt to refashion NOSB — to conform with how other advisory boards operate — breaches OFPA's intent and the letter of the law.

Yes, I am on NOP's email list to receive notice of public comment. PCC Natural Markets traditionally has commented on issues viewed as important to our membership. The "streamlined sunset review" is particularly troubling to us, and I wrote comments to NOP on that last fall, and had them resent for the spring meeting. (I have not attended the past several meetings due to some health issues that developed last fall.)

To allow any or all synthetics common to non-organic foods, unless 2/3 of NOSB votes to remove them, is clearly not what OFPA provided for. I would not have expected such a policy edict to come from Miles, our own state's former organic program manager, and it is very worrisome for the value of the organic seal that we fought for so hard.

I would be glad to review any supporting arguments or evidence for why the "streamlined sunset review process" is NOT contravening the OFPA mandate, if you could point me to it? Please advise.

Much obliged, take care,
Trudy

Trudy Bialic / Director, Public Affairs / PCC Natural Markets / Seattle, WA / (b) (6)

From: Avila, Joan - AMS [<mailto:Joan.Avila@ams.usda.gov>]
Sent: Friday, May 02, 2014 7:43 AM
To: Trudy Bialic
Subject: RE: complaints coming in

Dear Ms. Bialic:

We appreciate your email and we appreciate your perspective. Your input is very important to the work we do.

The reason why Mr. McEvoy co-chaired the meeting is because the USDA did recently adjust how it works with the National Organic Standards Board to be more consistent with how other federal advisory boards are managed. As NOP's deputy administrator, Miles McEvoy is responsible for making sure that NOSB meetings are run smoothly and effectively. At the Spring NOSB meeting, Miles opened the meeting and made sure that public participation was balanced and fair. This is a normal part of how federal advisory boards are managed, and supports the public meeting process in a positive way.

Public comments are a very important source of feedback for us. Are you signed up on our email list to receive public comment notices? If so – wonderful – then we encourage you to use those opportunities to get your views heard – they are very important to us. If no, and you are interested

in doing signing up, please go to www.ams.usda.gov/nop.

Thank you for your feedback.

Joan F. Avila, Secretary
National Organic Program
Agricultural Marketing Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Stop 0268, Room 2648-S
Washington, D.C. 20250-0268
Joan.avila@ams.usda.gov

(b) (6)

From: Trudy Bialic [<mailto:trudy.bialic@pccsea.com>]
Sent: Thursday, May 01, 2014 6:24 PM
To: Avila, Joan - AMS
Subject: FW: complaints coming in
Importance: High

Hi Joan,

Are you able to address the question below?

Thank you,

Trudy Bialic / Director, Public Affairs / PCC Natural Markets / Seattle, WA / (b) (6)

From: Trudy Bialic
Sent: Thursday, May 01, 2014 3:01 PM
To: Miles McEvoy (AGR) (Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov)
Subject: complaints coming in
Importance: High

Dear Miles,

I expect your hands are full at the moment. You should know, however, we are being rained on here in your home state, getting e-mails and calls about what's going on at the San Antonio meeting.

They pointedly are aghast at your self-appointment as co-chair and the reversal of the sunset rule, demanding PCC "do something" about them.

I always ask questions before weighing evidence. My question is whether you believe these are appropriate actions, or whether USDA/AMS has ordered them? Where did these actions originate?

Take care,

Trudy Bialic

Director, Public Affairs
PCC Natural Markets
Seattle, Wash. 98105

(b) (6)

From: [Bradley Mark - AMS](#)
 To: [McEvoy Miles - AMS](#); [Tucker Jennifer - AMS](#); [Bailey Melissa - AMS](#); [Courtney Cheri - AMS](#); [Michael Matthew - AMS](#)
 Subject: FW: COMMENTARY: Orwell Would Be Proud: Animal Farm Becomes Organic
 Date: Friday, May 23, 2014 8:19:56 AM

The latest missive from Mr. Kastel....FYI only.

Share

Cornucopia Institute

MAY
22,
2014

Mr. Orwell Would Be Proud: Animal Farm Becomes Certified Organic

<http://www.cornucopia.org/2014/05/mr-orwell-proud-animal-farm-becomes-certified-organic/>

In a move truly deserving of the comment "You can't make this stuff up," illustrating the widening divide in the organic community the USDA's National Organic Program announced this week that they would require public interest groups, educators, and the public to get their blessing before using the USDA organic logo in media coverage.

Maybe this edict isn't entirely Orwellian, and maybe it's not Stalinic, but it sure smacks of how the press operates under Premier Vladimir Putin.

After months of pointed criticism, and press coverage, of a series of allegedly illegal power grabs by the USDA, stripping authority Congress vested in the advisory panel it created, the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB), the USDA has figured out a way to resolve the dispute — control the message.

Their quarterly newsletter, distributed this week, recapped the recent NOSB meeting in San Antonio, Texas. It was one of the most contentious meetings in the history of the organic movement. It included a protest that initially shut down the proceedings and a parliamentary challenge to the illegal power grab by NOP staff director Miles McEvoy.

The protest ended after police came in for an arrest and the challenge, under Roberts Rules of Order, endorsed by a number of board members, only ended after a long adjournment where Mr. McEvoy conferred with his staff (and superiors and lawyers in Washington by phone) and subsequently threatened to shut the entire meeting down and send everyone home if the parliamentary motion challenging his authority wasn't withdrawn.

But if you read the USDA's [Organic Integrity Quarterly](#) you might question the "accuracy" of their story. There's not a word of any dispute at the meeting even though, besides the protests, numerous citizens and public interest groups, in formal written and oral testimony, condemned the USDA's actions.

And this meeting came on the heels of [a letter](#) written to USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack by the two primary authors of the Organic Foods Production Act, the law that gave the USDA the authority to establish the NOP in the first place. Senator Patrick Leahy and Representative Peter DeFazio clearly stated that the USDA moves were a violation of congressional intent and requested their immediate reversal.

Not a word about any of this in the USDA's quarterly organic newsletter.

But now the USDA wants to read anything The Cornucopia Institute, a corporate and governmental watchdog in the organic arena, or any other public interest group intends to publish if we want to use the USDA organic logo. This logo is owned by the citizens of the United States of America.

Now don't get me wrong. Their advice to commercial interests, to have their certifiers review labels where they might use the USDA seal, for compliance with the law, is sound. But stifling constitutionally protected free speech? No, that's a gross overstep of power.

Cornucopia's Board President, a third-generation certified organic farmer from Durand, Wisconsin, Helen Kees, after reading his newsletter instructed Cornucopia staff to "Give 'em hell" and included a referral to an experienced constitutional lawyer. We doubt it that will be necessary. Someone at the USDA will be wise enough to not kick that hornet's nest.

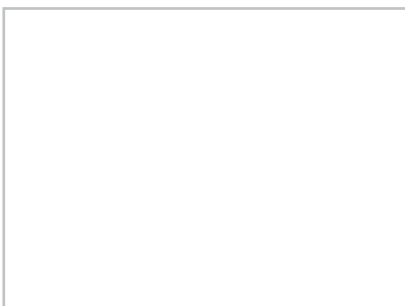
The former Soviet comic Yakov Smirnoff recently [appeared](#) on National Public Radio. He talked about how his standup routine was censored before he immigrated to the U.S. NPR's Bob Garfield said, "He wasn't making it up, well, except for the name, 'Department of Jokes,' which was actually the Humor Department of the Censorship Apparatus within the Soviet Ministry of Culture."

So I guess I should have submitted his commentary for Mr. McEvoy to refer to his "Department of Sanitation" within the USDA Ministry of Culture.

The divide between the corporate sector/USDA and traditional organic agriculturalists is actually no laughing matter.

In addition to Mr. Leahy and Mr. DeFazio, [virtually every public interest group](#), that monitors the organic industry, along with consumers and farmers, called for the reversal of the heavy-handed moves by the USDA alleging that they are going to undercut the credibility of the organic label. Only powerful industry interests are siding with the regulators.

And who is on the other side? The clout-heavy industry lobby group, Organic Trade Association, United Natural Foods Incorporated (the largest organic food distributor), Stonyfield and the nation's largest organic certifier, CCOF.



USDA Secretary Vilsack addresses the Organic Trade Association's Policy Conference on May 21. Deputy Administrator McEvoy seated left-center. Source: OTA

More recently, and disturbingly, the umbrella group for the nation's organic certifiers, the independent inspectors/auditors that act as agents of the USDA, overseeing farms and giant corporate processors alike, have chimed in, coming to the USDA's defense.

The certifiers are supposed to be the independent umpires. The only thing that assures that they will not be biased, in favor of their clients who write them their paychecks, is the judicious oversight of the USDA's accreditation and auditing of these entities. And now you have them buttering up Mr. McEvoy and helping in his damage control campaign? How unseemly.

What makes it even more unseemly is the fact that the board of directors at two of the largest certifiers, CCOF and OCIA, say they never were informed by their staff of their organization's endorsement of the controversial moves at the USDA.

The organic movement has always been about transparent debate and the focal point has always been at the semi-annual meetings of the National Organic Standards Board. That board can no longer set its own work plan and agenda, and Mr. McEvoy has now effectively appointed himself co-chairman of the board.

All that would be bad enough but now he wants to control the news and censor dissent. Those of us who care deeply about the ethical precepts that the organic movement was founded upon will not let that happen.

Mark A. Kastel, Codirector
The Cornucopia Institute

Please help ramp-up the pressure on the USDA to reverse their "power grab" by [sharing this commentary on Facebook](#) - "[click here](#)."

HAVING TROUBLE VIEWING THIS? [CLICK HERE FOR A WEB VERSION.](#)

The Cornucopia Institute

is a nonprofit organization engaged in research and educational activities supporting the ecological principles and economic wisdom underlying sustainable and organic agriculture. Through research and investigations on agricultural and food issues, The Cornucopia Institute provides needed information to family farmers, consumers, stakeholders involved in the good food movement, and the media.

P.O. Box 126 Cornucopia, Wisconsin 54827
TEL: [608-625-2000](tel:608-625-2000) | FAX: [866-861-2214](tel:866-861-2214) | www.cornucopia.org

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From: [Jennifer Tucker](#)
To: [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#); [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: Draft Accomplishments - Miles
Date: Friday, September 12, 2014 5:04:28 PM
Attachments: [MVM-Accomplishments.docx](#)

Miles - See attached draft. I got input from managers and added other material.

Having network difficulties - apologies for sending from personal account.

Reminder - due Monday.

Jenny

FY 2014 Senior Executive Service (SES) Accomplishment Report
Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator, USDA-AMS National Organic Program

Critical Element 1. Leading Change

Weight:
10%

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Critical Element 2. Leading People

Weight:
30%

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(b) (6)

Critical Element 3. Business Acumen

Weight:
10%

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Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions

Weight:
10%

(b) (6)

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Critical Element 5. Results Driven – Performance Requirements Brief Explanation

Weight:
40%

Performance Requirement 1: Implement Clear and Consistent Organic Standards.

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

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(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 2: Protect the Integrity of Organic Products.

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Performance Requirement 3: Implement Sound and Sensible Certification Practices.

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Performance Requirement 4: Support Organic Market Development.

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Performance Requirement 5: Support Public Involvement.

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(b) (6)

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Performance Requirement 6: Information Technology Improvements.

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

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From: [Alonzo, Anne - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Rakola, Betsy - OSEC](#); [Eckhouse, Sara - AMS](#); [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#)
Subject: Fwd: Letter of Support for Mr. McEvoy
Date: Monday, May 25, 2015 5:47:54 PM
Attachments: [ATT00001.htm](#)
[Miles McEvoy Letter of Support.pdf](#)
[ATT00002.htm](#)

Another letter.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Nicole Mason <nmason@veritablevegetable.com>
Date: May 25, 2015 at 5:30:18 PM EDT
To: "anne.alonzo@ams.usda.gov" <anne.alonzo@ams.usda.gov>
Cc: Bu Nygrens <bu@veritablevegetable.com>
Subject: **Letter of Support for Mr. McEvoy**

Hello Ms. Alonzo,

Please find the attached letter for the Secretary. Let me know if there is another address I should email it to. We will put a hard copy in the mail, too.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Nicole



Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20250-3700

May 25, 2015

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are writing to express our disagreement with a recent call for removal of Mr. Miles McEvoy, Deputy Administrator of the National Organic Program. While we understand many of the concerns raised about the manner in which recent changes were made to the National Organic Program's Sunset process for periodic review of materials on the National List, we do not agree that this merits a call for new Leadership at the National Organic Program. Instead, we support a reconsideration of the Sunset Policy using a process that allows for a public comment period on this important topic.

Our company strongly supports a vibrant organic produce industry. As an organic produce distributor with over 40 years of experience, Veritable Vegetable purchases, transports, and supplies the highest quality organic fruits and vegetables. We deliver throughout California, and parts of Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico and Colorado; we ship to Hawaii. We contribute to an equitable food system by supporting over 220 small to mid-size organic growers, increasing access to fresh, organic produce through relationships with over 500 independent stores, co-ops, restaurants, corporate campuses, schools and wholesalers. We strengthen communities, and advocate for sound policy.

We are unique in our commitment to make every business decision based on our values. We support our community by donating approximately 10% of our annual revenue each year through produce and service donations, memberships and event sponsorships. Veritable Vegetable is a certified B Corporation, using the power of business to solve social and environmental challenges. VV envisions a sustainable food system that values the true costs associated with growing and moving food from farm to table; farmers have access to land and receive fair payment for their labor, all workers are treated equitably, food is grown and moved with minimal impact to the environment, and all people have equal access to fresh, healthy foods.

I personally worked with Mr. McEvoy on the Organic Certifiers Council, going back to the early 1990s. As manager of the Washington State Organic Program we found him to be a tireless advocate for strict and reasonable organic standards while also sensitive to the issues facing small to mid-size farmers and larger producers alike. Mr. McEvoy has a solid track record of leading the National Organic Program, instituting many policies and programs that have helped the organic trade, strengthening the infrastructure of the NOP, and increasing enforcement.



We believe his work has led to many accomplishments, including: support of The Sound and Sensible Initiative which improved the organic regulatory system by streamlining the certification process and making it accessible to more growers; increase of staffing within the NOP, including many workers who have direct experience with certification and other aspects of organic production; and improvement of communications with organic stakeholders through the *Organic Insider* and the *NOP Handbook*. He's also increased the emphasis on oversight of the NOP's own accreditation system through internal audits and a proposal to the National Organic Standards Board for establishing the Peer Review Panel. He has prioritized work on a database of certified operations to facilitate real-time verification of certification status, which is critically important to the fresh produce sector. Finally, his work to promote the USDA's Organic Cost Share program has helped ensure that certification costs don't discourage those wanting to pursue organic certification.

As a business that is directly impacted by the activities and successes of the National Organic Program, the National Organic Standards Board and the organic trade in general we would like you to reconsider your recent call to remove Mr. McEvoy from his current role. We value all that Mr. McEvoy has accomplished and feel there is currently no one in the industry more suited for this role.

Thank you for your consideration,

Bu Nygrens

Co-Owner and Director of Purchasing



From: [Petty, Karen - AMS](#)
To: [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#); [Alonzo, Anne - AMS](#); [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Avila, Joan - AMS](#)
Subject: Miles (Mid-Year Review)

From: [Whitley, Patricia - AMS](#) on behalf of [Alonzo, Anne - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: Performance Review: Miles McEvoy

From: [Taylor, Jameelah - AMS](#) on behalf of [Alonzo, Anne - AMS](#)
To: [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#); [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: Miles McEvoy - Performance Review

From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#); [Coale, Dana - AMS](#)
Subject: evaluation review
Date: Friday, September 16, 2016 5:47:37 PM

Hi –

I wasn't [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Happy to understand what you need and how you'd like to proceed. Thanks.

Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

From: [Mark Kastel](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Cc: [Michael, Matthew - AMS](#)
Subject: RE: Memo to Certifiers on "Brand Name" Instruction Implementation
Date: Monday, August 25, 2014 11:31:00 AM

Hello Miles,

I appreciate your response but you really didn't directly answer my two questions.

You are leaving quite a bit of discretion to the individual certifiers as to how accommodating they want to be in the switchover. This could take years to bring these companies into compliance. And of course the alternative to you folks taking action (directly or through certifiers) is it means we have to do marketplace education and that tends to have collateral damage in terms of the overall perceived value of the organic label (by no means our first choice).

Secondly, a company, right now as I understand it, can invest in having labels approved that are for products that are not yet on the market (or updates to original labels), and you will consider them compliant.

This could create a loophole as when WhiteWave/Horizon took advantage by introducing new products, subsequent to your declaration that the Martek DHA had to be approved by the NOSB before it could be legally used.

Again, I want to make sure that if we support or differ from your enforcement approach we are doing so accurately.

Sincerely,

Mark

Mark A. Kastel
The Cornucopia Institute
Kastel@cornucopia.org
608-625-2042 Voice
866-861-2214 Fax



P.O. Box 126
Cornucopia, WI 54827
www.cornucopia.org

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS [mailto:Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov]
Sent: Monday, August 25, 2014 10:10 AM
To: Mark Kastel
Cc: Michael, Matthew - AMS
Subject: Re: Memo to Certifiers on "Brand Name" Instruction Implementation

Dear Mark,

The Instruction describes the principles we use in compliance and enforcement for the use of organic in brand and company names. We use these principles under our complaint investigations. They mostly apply to uncertified operations making organic claims. Some of these operations have tried to use organic in their farm, brand or company name and fail to obtain certification or comply with other elements of the USDA organic regulations. Please note that the instruction is directed at agricultural products where we have clear authority under the Organic Foods Production Act. We receive a number of complaints on personal care products where USDA's authority on organic claims is not as clear cut.

We are working with certifiers to implement the new Instructions. We have heard from a number of them that they appreciate the clarification and will be implementing these principles in their review of new labels and existing labels. The NOP will include reviewing certifiers implementation of this instruction during the accreditation audits and we will provide further training on this instruction during the annual certifier training.

Best regards,

Miles V McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
USDA National Organic Program

On Aug 22, 2014, at 9:52 AM, "Mark Kastel" <kastel@cornucopia.org> wrote:

Dear Miles,

I want to make sure we are accurately portraying what you are doing.

Does the last paragraph on your memo mean that you do not intend to enforce your newly announced interpretation regarding using the word "organic" in a namebrand, when the product is not actually certified organic, if the label has already been approved by the certifier but not yet introduced to the marketplace?

How liberal and accommodating we would allow certifiers to be in creating the timeline, after an annual review, for modifying their labels? Here's an example, what if the company had just recently had their review, maybe in early August. They will have almost a year notice, since your pronouncement that this is no longer acceptable, to shift their approach to labeling. Are you going to allow a certifier like QAI to give a company like Newman's Own Organics an additional year, after their next review?

Obviously the scenario would be different for a company that is receiving their annual review this week having just learned of the NOP's newly announced enforcement approach.

Please advise,

Mark

Mark A. Kastel
 The Cornucopia Institute
Kastel@cornucopia.org
 608-625-2042 Voice
 866-861-2214 Fax

<image001.jpg>

P.O. Box 126
 Cornucopia, WI 54827
www.cornucopia.org

From: USDA National Organic Program [<mailto:organicinfo@ams.usda.gov>]
Sent: Friday, August 22, 2014 10:37 AM
To: Mark Kastel
Subject: Memo to Certifiers on "Brand Name" Instruction Implementation

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The USDA Organic Insider



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Our Vision

Organic Integrity from
 Farm to Table
 Consumers Trust the
 Organic Label

Announcement

August 22, 2014

Dear Mark,

The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is pleased to share a memo to accredited certifying agents regarding the National Organic Program (NOP) Instruction: Use of Brand or Company Names Containing the Word "Organic."

Memo to Accredited Certifying Agents

On August 14, 2014, the National Organic Program (NOP) issued an instruction clarifying the requirements for the use of brand names containing the word "organic" on the labeling of agricultural products. This memo to accredited certifying agents shares aspects to be considered during the instruction's implementation.

[Memo to Accredited Certifying Agents](#)

Instruction: Use of Brand or Company Names Containing the Word "Organic"

About the Agricultural Marketing Service

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) facilitates the competitive and efficient marketing of agricultural products. Through its National Organic Program, AMS facilitates trade and ensures the integrity of organic agricultural products by consistently implementing organic standards and enforcing compliance with the regulations throughout the world. [Learn more.](#)

About the USDA Organic Insider

The USDA Organic Insider informs the organic community on a wide range of functions, including regulatory updates, requests for public comments, and USDA programs and services.

You are receiving this email because you elected to receive selected updates from the Agricultural Marketing Service. You may manage your profile to receive additional updates or unsubscribe at any time by using the links below.

[Forward email](#)



This email was sent to kastel@cornucopia.org by organicinfo@ams.usda.gov | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Rapid removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).



USDA National Organic Program | 1400 Independence Ave., SW | Room 2646, Ag Stop
0268 | Washington | DC | 20250

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From: [Alonzo, Anne - AMS](#)
To: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#); [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#)
Subject: Fwd: Stop the bullying
Date: Monday, October 19, 2015 10:30:02 PM
Attachments: [Cornucopia Complaints.docx](#)
[ATT00001.htm](#)
[Chronology.docx](#)
[ATT00002.htm](#)

E..Unclear

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Begin forwarded message:

From: "McEvoy, Miles - AMS" <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>
Date: October 19, 2015 at 9:16:23 PM EDT
To: "Alonzo, Anne - AMS" <Anne.Alonzo@ams.usda.gov>, "Barnes, Rex - AMS" <Rex.Barnes@ams.usda.gov>, "Eckhouse, Sara - AMS" <Sara.Eckhouse@ams.usda.gov>, "Rakola, Betsy - OSEC" <Betsy.Rakola@osec.usda.gov>, "Herrick, Matthew - OC" <Matthew.Herrick@oc.usda.gov>, "Morris, Erin - AMS" <erin.morris@ams.usda.gov>, "Bailey, Shayla - AMS" <Shayla.Bailey@ams.usda.gov>
Cc: "Tucker, Jennifer - AMS" <Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov>
Subject: Stop the bullying

Attached is some background on the Cornucopia complaints including details of AMS-NOP's review of the complaints, analysis of the photographic evidence, and how we consulted with AMS accredited certifiers on the compliance of these operations with the USDA organic regulations. You will see that AMS-NOP conducted a thorough review and determined that there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations of these certified organic operations.

(b)(5) Deliberative

Thanks,

Miles V McEvoy
 Deputy Administrator
 Agricultural Marketing Service
 National Organic Program

Cornucopia Complaints

Talking Points

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- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
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Brief Chronology

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SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS

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Complaint Investigation Chronology

Case #: (b)(5) Deliberative
Subject: [Redacted]
Compliance Specialist: [Redacted]

Date	Activity
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From: [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)
To: [Michael, Matthew - AMS](#); [Holmes, Vella - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Mann, Renee - AMS](#); [Lewis, Paul I - AMS](#); [Nelson, Kristen - AMS](#)
Cc: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: Input for Miles" Accomplishments - DUE 9/1, Noon to JENNY
Date: Monday, August 24, 2015 1:41:25 PM
Attachments: [NOP Appraisal Input Template.docx](#)
Importance: High

All – As mentioned in a previous management meeting, I am requesting your input for Miles' appraisal – Miles' appraisal reflects performance for the whole program, so input from the management team is vital to the process. I have attached a template with instructions for what to do in BLUE. Your "deliverable" is an updated clean (not redlined) version of this Word document, sent to me, with your items listed under the appropriate bullets where marked.

Please send me your input document as an attachment by SEPT 1 AT NOON. This is a firm deadline, as I must get the compiled draft to Miles by COB that Friday, and it will take time to bring everyone's input together, come back to you for any clarifications or missing items, and to expand where needed.

Thanks -
Jenny

NOP Appraisal Input Template DUE SEPTEMBER 1 – NOON

Instructions: Please provide your input in bullet form in the following sections below (helpfully marked "Bullet 1" "Bullet 2") – Hints:

- Use bullets and verbs to describe action taken (examples: led, facilitated, executed, assessed, drove forward, completed, coordinated, developed, used, sought input on, collaborated with, coordinated with, achieved)
- Do not include Division/group names - Miles gets credit for all program work
- Review descriptions in bullets below to highlight what needs to be addressed. Do not ignore anything that falls in your Division – if it wasn't achieved, say what WAS achieved
- Unless a bullet specifically says "Jenny will cover," I would like your input.
- Selected language from end of LAST year is included at the base for reference – use as a resource in building this year's but do not JUST update last year's – new material will be needed.
- Send me back this word file – NOT track changes, but clean with your language inserted in place of "Bullet 1" "Bullet 2" placeholders.

USE THIS SECTION FOR FY 2015 RESPONSE

Results - Performance Requirement 1: Working Across AMS Programs - Work across AMS program areas and other agencies to provide seamless services to similar customers and improve relations and agency-wide collaboration; improve programs, services, and business processes.

- Bullet 1
- Bullet 2

Results - Performance Requirement 2: Cultural Transformation - Leads the organization to eliminate barriers to improve operational and service excellence in work-life and wellness, labor relations, process improvement, employee development, talent management, customer focus Initiative and community outreach, and hiring reform. Pursues workforce diversity through recruitment, outreach and employee development programs designed to enhance the hiring and retention of highly qualified employees from diverse backgrounds.

- Bullet 1
- Bullet 2

Results - Performance Requirement 3: Protect the Integrity of Organic Products - Increase the number of annual complaint case closures over previous years; and reduce the number of average days that complaints and appeals remain open. Continue rigorous investigations of complaints of alleged violations. Ensure terms of trade arrangements are being met. Ensure complete and thorough audits of USDA accredited certifying agents. Address 90% of appeals cases received in FY 2015 through a decision, settlement, or closure, in less than 180 days.

- Bullet 1
- Bullet 2

Results - Performance Requirement 4: Support organic market development - Maintain organic integrity in a sound and sensible manner. Support affordable, accessible and attainable certification for

all organic operations. Provide opportunities for new and beginning farmers to succeed in organic production and marketing. Provide training to certifiers, organic farmers and the organic trade on sound and sensible organic certification. Publish 2 new instructions for certifying agents that support sound and sensible certification practices. Provide one in-person certifier training session that covers sound and sensible certification practices. Lead efforts to negotiate and finalize organic equivalence arrangements; successfully complete required peer assessments to maintain existing equivalency arrangements. Support projects that implement the USDA Organic Working Group (OWG) objectives for FY2015. All five OWG topic areas show measurable progress towards reaching their goals in supporting organic agriculture.

- Bullet 1
- Bullet 2

Results - Performance Requirement 5: Information Technology - Improve the quality of the information in the list of certified organic operations. Provide quarterly updates to the list of certified operations that includes updates on suspended, revoked and reinstated organic operations. Achieve 95% accuracy in match between certifier-submitted annual operation lists and the USDA posted list. Organic database pilot system delivered and deployed by end of fiscal year 2015 that USDA and the public can generate reports from, and that certifiers can contribute data directly to, replacing the current posted list of certified operations.

- Bullet 1
- Bullet 2

Results - Performance Requirement 6: Support AMS Signature Process Improvement - Support the implementation of the AMS Signature Process Improvement Initiative to improve the effectiveness of the Agency's operations.

- Jenny will cover

Critical Element 1. Leading Change - Develops and implements an organizational vision that Integrates key organizational and program goals, priorities, values, and other factors. Assesses and adjusts to changing situations, implementing innovative solutions to make organizational improvements, ranging from incremental improvements to major shifts in direction or approach. Balances change and continuity; continually strives to improve service and program performance; creates a work environment that encourages creative thinking, collaboration, and transparency; and maintains program focus even under adversity.

- Bullet 1
- Bullet 2

Critical Element 2 - Leading People - Designs and implements strategies that maximize employee potential, connects the organization horizontally and vertically, and fosters high ethical standards in meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals. Provides an inclusive workplace that fosters the development of others to their full potential; allows for full participation by all employees; facilitates collaboration, cooperation, and teamwork, and supports constructive resolution of conflicts. Ensures employee performance plans are aligned with the organization's mission and goals, that employees receive constructive feedback, and that employees are realistically appraised against clearly defined and communicated performance standards. Holds employees accountable for appropriate levels of

performance and conduct. Seeks and considers employee input. Recruits, retains, and develops the talent needed to achieve a high quality, diverse workforce that reflects the nation, with the skills needed to accomplish organizational performance objectives while supporting workforce diversity, workplace inclusion, and EEO

- Jenny will cover

Critical Element 3. Business Acumen - Assesses, analyzes, acquires, and administers human, financial, material, and information resources in a manner that Instills public trust and accomplishes the organization's mission. Uses technology to enhance processes and decision making. Executes the operatimr budget; prepares budget requests with justifications; and manages resources.

- Jenny will cover

Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions - Solicits and considers feedback from internal and external stakeholders or customers. Coordinates with appropriate parties to maximize input from the widest range of appropriate stakeholders to facilitate an open exchange of opinion from diverse groups and strengthen internal and external support. Explains, advocates, and expresses facts and ideas in a convincing manner and negotiates with individuals and groups internally and externally, as appropriate. Develops a professional network with other organizations and identifies the internal and external politics that affect the work of the organization.

- Bullet 1
- Bullet 2

SELECTED STARTING POINTS FROM LAST YEAR’S LANGUAGE - USE AS POSSIBLE INPUTS IN ADDITION TO ADDING NEW MATERIAL BASED ON WORK THIS YEAR

Note: categories are different this year from last, so that’s why these are not grouped by categories like above.

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From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: (b) (6) [@l.com](#)
Subject: FW: eOPF Notification: New Documents Have Been Added to Your Folder
Date: Monday, February 01, 2016 8:16:56 AM

-----Original Message-----

From: eopf_hd@telesishq.com [mailto:eopf_hd@telesishq.com]
 Sent: Monday, February 01, 2016 7:22 AM
 To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>
 Subject: eOPF Notification: New Documents Have Been Added to Your Folder

A document has been added to your electronic Official Personnel File (e-OPF). You may review this document by logging into the e-OPF at the following link:

<https://eopf.nbc.gov/usda/>

Agency: [USDA]

eOPF ID: [MMCE55834] Name: [MCEVOY, MILES] POID: [5015]

~~~~~  
 DOCUMENT: SF 50 - NOTIFICATION OF PERSONNEL ACTION NATURE OF ACTION: SES  
 PERFORMANCE AWARD (As of 1/1/1999) EFFECTIVE DATE: 05-DEC-2015

~~~~~  
 DOCUMENT: SF 50 - NOTIFICATION OF PERSONNEL ACTION NATURE OF ACTION: REG PERF PAY
 EFFECTIVE DATE: 10-JAN-2016

If you have not used e-OPF previously, you simply login using your USDA e-Authentication (e-Auth) ID and password (the same ID and password you use for AgLearn). The first time you login using your e-Auth ID and password, you will have to register your e-Auth ID for use with e-OPF (this is a one-time registration). If you are experiencing problems with your USDA e-Auth ID and password, you can get help at <https://pws.sc.egov.usda.gov/login/login.aspx>.

Please note that you will need the following to use e-OPF:

1. Internet Explorer version 8.0 or later, Safari, Firefox, or Chrome.
2. Adobe Acrobat Reader version 8.0 or later If you need assistance with the registration process, or need to verify your org code or other information requested during the registration process, please use the contact information below to contact your eOPF Administrator or HR support staff for your Mission Area/Agency as noted on the list below:

MISSION AREA/AGENCY: MRP (APHIS, AMS, GIPSA) INQUIRY/HELP EMAIL:
 eopfmrp@aphis.usda.gov WEBLINK FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:
<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/mrpbs/systems/eopf/index.shtml>

MISSION AREA/AGENCY: REE (ARS, ERS, NIFA, NASS) INQUIRY/HELP EMAIL: eopf50@ars.gov
 WEBLINK FOR MORE INFORMATION:
<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/applications/e-opf.htm>

MISSION AREA/AGENCY: FSIS
 INQUIRY/HELP EMAIL: eopf@fsis.usda.gov
 WEBLINK FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:
<https://inside.fsis.usda.gov/fsis/emp/static/centerContent/fsisPage.jsp?keyword=eOPF1234>

MISSION AREA/AGENCY: RD (RBS, RHS, RUS)

INQUIRY/HELP EMAIL: HRD-RD@wdc.usda.gov WEBLINK FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

<https://rd.sc.egov.usda.gov/teamrd/rdom/hr/e-opf/SitePages/Home.aspx>

MISSION AREA/AGENCY: DM Staff Offices/Divisions INQUIRY/HELP EMAIL: dm-hro-eopf@dm.usda.gov

WEBLINK FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: <http://www.dm.usda.gov/employ/eopf/index.htm>

MISSION AREA/AGENCY: FFAS (FAS, RMA, FSA)

INQUIRY/HELP EMAIL: FFAS-eOPF@WDC.USDA.GOV WEBLINK FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

<http://intranet.fsa.usda.gov/fsa/operations/hrd/eopf.htm>

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Agency: USDA]

From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)
Subject: Mcevoy accomplishments
Date: Wednesday, August 24, 2016 2:44:09 PM
Attachments: [McEvoy-2016Accomplishments.docx](#)

Miles V. McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service – National Organic Program

SES Performance Accomplishments Report – FY 2016

McEvoy, Miles V.	Deputy Administrator	AMS National Organic Program
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Critical Element 1 – Leading Change (Weight 15%):
(b) (6)

Critical Element 2 – Leading People (Weight 30%):
(b) (6)

Critical Element 3 – Business Acumen (Weight 10%):
(b) (6)

Critical Element 4 – Building Coalitions (Weight 10%):
• (b) (6)

(b) (6)

Critical Element 5 – Results Driven (Weight 35%):

Performance Requirement 1 – Working Across AMS Programs: (b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 2 – Cultural Transformation: (b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 3 – Protect Integrity of Organic Products:

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 4 – Support Organic Market Development:

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 5 – Information Technology:

(b) (6)
(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 6: Support AMS Signature Process Improvements:

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Text below this point is template ST/SL text that cannot be deleted.

Choose an item. **Performance Accomplishments Report – FY 2016**

Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Element 1 - Choose an item.: Click here to enter text.		
Element 2 - Choose an item.: Click here to enter text.		
Element 3 - Choose an item.: Click here to enter text.		
Element 4 - Choose an item.: Click here to enter text.		
Optional Critical Element(s) : Click here to enter text.		

Choose an item. **Performance Accomplishments Report – FY 2016**

Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
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Element 1 – Choose an item.: Accomplishments for Element 1 – Table Format

Exceeds	Met	Did Not Meet	Performance Goal/Measure	Provide a brief and concise statement explaining how the result exceeded the goal/measure or why it was not met.
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Element 2 – Choose an item.: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Element 3 – Choose an item.: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Element 4 – Choose an item.: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Optional Critical Element(s): [Click here to enter text.](#)

From: [Mark Kastel](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Michael, Matthew - AMS](#)
Cc: [Miles McEvoy \(Miles.McEvoy@usda.gov\)](#); [Will Fantle](#); [Jason Cole](#)
Subject: Flyover Complaints
Date: Friday, December 19, 2014 11:09:42 AM

Dear Miles and Michael,

I wanted to update you on the logistical status of the complaints we announced last week and a few of the background details. Please add this email to each related complaint file.

By now you should have received electronic copies of all of the complaints (some of which were updated with additional information that we received over this past week).

This week we shipped, via Federal Express, a package that included a hard copy of each complaint, a spreadsheet that contains some summary data on each facility, along with a series of DVDs containing the aerial photography we contracted for (and a document that serves as the key to reconciling which disc contains which images.

Here are some things you should know about the images:

1. The states and locations of target CAFOs were located based on where our photography contractor already had contracts to perform work for other entities. There is every reason to believe that if we were able to do flyovers in a different series of states (California, Idaho, New Mexico, Arizona or Colorado, as an example – which we may very well do this coming farming season) that we would've had a different set of similar alleged violations. The states that were chosen were not because we thought we would find the highest concentration of scofflaws operating in those jurisdictions.
2. The aerial photographer we contracted with, based on pre-existing contracts with other clients, established the dates of all shoots (between May and September). We did not know specifically when they were going to be over a designated production facility until after the fact. One of the criteria they have for all shoots is that it be done on a clear sunny day to assure the highest quality images.
3. These are massive photography files, 62 MB each. This will enable you, as it did our researchers, to greatly enlarge the photos enabling you to clearly verify if any animals are outside or on pasture. These are detailed enough photos that you can gauge, to a great extent, the quality of the pasture on the dairy operations indicating any history of outdoor access or grazing. Chickens, in any appreciable number, even 50 or 100, will defoliate and tear up an area pretty quickly (in larger fixed houses this is especially true right outside of the doors as, overall, few birds go out and normally congregate close by). Many of these photos, when zoomed in, clearly indicate pristine lawns surrounding henhouses.

4. We have sent you all of the organic CAFOs that we contracted to photograph with two exceptions. One was in Ohio and we inadvertently sent the photographers to an operation that was a conventional turkey grower. The other was a certified organic CAFO in Michigan. Unfortunately, although no animals were visible outside, the series of photographs did not include our required panoramic views of all surrounding outdoor areas that would've enabled us, to say with a high level of assurance that they were violating the standards. We did not cherry pick the most egregious violations and leave out any facilities that would've looked good to the public and appeared to be complying with the regulations.
5. Of the 14 complaints and series of photos that we have forwarded to you, we have shared 100% of the images that were taken by the contractor. We wanted you to know that we did not select only the most egregious illustration of violations nor edit out any images that would show animals outside. Viewing all the images on a particular facility you should be able to see a 365° view of the livestock housing facilities and, for the dairy outfits, all surrounding fields. In the case of the egg laying houses, and the one broiler producer with 40 buildings, we had the photographer, specifically, zero in on the space between the buildings so that the quality of the vegetation, doors and any fencing would be visible (in between and surrounding every building). Again, we encourage you to enlarge and zero in on these features.
6. One of the producers, Nature Pure/Topaz Real Estate, Inc. (New Day Farms, LLC), Raymond, Ohio, has a massive conventional production operation, basically, at the address registered for the organic operations. In the same general vicinity they had two separate certified organic facilities (we have delineated these in our formal complaint document). Our aerial photographer missed one of the two organic facilities. We would ask that you go to our website and view the photo gallery to retrieve a series of satellite images that were taken on three separate days of the facility in question (no birds out).

In addition to the aerial photography, we have satellite images of a number of other facilities that we targeted for investigation. As an example, we have images of the Idalou, Texas egg facility, owned by Chino Valley, taken on three separate days in addition to the aerial photography. On all four days no chickens are visible outdoors. We will send the other images that we have, in a series of emails, within the near future.

The intent of the law needs to be carefully considered when deciding whether or not you are going to take enforcement action. "Access to the outdoors" obviously infers that animals will be outside. Not just having access but actually getting an appreciable percentage of the population outdoors.

As in the example of the enforcement action that was taken against Aurora during the prior administration, you do not need prescriptive benchmarks to take enforcement action when a woefully inadequate percentage of animals are being allowed out on

pasture or outdoors (in the case of Aurora it wasn't 0% of their animals out but it was a token percentage).

Porches are not the "outdoors." They are indoors. To get out of that structure you would have to go through a door. The birds don't have that option.

Furthermore, the memo we refer to that you issued, Miles, seems to make it pretty clear that birds have to be outside of a "structure." Porches are not outdoors. They are structures.

The original decision, under the Bush administration, to allow porches to serve as outdoor space, did not comport with the law. There is the additional appearance of corruption, by virtue of the USDA official who personally issued the porch decision later going to work for the company that directly benefited. This appears to the public as untenable. There is no legitimate reason why the USDA, under the Obama administration, should be legitimizing this "error" (to use the same vernacular as you did, Miles, when ruling that the inappropriate use of Martek's DHA, as allowed by the Bush administration, was not in compliance with the law).

In the case of dairies, "access to pasture," when the regulations were drafted, based on OFPA, and in conjunction with regulatory language legally requiring farmers managing livestock to allow for their *natural instinctive behaviors*, clearly intended to have animals actually out grazing.

There are legal exceptions when farmers can "temporarily" confine livestock. But when those conditions are not met, their herds, generally, need to be on pasture. Not 10% of the herd. And not between one of the milkings per day if they are milking three or four times. Those are examples of large corporate, industrialized dairy operations trying to "game the system." Independent experts can verify how much time cattle need to be in a feedlot, before and after entering the parlor, to facilitate milking. It does not require having 90% of the cattle confined on a nice day. These facilities milk 24 hours a day and move cattle pretty efficiently in and out of their parlors.

If you do not interpret the regulations conservatively, and you have not the past, you are placing ethical livestock producers, at all scales of size, at a competitive disadvantage.

After reviewing the information we have forwarded to you please let us know if you have any questions or if we can provide you with any other background information or justification for our interpretations.

Sincerely yours,

Mark A. Kastel
Senior Farm Policy Analyst
The Cornucopia Institute

Mark A. Kastel
The Cornucopia Institute
Kastel@cornucopia.org
608-625-2042 Voice
866-861-2214 Fax



P.O. Box 126
Cornucopia, WI 54827
www.cornucopia.org

From: eopf_hd@telesishq.com
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: eOPF Notification: New Documents Have Been Added to Your Folder
Date: Monday, February 01, 2016 7:22:26 AM

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Agency: [USDA]

eOPF ID: [MMCE55834] Name: [MCEVOY, MILES] POID: [5015]

~~~~~  
DOCUMENT: SF 50 - NOTIFICATION OF PERSONNEL ACTION  
NATURE OF ACTION: SES PERFORMANCE AWARD (As of 1/1/1999)  
EFFECTIVE DATE: 05-DEC-2015

~~~~~  
DOCUMENT: SF 50 - NOTIFICATION OF PERSONNEL ACTION
NATURE OF ACTION: REG PERF PAY
EFFECTIVE DATE: 10-JAN-2016



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<http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/hrd/applications/e-opf.htm>



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eOPF ID: [MMCE55834] Name: [MCEVOY, MILES] POID: [5015]

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DOCUMENT: SF 50 - NOTIFICATION OF PERSONNEL ACTION  
NATURE OF ACTION: SES PERFORMANCE AWARD (As of 1/1/1999)  
EFFECTIVE DATE: 05-DEC-2014

~~~~~  
DOCUMENT: SF 50 - NOTIFICATION OF PERSONNEL ACTION
NATURE OF ACTION: REG PERF PAY
EFFECTIVE DATE: 11-JAN-2015



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INQUIRY/HELP EMAIL: FFAS-eOPF@WDC.USDA.GOV

WEBLINK FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: <http://intranet.fsa.usda.gov/fsa/operations/hrd/eopf.htm>

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Agency: USDA]

From: [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#) on behalf of [AMS - Office Of The AMS Administrator](#)
To: [Alonzo, Anne - AMS](#); [Eckhouse, Sara - AMS](#); [Bailey, Shayla - AMS](#); [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#); [Rakola, Betsy - OSEC](#)
Subject: FW: Letter in support of Miles McEvoy
Date: Wednesday, May 20, 2015 3:02:19 PM
Attachments: [Letter of Support from OEFFA May 2015.pdf](#)

FYI...

Sam Jones-Ellard
Public Affairs Specialist
USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service

(b) (6)

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From: Carol Goland [mailto:cgoland@oeffa.org]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2015 2:54 PM
To: AGSEC - OES
Cc: AMS - Office Of The AMS Administrator
Subject: Letter in support of Miles McEvoy

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

Please see the attached letter from the Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association, expressing our support for Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy.

Thank you for your consideration,
Carol Goland

--

Carol Goland, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Ohio Ecological Food & Farm Association
41 Crowell Rd.
Columbus, OH 43214
office: 614.421.2022 x202
mobile: (b) (6)
fax: 614.421.2011
www.oeffa.org

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OEFFA CERTIFICATION

41 Croswell Rd.
Columbus, OH 43214-3062
PHONE: 614-262-2022
FAX: 614-421-2011
EMAIL: organic@oeffa.org
WEB: www.oeffa.org

20 May 2015

The Honorable Thomas J. Vilsack
Room 200-A Whitten Building
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

As a USDA-accredited organic certifier and grassroots farming organization with many certified organic members, the Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association (OEFFA) offers this letter of support for Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy.

While we do not agree with every action taken by the Department, we recognize the challenging position Mr. McEvoy holds. Further, we appreciate the expertise he brings to this important work. With decades of experience building and supporting the organic industry, he provides a well-informed perspective and institutional memory on organic production and certification that is unparalleled in the Department. With his team, he has grown the infrastructure of the Program, stepped-up enforcement, and remained in constant communication with an ever-growing group of organic stakeholders.

Mr. McEvoy has demonstrated leadership during his tenure at the National Organic Program through the development of the Sound and Sensible Initiative. He has made a clear effort to personally connect and partner with organic certifiers. He visited OEFFA on two separate occasions, during which our staff had the opportunity to engage with him on a variety of issues, demonstrate our successful implementation of the Livestock Pasture Rule, and receive guidance and constructive feedback. We were struck by his desire to listen to our perspective and connect with producers by visiting some of our clients' farms. He continues to communicate openly and thoughtfully with us whenever we encounter him at industry events, such as the annual certifier training.

We look forward to the additional improvements to the NOP's work under Miles McEvoy's continued leadership, and appreciate his ongoing service to the Organic Foods Production Act, the diverse and growing organic community, and the National Organic Program.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Carol Goland, Ph.D.
Executive Director

cc: Anne Alonzo, Administrator for the Agricultural Marketing Service

From: [The Cornucopia Institute](#)
To: Miles.McEvoy@usda.gov
Bcc: [McEvoy_Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: Organic Stakeholders Battle the USDA--Showdown at the Alamo
Date: Thursday, May 08, 2014 3:48:25 PM

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MAY
 8,
 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact Will Fantle, 715-839-7731

Turmoil Shakes National Organic Standards Board Meeting in Texas

Board Decision Making Colored by Restrictions to Authority and Governance Imposed by USDA

<http://www.cornucopia.org/2014/05/turmoil-shakes-national-organic-standards-board-meeting-texas>

CORNUCOPIA, WI Protests, an arrest and parliamentary maneuvers marked the beginning of the semi-annual meeting of the USDA's National Organic Standards Board (NOSB). After the initial turmoil subsided its members wrestled with the implications of widely criticized changes to its authority and procedures that have been imposed by USDA leadership without the customary public discussion or review.

Meeting for the first time since the governance and process changes were unilaterally announced last year, the NOSB's San Antonio, Texas meeting saw the board defer many of its agenda items to its Fall 2014 meeting and an outright challenge to USDA authority on the part of some NOSB board members.

The National Organic Standards Board was established by Congress as part of the landmark Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 (OFPA). The 15-member board is composed of organic farmers, consumers, organic food processors/retailers, environmentalists, a scientist and an organic certification representative. Congress gave the board the authority to review and approve materials used in organic agriculture and food, as well as mandating the USDA Secretary seek their advice and counsel on policies important to the organic community.

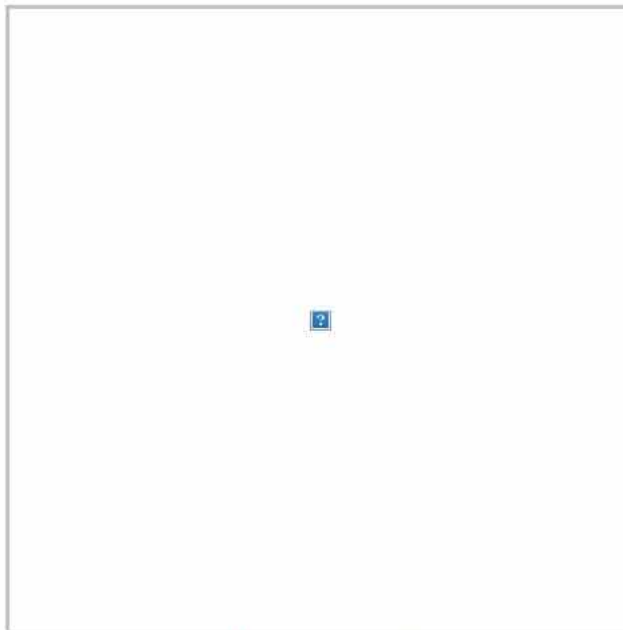
"The NOSB is a prime example of the desire to build partnership and collaboration, as established by OFPA," explains Will Fantle, codirector of The Cornucopia Institute, an organic industry watchdog. "It was supposed to be a buffer to prevent total control of the organic sector by the USDA and big agribusiness interests."

When the NOSB meeting began, it was opened by its new co-chair, USDA's Miles McEvoy, who directs the staff of the National Organic Program. The prominent role of the USDA bureaucrat, claiming the right to co-chair the NOSB meeting, was a first and part of the changes implemented by the USDA.

Almost immediately this "power grab" was challenged by demonstrators from the Organic Consumers Association (OCA). A number of their members moved in front of the podium and began chanting "Don't change Sunset," a reference to another controversial change made by the USDA that lowers the threshold for re-approval of synthetic materials allowed for temporary use in organic food and agriculture. Ultimately, following a quick adjournment of the meeting, OCA's political director Alexis Baden-Meyer was [arrested and removed](#) from the room.



Miles McEvoy, left, and Mac Stone
(elected NOSB Board Chairman to his right)



OCA protest initially shuts down meeting

As the meeting resumed, NOSB member Jay Feldman, executive director of Beyond Pesticides, called for a *point of order* to contest the co-chairing of the meeting by USDA's McEvoy. Feldman, who occupies one of the NOSB seats reserved for environmentalist/conservationists, was seeking to restore the authority of the board's duly elected chair.

Beyond Pesticides, The Cornucopia Institute, and most other public interest groups involved in organics contend that the language of OFPA is clear in mandating that the board, "shall select a Chairperson for the Board."

During the middle of a roll call vote, the meeting was again suspended and USDA staff huddled to discuss the situation. McEvoy was seen making cell phone calls, presumably with superiors in Washington. He subsequently approached Feldman during the break and reportedly told him that he would cancel the entire meeting unless Feldman retracted his parliamentary move. When the meeting resumed, Feldman reluctantly withdrew his objection.

"It's amazing that the USDA would go to the mat over the issue of Mr. McEvoy's co-chairing the meeting," said Cornucopia's Will Fantle. "Being willing to shut down the entire process in San Antonio, after board members and organic stakeholders invested thousands of hours in preparation and tens of thousands of private and taxpayer dollars, over such a small but symbolic dispute is reprehensible," Fantle added.

When the meeting once again was convened, McEvoy began a lengthy explanation of why the USDA had taken more control over the actions of the board, and detailed the "training" session that all NOSB members had been summoned to Washington, D.C. for in February. He claimed the changes would lend more transparency and streamline the NOSB procedures.

NOSB member Jean Richardson, a consumer representative from Vermont, observed shortly after McEvoy concluded his remarks, that the NOSB has no work items "on our agenda." Her comment referenced the USDA's taking away of agenda-making authority from the NOSB, a right formerly used to develop positions on important issues including GMO contamination in organics, and the potential use of nanotechnology.

Even before the NOSB's Texas meeting began, USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack was receiving a steady stream of criticism regarding what some described as a [power grab](#) and a [gutting](#) of OFPA. Three former and widely respected chairs of the NOSB sent [a joint letter to Vilsack](#) outlining their grave concerns. And, dramatically, just days before the opening of the meeting, two of the prime authors of OFPA, Vermont Senator Patrick Leahy and Representative Peter DeFazio of Oregon, [contacted Vilsack](#) urging a reversal of the changes made to the "Sunset" process, noting the move was made "in conflict with both the letter and intent of the statute."

As the first day of the meeting moved into the afternoon, a number of board members continued probing and questioning USDA staff about the Sunset changes. Richardson called the new process a "rabbit warren," adding that it was "hard to see transparency." During the formal public comment session, a number of citizens and representatives of public interest groups harshly criticized the changes as well.

Ultimately, the board turned its attention to the numerous agenda items requiring discussion, votes and decisions at its four-day meeting. But before that process began, McEvoy offered that the USDA had "heard" the comments on Sunset changes and taking of power from the NOSB. He encouraged anyone with concerns to contact him. To date the USDA has made no indication that they will back down on the widely unpopular moves that have generated the impassioned protests as well as a threat by The Cornucopia Institute to challenge the moves in court.

One hot-button topic at the meeting was a decision on whether or not to extend the Sunset deadline for ending the use of the antibiotic streptomycin in apple and pear orchards as a disease control agent for the potentially devastating disease [fire blight](#). The petitioners, active in the orchard industry, sought a three-year extension from its current expiration date of Oct. 21, 2014.

The board voted not to extend, instead choosing to end the use of all antibiotics in organic agriculture. Opponents of an extension argued for changes in agricultural practices, consistent with organic management, that reduce disease risk and expressed confidence in new natural fire blight prevention materials that have been tested.

A large group of industry and public representatives at the meeting came to learn what the board would do with usage levels of the somewhat controversial synthetic amino acid methionine. Methionine is an essential amino acid for poultry, necessary for the health and well-being of birds. A synthetic version is added to poultry feed and the NOSB has been wrestling for years with how to phase it out in favor of natural alternatives.

Once again, the USDA's Sunset process changes surfaced. Several board members appeared reluctant to adopt changes recommended by the NOSB's Livestock Subcommittee to the amount of synthetic methionine allowed in feed, fearing that USDA's Sunset changes would make the eventual phase-out of the synthetic more difficult, if not impossible.

NOSB farmer-member Nick Maravell and NOSB environmentalist Francis Thicke (also a dairy farmer) received support from fellow board members to send the matter back to the subcommittee for additional review.

"Under the old Sunset rules that the NOSB had historically operated under, this measure likely would have passed with the board having confidence that they would have the power to revisit this issue in the future," Cornucopia's Fantle observed.



*Cornucopia farmer-member
Tim Miller testifying*

A similar fate befell numerous aquaculture materials being reviewed by the board. Discussion revolved around the lack of organic aquaculture standards, with a general sentiment that it was premature to approve materials for use in aquaculture without a full understanding of the system they would be used in. "How can we evaluate without standards?" asked consumer representative Calvin Walker.

The USDA had been criticized over the past few years for pushing synthetic and non-organic materials for use in aquaculture, presumably at the request of corporate agribusiness, when they have ignored recommendations from the NOSB on how to structure the industry to protect human health and the environment.

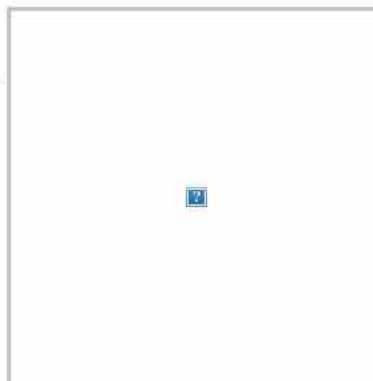
With the potential for dramatically different approaches between land-based pond systems and ocean net pens (which in conventional aquaculture have resulted in catastrophic environmental degradation), the board chose a cautious path and elected to table further review of all aquaculture materials until the USDA promulgates draft aquaculture standards.

During his organic status report given earlier in the meeting, the USDA's Miles McEvoy said that aquaculture standards had passed clearance and review by other federal officials and would be forthcoming. McEvoy also mentioned that long-promised regulations concerning origin of livestock had similarly been given clearance. Organic dairy farmers have long complained that this loophole was allowing organic "factory farms" to continue to bring in conventional replacement animals. The pending rule change is expected to prevent the practice.

McEvoy also reported a rule governing organic pet food production and labeling was given clearance for release as well and should also be out in the near future.

As one of its last agenda items, the NOSB selected its new leadership. Jean Richardson was elected board chair. John Foster, a handler representative and employee of WhiteWave/Earthbound Foods, was elected vice-chair. And Mac Stone, a certifier representative, was elected the board's secretary.

Amanda Love, a natural foods chef and nutrition therapist from Texas who sits on The Cornucopia Institute's Board of Directors and testified at the meeting, observed afterward, "The NOSB was structured by Congress to balance the power of organic farmers and consumers with powerful industry interests. That power dynamic has been seriously compromised by the USDA. It will be interesting to see if Secretary Vilsack responds to the almost universal public condemnation of their power grab as illustrated by the tumult at the meeting in San Antonio."



Amanda Love

-30-

MORE

Other agenda items discussed by the NOSB included:

- An update on a genetic purity standard for seed
- Added magnesium oxide to the National List as a synthetic for use in organic crop production
- Adopted a resolution encouraging increased research into fire blight disease control practices
- Approved the proposal to modify the policy on confidential business information

The Fall meeting of the NOSB is scheduled for October 28-30 in Louisville, Kentucky.



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The Cornucopia Institute

is a nonprofit organization engaged in research and educational activities supporting the ecological principles and economic wisdom underlying sustainable and organic agriculture. Through research and investigations on agricultural and food issues, The Cornucopia Institute provides needed information to family farmers, consumers, stakeholders involved in the good food movement, and the media.

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TEL: 608-625-2000 | FAX: 866-861-2214 | www.cornucopia.org

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From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)
Subject: performance plan
Date: Wednesday, August 03, 2016 4:09:48 PM
Attachments: [FY2016 SES plan - mmcevoy nov16 version.docx](#)

Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

SES Performance Management System Executive Performance Agreement



Part 1. Consultation. <i>I have reviewed this plan and have been consulted on its development.</i>						
Executive's Name (<i>Last, First, MI</i>): McEvoy, Miles, V				Appraisal Pd: 10/01/15 –9/30/16		
Executive's Signature:				Date:		
Title: Associate Administrator				Organization:		
Rating Official's Name (<i>Last, First, MI</i>): Barnes, Rex				CA <input type="checkbox"/> NC <input type="checkbox"/> LT/LE <input type="checkbox"/>		
Rating Official's Signature:				Date:		
Part 2. Progress Review						
Executive's Signature:				Date:		
Rating Official's Signature:				Date:		
Reviewing Official's Signature (<i>Optional</i>):				Date:		
Part 3. Summary Rating						
Initial Summary Rating	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5 Outstanding	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 Exceeds Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 Minimally Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1 Unsatisfactory	
Rating Official's Name (<i>Last, First, MI</i>):						
Rating Official's Signature:				Date:		
Executive's Signature:				Date:		
Reviewing Official's Signature (<i>Second-Level Official's Concurrence</i>):				Date:		
Higher Level Review (if applicable)						
<input type="checkbox"/> I request a higher level review. Executive's Initials:				Date:		
Higher Level Review Completed <input type="checkbox"/>				Date:		
Higher Level Reviewer Signature:						
Performance Review Board Recommendation		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
PRB Chair Signature:				Date:		
Annual Summary Rating		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
Appointing Authority Signature:				Date:		
Part 4. Derivation Formula and Calculation of Annual Summary Rating						
Critical Element	Element Rating		Weight	Score		Summary Level Ranges
	Initial	Final (if changed)		Initial	Final (if changed)	
1. Leading Change			15%			475-500 = Level 5 400-474 = Level 4 300-399 = Level 3 200-299 = Level 2 Any CE rated Level 1 = Level 1
2. Leading People			30%			
3. Business Acumen			10%			
4. Building Coalitions			10%			
5. Results Driven			35%			
Total			100%			

Part 5. Critical Elements

Performance Standards for Critical Elements (The performance standard for each critical element is specified below; examples for the top three performance levels can be found in the system description).

- **Level 5:** The executive demonstrates exceptional performance, fostering a climate that sustains excellence and optimizes results in the executive's organization, agency, department or government-wide. This represents the highest level of executive performance, as evidenced by the extraordinary impact on the achievement of the organization's mission. The executive is an inspirational leader and is considered a role model by agency leadership, peers, and employees. The executive continually contributes materially to or spearheads agency efforts that address or accomplish important agency goals, consistently achieves expectations at the highest level of quality possible, and consistently handles challenges, exceeds targets, and completes assignments ahead of schedule at every step along the way.
- **Level 4:** The executive demonstrates a very high level of performance beyond that required for successful performance in the executive's position and scope of responsibilities. The executive is a proven, highly effective leader who builds trust and instills confidence in agency leadership, peers, and employees. The executive consistently exceeds established performance expectations, timelines, or targets, as applicable.
- **Level 3:** The executive demonstrates the high level of performance expected and the executive's actions and leadership contribute positively toward the achievement of strategic goals and meaningful results. The executive is an effective, solid, and dependable leader who delivers high-quality results based on measures of quality, quantity, efficiency, and/or effectiveness within agreed upon timelines. The executive meets and often exceeds challenging performance expectations established for the position.
- **Level 2:** The executive's contributions to the organization are acceptable in the short term but do not appreciably advance the organization towards achievement of its goals and objectives. While the executive generally meets established performance expectations, timelines and targets, there are occasional lapses that impair operations and/or cause concern from management. While showing basic ability to accomplish work through others, the executive may demonstrate limited ability to inspire subordinates to give their best efforts or to marshal those efforts effectively to address problems characteristic of the organization and its work.
- **Level 1:** In repeated instances, the executive demonstrates performance deficiencies that detract from mission goals and objectives. The executive generally is viewed as ineffectual by agency leadership, peers, or employees. The executive does not meet established performance expectations/timelines/targets and fails to produce – or produces unacceptable – work products, services, or outcomes.

Element Rating Level Points

Level 5 = 5 points
Level 4 = 4 points
Level 3 = 3 points
Level 2 = 2 points
Level 1 = 0 points

Critical Element 1. Leading Change	Weight: 15%				
<p>Develops and implements an organizational vision that integrates key organizational and program goals, priorities, values, and other factors. Assesses and adjusts to changing situations, implementing innovative solutions to make organizational improvements, ranging from incremental improvements to major shifts in direction or approach, as appropriate. Balances change and continuity; continually strives to improve service and program performance; creates a work environment that encourages creative thinking, collaboration, and transparency; and maintains program focus, even under adversity.</p>					
<p>Agency-Specific Performance Requirements</p>					
<p>Leads organizational change and motivates managers to incorporate vision, strategic planning and results-driven management in the full range of the organization's activities. Addresses programmatic requirements as necessary to motivate and lead the organization. Strategies are designed and implemented to improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency, and to meet program goals. Program goals are aligned to Agency strategic plans and accomplished within specified timeframes.</p>					
<p>Interests of the organization, employee, and customer/stakeholder are well balanced and priorities are adjusted in response to changing demands. Meets management initiative goals as imposed by regulatory/oversight agencies (e.g. Office of Management and Budget and Office of Personnel Management), and the Department or Agency.</p>					
<p>Leads organization in supporting the Secretary's initiative to improve Departmental responses to important inquiries of USDA's partners, customers, and Legislative Officials and for improved release of information to the press and public. As requested, reports activities and process improvements to the Department's Office of Executive Secretariat, Office of Congressional Relations, and Office of Communications.</p>					
<p>Coordinates with business units to align their individual plans and identify clear measures of accomplishment. Encourages the development and implementation of initiatives or innovative solutions to enhance/improve procedures or services. Encourages employees to take risk, think creatively and work cooperatively with others in the program and Agency.</p>					
<p>Shares information and goals/vision in a way that enhances transparency and encourages collaboration.</p>					
<p>Applicable milestones from the USDA Civil Rights Plan and Strategic Plan are incorporated into the Agency or staff office strategic and annual performance plans. Applicable goals and objectives related to accountability, program delivery, outreach, workforce diversity, employment practices, resources and structure, performance, administrative activities, communications and reporting are met in accordance with Department and Agency policy.</p>					
<p>Develops and implements outreach strategies that enhance the delivery of agricultural services and assistance to underserved populations. Demonstrates an understanding of and commitment to equal employment opportunity and ensures fair and equitable program delivery.</p>					
<p>Ensures subordinate supervisors exercise effective managerial, communication and interpersonal skills to supervise and develop a diverse workforce.</p>					
<p>Promotes business practices and a work environment that allow for the delivery of the highest quality, most efficient service to AMS customers.</p>					
<p>Demonstrates a focus on ensuring civil rights compliance and commitment in the workplace.</p>					
<p>Rating Official Narrative: <i>(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)</i></p>					
<i>Critical Element Rating – Leading Change</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1

Critical Element 2. Leading People**Weight: 30%**

Designs and implements strategies that maximize employee potential, connects the organization horizontally and vertically, and fosters high ethical standards in meeting the organization's vision, mission, and goals. Provides an inclusive workplace that fosters the development of others to their full potential; allows for full participation by all employees; facilitates collaboration, cooperation, and teamwork, and supports constructive resolution of conflicts. Ensures employee performance plans are aligned with the organization's mission and goals, that employees receive constructive feedback, and that employees are realistically appraised against clearly defined and communicated performance standards. Holds employees accountable for appropriate levels of performance and conduct. Seeks and considers employee input. Recruits, retains, and develops the talent needed to achieve a high quality, diverse workforce that reflects the nation, with the skills needed to accomplish organizational performance objectives while supporting workforce diversity, workplace inclusion, and equal employment policies and programs.

Agency-Specific Performance Requirements

Maintains a positive organizational environment that fosters diversity, inclusion, innovation, initiative, open and honest communication, and teamwork among employees and peers. Within available resources, ensures employees have the tools and training to do their jobs.

Leads organization to set goals and track results for achieving workforce diversity, recruitment, and retention programs that will help to maximize the hiring and retention of highly qualified employees in underrepresented groups. Upon request by OHRM, reports activities and progress towards workforce diversity achievements.

Seeks employee feedback to identify needs and expectations and considers employee perspective when making decisions affecting workforce or programs. Increases employee participation in feedback opportunities such as the employee survey. Analyze feedback and develop strategies to address areas of opportunity.

Recruits and selects new employees based on organizational goals, budget considerations, and staffing needs. When filling a position, the supervisor engages and collaborates with HR to ensure skills required for the job are identified, posting of the job vacancy is accurate, and assists in identifying contacts for diverse locations or organizations for recruiting purposes. Participates as needed with HR in the proper screening of applications, and appropriate categorization of applicants based on qualifications.

Utilizes flexible hiring authorities when filling a vacancy (e.g., targeted disabilities, student employment, direct hire, appointing veterans, etc.) to ensure diversity in recruitment and hiring.

Successfully transitions new hires into the position by promptly providing an orientation into the workforce and establishing performance elements and standards. Supervisor provides ongoing feedback and coaching, and makes appropriate use of the probationary period to assess the new hire's ability to perform in the position.

Encourages employees to participate in developmental assignments, details, mentoring and training programs, and other Agency programs to develop and retain a highly qualified workforce. Closes competency/skills gap for mission critical positions.

Implements retention strategies that focus on key internal processes (e.g., work environment, employee orientation, executing Individual Development Plans for all employees--subject to bargaining obligations, coaching, development, and mentoring, etc.) that promotes employee growth, supports the health of the workforce and drives the future success of the organization's people and infrastructure.

Manages and controls attrition by developing best practices and retention strategies as well as by developing a succession plan. Assesses current workforce plans to ensure they are up-to-date in order to meet Program/Agency goals and objectives. Works with senior management officials and HR to comply with the workforce planning process as described in the Department's position management policy.

The supervisor establishes subordinate employee performance plans within established timeframes and that align with Agency and Departmental goals and objectives. Communicates to employees how their work supports the Agency mission

and strategic plan/initiatives. Employee performance plans contain clear, results-focused measures and the supervisor provides accurate and timely feedback to determine progress and success in meeting expectations.

The supervisor completes performance plans, progress reviews, and appraisals of subordinate employees by the due dates established by the Department or Agency. Performance plans for each employee must include at least one critical element that is traceable to the Agency's goals and objectives (e.g., Mission Results critical performance element). Provides ongoing feedback and coaching as demonstrated through performance feedback sessions as evidenced by 100% of employees receiving at least one feedback session at the midpoint of the rating period. Appraisals show a fair distribution in ratings among all employees.

Ensures appropriate action is taken to address performance problems in a manner that supports organizational goals and objectives. Ensures subordinate managers and supervisors adhere to the Agency performance management policy with regard to performance appraisal and employee recognition.

Performance and employee feedback data is used as an indicator of compliance and general satisfaction or needed improvement with regard to the planning, developing, monitoring, rating and rewarding of performance.

Utilizes the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) to identify and address issues related to employee engagement, development, and satisfaction. Target: Based on specific information collected from the 2015 FEVS, implements effective and measurable strategies to address FEVS scoring as applicable to my mission area, agency, and individual position.

Creates an environment where people from diverse backgrounds feel respected, recognized, and valued; actively fosters and maintains a work environment free of bullying, sexual harassment, and discrimination as prescribed by Departmental and Federal civil rights regulations and laws. In addition, implements strategies for addressing underrepresentation of minorities, women, and/or persons with disabilities within the workforce.

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

Critical Element Rating – Leading People

Level 5

Level 4

Level 3

Level 2

Level 1

Critical Element 3. Business Acumen	Weight: 10%
Assesses, analyzes, acquires, and administers human, financial, material, and information resources in a manner that instills public trust and accomplishes the organization's mission. Uses technology to enhance processes and decision making. Executes the operating budget; prepares budget requests with justifications; and manages resources.	
<p>Agency-Specific Performance Requirements</p> <p>Human, financial, material, and informational resources are effectively acquired and managed to achieve performance goals. Needs assessments are based on organizational goals and budget realities, and opportunities to reduce program and administrative costs are sought. Management control systems are established/maintained to monitor activities, identify problem areas, and initiate timely corrective action.</p> <p>Explores new partnerships and innovative ways to carry out AMS mission with fewer resources. Leverages budget realities (diminishing resources) and best practices to remain efficient, effective, relevant and valued. Procures, develops and uses resources to efficiently and effectively support AMS programs.</p> <p>Adjusts spending priorities such as travel, training, equipment purchases, and vacancies by improving business processes, adapting and innovating procedures in these areas.</p> <p>Continuously seeks to improve business processes, sharing those efforts with other programs to improve overall Department performance. Fully leverage the expertise and commitment of the workforce to meet challenges and Agency mission.</p> <p>Uses technology innovation and organizational synergies to meet the needs of American agriculture.</p> <p>Evaluates and develops fee schedules that encourage increased efficiency and cost reductions while maintaining high quality services. Develops a long term user fee plan that provides for future adjustments.</p> <p>Manages resources in a manner that fosters an environment that upholds civil rights standards and is inclusive of a diverse workforce.</p>	
Rating Official Narrative: <i>(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)</i>	
Critical Element Rating – Business Acumen	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Level 1

Critical Element 4. Building Coalitions	Weight: 10%
Solicits and considers feedback from internal and external stakeholders or customers. Coordinates with appropriate parties to maximize input from the widest range of appropriate stakeholders to facilitate an open exchange of opinion from diverse groups and strengthen internal and external support. Explains, advocates, and expresses facts and ideas in a convincing manner and negotiates with individuals and groups internally and externally, as appropriate. Develops a professional network with other organizations and identifies the internal and external politics that affect the work of the organization.	
<p>Agency-Specific Performance Requirements</p> <p>Ensures a high degree of responsiveness to organizational leadership, the public, and internal and external customers. Continuously reviews and monitors organizational performance to achieve Agency mission results and considers the customer's point of view. Consults, collaborates and builds partnerships with agencies and other stakeholders, and takes decisive actions in accordance with law, regulation, and Department policy.</p>	

Systematically listens to customers and gathers their feedback, actively seeking to identify their needs and expectations, and effectively communicating those needs and expectations to employees. Ensures employees are prompt, professional, fair and responsible to the circumstances of individual customers to the extent permitted by law and regulation.

Supports AMS customers in making verifiable market-enhancing claims about how their products are produced, processed and packaged.

Collaborates with stakeholders to help them succeed, tell their story and remain competitive in a global marketplace. Leverages the expertise and commitment of the workforce to meet the agency mission and future challenges.

Engages with internal Functional Committees to enhance processes and procedures and improve communication.

Utilizes outreach strategies to network with minority organizations and institutions as well as, advocates for women, minorities, and/or persons with disabilities.

Rating Official Narrative: *(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)*

<i>Critical Element Rating – Building Coalitions</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
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Critical Element 5. Results Driven				Weight: 35%		
<p>Agency Goals/Objectives for Current FY: Must have at least 1 result (may have more than 5) This critical element includes specific performance requirements expected of the executive during the appraisal period, focusing on measurable outcomes from the strategic plan or other measurable outputs and outcomes clearly aligned to organizational goals and objectives. At a minimum, the performance plan will include performance requirements (including measures, targets, timelines, or quality descriptors, as appropriate) describing the range of performance at Level 3 for each result specified. It is recommended to also establish the threshold measures/targets for Levels 5 and 2.</p> <p>Alignment--cite relevant goals/objectives, page numbers, from the Strategic Plan, Congressional Budget Justification/Annual Performance Plan, or other organizational planning document in the designated section for each performance requirement specified.</p> <p>As applicable, executives will be appraised on their execution of their agency's civil rights plan.</p>						
<p>Performance Requirement 1: Working Across AMS Programs Work across AMS program areas and other agencies to provide seamless and comparable services to similar customers and to improve relations and agency-wide collaboration; improve programs, services, and business processes.</p>			<p>Strategic Alignment: -Departmental Blueprint for Stronger Service -AMS Strategic Goal 6</p>			
<i>Performance Requirement 1 Rating</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<p>Performance Requirement 2: Cultural Transformation Leads the organization to eliminate barriers to improve operational and service excellence in work-life and wellness, labor relations, process improvement, employee development, talent management, customer focus and community outreach, and hiring reform. Pursues workforce diversity through recruitment, outreach and employee development programs designed to enhance the hiring and retention of highly qualified employees from diverse backgrounds. Supports the strategic objectives and action items contained in the AMS Special Emphasis Assessment Plan.</p> <p>Exercises all of USDA's special hiring authorities designed to increase employment of veterans and individuals with disabilities and targeted disabilities.</p> <p>Actively engages in the transformation of USDA by supporting process improvements in the organization. Engage employees to transform USDA into a model agency.</p> <p>Ensures that activities and timeframes established in the AMS Cultural Transformation Act Plan are met by demonstrating support through allocation of resources and commitment of program area managers to support initiatives.</p>			<p>Strategic Alignment: -Secretary's Cultural Transformation Initiative -Secretary's Management Initiative 1</p>			
<i>Performance Requirement 2 Rating</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<p>Performance Requirement 3: Protect the Integrity of Organic Products Continue rigorous investigations of complaints of alleged violations. Ensure terms of trade arrangements are being met. Ensure complete and thorough audits of USDA accredited certifying agents.</p> <p>Address 90% of appeals cases received in FY 2015 through a decision,</p>			<p>Strategic Alignment: USDA Goal 1 AMS Strategic Goal 4</p>			

<p>settlement, or closure, in less than 180 days.</p> <p>Complete the investigation of 260 or more complaint cases during FY 2016.</p> <p>Work with AMS and USDA other government agencies to implement clear organic regulations, guidance, instructions and policy. Publish 1 proposed rule and 2 final guidance documents</p> <p>Support the work of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) to develop recommendations on organic standards. Support public engagement, transparency, and a fair process in the development of NOSB recommendations. Conduct one NOSB training session and two NOSB public meetings in FY 2016.</p> <p>Continue implementing sunset process by published federal register notice to renew 2016 sunset materials.</p>						
<p><i>Performance Requirement 3 Rating</i></p>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<p>Performance Requirement 4: Support organic market development Maintain organic integrity in a sound and sensible manner. Support affordable, accessible and attainable certification for all organic operations. Provide opportunities for new and beginning farmers to succeed in organic production and marketing. Provide training to certifiers, organic farmers and the organic trade on sound and sensible organic certification.</p> <p>Provide one in-person certifier training session that covers sound and sensible certification practices.</p> <p>Lead efforts to negotiate and finalize organic equivalence arrangements; successfully complete required peer assessments to maintain existing equivalency arrangements.</p> <p>Support projects that implement the USDA Organic Working Group (OWG) objectives for FY2016. All five OWG topic areas show measurable progress towards reaching their goals in supporting organic agriculture.</p>		<p>Strategic Alignment:</p> <p>USDA Goal 1</p> <p>AMS Strategic Goal 4</p>				
<p><i>Performance Requirement 4 Rating</i></p>		<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<p>Performance Requirement 5: Information Technology Work with certifiers to define and implement quality standards for the list of certified organic operations. Provide quarterly updates to the list of certified operations that includes updates on suspended, revoked and reinstated organic operations.</p> <p>Ensure that all certifiers provide data to the Organic Integrity Database.</p> <p>Build and generate dynamic reports and statistics from the Organic Integrity Database that support updated responses to data calls concerning number of certified operations, statistics for certified operations per state, and statistics related to adverse actions against operations.</p>		<p>Strategic Alignment:</p> <p>USDA Goal 1</p> <p>AMS Strategic Goal 4</p>				

<i>Performance Requirement 5 Rating</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
Rating Official Narrative: <i>(Mandatory for Level 5 and below Level 3 Element Ratings)</i>					
Performance Requirement 6: Support AMS Signature Process Improvement Support the implementation of the AMS Signature Process Improvement Initiative to improve the effectiveness of the Agency's operations.			Departmental Blueprint for Stronger Service AMS Strategic Goal 6		
<i>Performance Requirement 5 Rating</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1
<i>Critical Element Rating – Results Driven</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Level 1

Part 6: Summary Rating Narrative (Mandatory)

Part 7: Executive's Accomplishment Narrative (Mandatory)

Part 8: Agency Use

From: [Walker, Natosha - AMS](#) on behalf of [Coale, Dana - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Starmer, Elanor - AMS](#)
Subject: Performance Review - Miles McEvoy

From: [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#)
To: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#); [Brownlee, Jim - AMS](#)
Subject: Food Safety News Article on Organic
Date: Monday, May 12, 2014 9:22:09 AM

Good morning,

Here is the Food Safety News article. Fairly balanced and highlights USDA's support and views.

Thanks!

<http://www.foodsafetynews.com/2014/05/controversy-erupts-over-synthetics-in-organic-agriculture/#.U3DESXcpC70> .

Controversy Erupts Over Process of Allowing Non-Organics in Organic Agriculture

By [Cookson Beecher](#) | May 12, 2014

Rumblings over a new USDA policy about which synthetic (non-organic) materials can be used in organic agriculture sparked heated blowback on legal and political fronts during a four-day meeting late last month of the [National Organic Standards Board](#) (NOSB) in Texas.

Those against the new policy believe it could make it more difficult for the NOSB to phase out allowable synthetic and non-organic materials from organic foods and therefore weaken organic standards.



Members of the Organic Consumers Association held a protest at the recent National Organic Standards Board meeting in San Antonio, TX.

Attracting the most media attention was the April 29 arrest of Alexis Baden-Mayer, political director of the [Organic Consumers Association](#), who was handcuffed and hauled away by the police. Banner waving and chanting against the change also marked opposition tactics during the meeting.

"It's a terrible change to the process," Baden-Mayer, who was charged with criminal trespass and released on a \$1,000 bond, [told](#) a Capital Press reporter.

Then there was a letter fired off to USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack several days before the meeting by two members of Congress — the principal authors of the 1990 Organic Foods Production Act — expressing dismay over the new policy and asking USDA to review it.

Synthetics? What's this all about?

But wait. Isn't food bearing the organic seal supposed to be produced without the use of materials such as synthetic pesticides and factory-made fertilizers? The answer to that question is, "Yes, almost always — but not always."

It turns out that some crops or livestock can't be raised without synthetic materials. But that doesn't mean farmers get a free pass to use them forever. Instead, these materials are put on a "[National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances](#)," which lists exceptions to the ban on synthetics in organic farming. After five years, under a "sunset process," the material in question is to be automatically removed from the list — unless a two-thirds majority of the NOSB votes to keep it on the list.

At least, that's the way it's been done for the past decade.

The underlying goal of the "sunset process" is to motivate the industry to find or develop organic alternative materials. This, in turn, fits in with the consumer's desire to keep foods bearing the organic seal as "pure as possible."

An important part of this process is the opportunity for interested parties such as farmers, processors, consumers and organic groups to submit comments during two public meetings.

A good example can be seen in what happened to hops, a key ingredient in beer. Previously, non-organic hops were allowed to be used in organically made beer. But, in 2010, the NOSB allowed conventional hops to sunset from the list, effective 2013. As a result, only hops that are grown organically may now be used in beer that's labeled organic.

Although the system appeared to be working well, USDA reversed this policy last fall without going through a public process to do so. Now, even though the materials will still be reviewed, a synthetic material will stay on the National List unless a two-thirds majority of the board votes to remove it. In other words, it's going to be harder — some opponents say almost impossible — to remove these materials from the list.

"The land of the midnight sun," is how Mark Kastel, co-founder of organic industry watchdog [Cornucopia](#), describes this change to the sunset process. It matters, he said, because it's about consumer confidence and the integrity of the industry.

"Organics is not supposed to be controlled by corporate interests or by minions at the USDA," he told **Food Safety News**. "It's supposed to be an alternative to conventional agriculture, and the lines between the two shouldn't be blurred. The NOSB plays a key role in this. The NOSB meetings are where the rubber hits the road."

Kastel said that the concern now is that a troubling number of [current NOSB members](#) are representatives of industry heavyweights such as Earthbound Farm, Driscolls, Whole Foods, CROPP Cooperative and Zirkle, although smaller-scale farmers and processors are also in this mix of members.

"It's a power grab," he said, referring to the larger companies and their increasing influence on the industry, which, at its beginning, was rooted in family-scale farms and operations.

But Laura Batcha, CEO and executive director of the [Organic Trade Association](#), told **Food Safety News** that what's referred to as "big food" or "big ag" sometimes involves large companies contracting with many small farmers and processors.

"It's potentially misleading to draw bright lines between the two," she said.

Why does this matter to you and me?

A lot of it comes down to who's running the show. At the heart of the controversy is NOSB's role in providing advice to USDA on which substances should be allowed or prohibited in organic farming and processing based on criteria under the Organic Foods Production Act.

Established in 1990, the 15-member citizen oversight board represents different sectors of the industry: growers, processors, retailers, consumers, environmentalists, a scientist and an organic certification representative. As such, it is not supposed to be in the grip of USDA, but rather an entity that the agency turns to for advice and counsel on this issue and others.

Cornucopia's co-director Will Fantle said the [board was created to be a buffer](#) to prevent total control of the organic sector by USDA and big agribusiness interests.

However, as organics has grown from a "step-child" of agriculture to a full-blown powerhouse, with an expected \$35 billion in revenues this year, some smaller-scale organic farmers and processors say "Big Ag" has jumped on board, many times buying smaller organic farms and companies. Fearing their voices are being drowned out, they point to the current NOSB membership as an example. But Miles McEvoy, deputy administrator of USDA's National Organic Program, who sent out the [memo](#) about the new "sunset" policy, said in an email to **Food Safety News** that the reforms protect organic farmers and consumers by ensuring that any changes to organic rules, including adding items to the list of approved synthetic materials, are only made with the support of a strong majority of the board.

"We are also increasing public engagement and transparency with more opportunity for public comment," he said. "We believe providing greater authority to the citizen advisory board and increasing public input are positive changes. USDA strongly supports organic agriculture, and is responsible for establishing a level playing field for all organic farms and businesses. Public participation and comments are vital to USDA's work in organics. We encourage all members of the public to take part in future formal comment opportunities."

Under the "next steps" listed in his memo is a bulleted item stating that streamlining the process involved in the "sunset process" should be continued.

OTA's Batcha said this streamlining will free up staff to put more effort into other areas of concern to organic consumers such as animal welfare and enforcement.

"Consumers' perspectives move quickly and the regulations also need to move quickly," she said.

The new policy ("Sunset" Review of the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances) was put up on the Federal Register on Sept. 13, 2013, for public inspection and replaces the March 4, 2010, memorandum from the National Organic Program to the NOSB regarding the "sunset process."

What about the list?

So what are some of the non-organic materials on the list? And what does this have to do with food safety?

One of them is as benign as baking powder. It's there simply because there is no organic substitute for it.

But some others have raised controversy, with petitions against their use attracting tens of thousands of signatures or more.

One of these is carrageenan, which is used as a thickener and emulsifier in products such as ice cream and nut milks. The controversy stems from some studies that say it may be harmful to the intestinal tract; other studies dispute that. OCA's petition to remove it from the National List has

been signed by 15,050 organic consumers.

Another is methione, a synthetic feed additive that provides an essential amino acid needed by fast-growing chickens, which OCA says don't have access to pasture and are being raised on a nutrition-poor diet of corn and soy. OCA's petition demanding real outdoor access for organic chickens has been signed by 36,947 organic consumers.

During the recent NOSB meeting, some producers wanted to see the allowable amount increased that would be fed to chickens during certain stages of their growth, but the board chose not to vote on it.

Also on the National List are synthetic nutrient vitamins and minerals and also sausage casings from the intestines of non-organic animals, which opponents say are likely produced on "factory farms." USDA provides information [here](#) about the National List sunset dates.

Some good news on antibiotics

A significant move during the recent NOSB meeting came when members agreed not to extend the sunset deadline for ending use of the antibiotic streptomycin, which is used to control fire blight, a potentially devastating disease that can hit apple and pear orchards. Instead, the board voted in favor of the Oct. 21, 2014, expiration date.

Members went one step further and chose to stop the use of all antibiotics in organic agriculture. "USDA Organic is now 100-percent antibiotic-free!" states an [article](#) on the Organic Consumers Association's website.

Politicians weigh in

U.S. Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT) and U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR), in their April 24 [letter](#) to USDA Secretary Vilsack, described the new sunset policy as "a conflict with both the letter and intent of the statute (the Organic Food Production Act)." The letter also decries that "such a substantive policy was made without the benefit of full notice and comment."

According to the letter, the new policy "turns the sunset policy of the Organic Foods Production Act on its head" and "is counter to the key principals of public involvement and oversight in the organic certification process as well as adhering to the highest standards possible for organic food production."

The two senators urged Vilsack to reverse this policy change and add this suggestion. ". . . if, after consulting with Congress and the full spectrum of the affected organic community, you still believe this change is necessary, we strongly recommend that you use the full notice and common rulemaking procedures to do so."

As of May 11, Vilsack had not yet replied to the letter.

But, in an email to **Food Safety News**, McEvoy of USDA said that while the agency does not intend to revisit the new process, it has taken steps to notify various congressional offices about these changes.

"We have taken into account concerns raised by this process, and we are working on clearing up misinformation and educating consumers and organic stakeholders on this issue," echoed Sam Jones-Ellard, public affairs specialist with USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service.

From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Morris, Craig - AMS](#)
Subject: FW: Meeting follow-up and regional AP data
Date: Monday, June 29, 2015 11:58:42 AM

PVP interest

From: McKalip, Doug - OSEC
Sent: Monday, June 29, 2015 10:16 AM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS; Schechtman, Michael
Subject: FW: Meeting follow-up and regional AP data

Fyi...

From: Charlie Brown [[mailto:\[REDACTED\]@\[REDACTED\].com](mailto:[REDACTED]@[REDACTED].com)]
Sent: Friday, June 26, 2015 12:48 PM
To: Logan Peterman
Cc: McKalip, Doug - OSEC; alavigne@amseed.org; Lynn Clarkson; Michelle Klieger
Subject: Re: Meeting follow-up and regional AP data

Doug,

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to meet with us last week. I appreciate the concern of USDA for IP issues in organic and non-GE seed, and to take a look at possibilities of moving something forward that is based on data, stakeholder involvement and economic practicality. I was encouraged in your statement that this is not a food safety issue, but a seed purity issue.

I realize we are still at discussion stage, but would like you to know of some groundwork that has been done. If it makes sense to let the market forces determine what is possible and practical regarding adventitious presence(AP) of GE in crops, an option is to allow for information sharing. One option would be to setup a sister website to AOSCA's Organic Seed Finder website, that could serve as a 'clearing house' for seed purity issues. It could include a voluntary listing of seed production standards seed companies are currently using, which would be educational on many fronts. Other points of interest could include data and education regarding AP sampling issues, gene-flow through pollen etc. Chet Bouroff of AOSCA has been contacted about this and is interested in proceeding, his first comment, it must be funded. Perhaps an agenda item we could consider is a brainstorm session of how this could happen.

I can't help but think that with the resources of USDA, NASS, AMS there is data already being collected that if coordinated, could be adapted and used to the benefit of the IP issues. what data do we need to bring to the path forward? If something critical not being collected, how would that be accomplished?

Have a question, if I may, would like to present our Purity Plus(tm) Quality Program to USDA's PVP program, could you let me know with whom I need to contact? It has been vetted nationally by AOSCA, but feel this would be also a good thing to do.

Could I ask also to have you forward this to Miles and Michael, as I do not have their email address as well.

Miles and Betsy did a great job at ASTA Organic Seed Committee presenting the resources of USDA to the seed trade and answering questions. The bridge between grows stronger all the time.

I seem to have a passion for seed purity and would very much invite the opportunity to do what I could towards this in the future.

Thanks and best regards,

Charlie Brown

Brownseed Genetics, LLC

Charles M. Brown, President
N1279 530th Street P.O. Box 7
Bay City, WI 54723 USA
715.594.3355
715.594.3390 fax
(b) (6) mobile

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PLEASE CONSIDER YOUR ENVIRONMENT BEFORE PRINTING.

On Mon, Jun 22, 2015 at 12:28 PM, Logan Peterman <logan.peterman@organicvalley.coop> wrote:

Good afternoon Doug,

Firstly, thank you again for making time to discuss organic & IP seed purity issues with us last week. I was encouraged by your thoughtful questions, and I hope we can continue the conversation to detail practical steps moving forward.

In follow-up to our conversation, I've attached an executive summary of the 2 year corn trial data I mentioned regarding differing levels of GM presence in seed and the resulting feed grain. While this report only represents a small sample set, I do think the testing model allows for a fairly powerful dataset with regard to allocating the source of GM presence from either the seed or the in-field pollen flow. Please take a look over it and let me know if you have questions, or suggestions for researchers that may help us to continue this effort and further assess the state of

conditions in the countryside.

If I may, I'd like to make two requests of you Doug.

- Firstly, please forward this email to both Miles and Michael, I don't have their email addresses but would like them to also have this report for their reference.
- Secondly, you mentioned that a Post-doc was doing to literature review on the efficacy of common windblown pollen mitigation strategies (windbreaks, buffers size, etc.) What is the name of that Post-doc? I am very interested to see the results of that work if you are willing to share it (when completed in Sept. that is), and would also potentially like to get directly in touch with that researcher to further discuss some of the nuances of pollen flow on a landscape scale.

Again, many thanks for your time, and I'll look forward to scheduling some next steps with this group to continue the conversation.

In cooperation,

Logan Peterman

Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative
Farm Resources Manager

One Organic Way

La Farge, WI 54639

Direct Phone: [608.625.3226](tel:608.625.3226)

www.organicvalley.coop

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PLEASE CONSIDER YOUR ENVIRONMENT BEFORE PRINTING.

From: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#)
To: [Walker, Natosha - AMS](#)
Subject: FW: Accomplishments
Date: Monday, October 03, 2016 5:21:58 PM
Attachments: [McEvoy-2016Accomplishments.docx](#)

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Friday, September 16, 2016 4:14 PM
To: Morris, Erin - AMS
Subject: RE: Accomplishments

Updated accomplishments attached.

Miles

From: Morris, Erin - AMS
Sent: Tuesday, September 06, 2016 4:19 PM
To: AMS - All Deputy Administrators <AllDeputyAdministrators@ams.usda.gov>
Subject: Accomplishments

All,

A few folks have asked about their accomplishments as they pertain to the FEVS results. Please update your accomplishments to include information about your FEVS results under the Leading People element and resubmit them no later than September 16th. Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Erin

Erin Morris
Associate Administrator/
Chief Operating Officer
USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Room 3068

(b) (6)

SES Performance Accomplishments Report – FY 2016

McEvoy, Miles V.	Deputy Administrator	AMS National Organic Program
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Critical Element 1 – Leading Change (Weight 15%):

(b) (6)



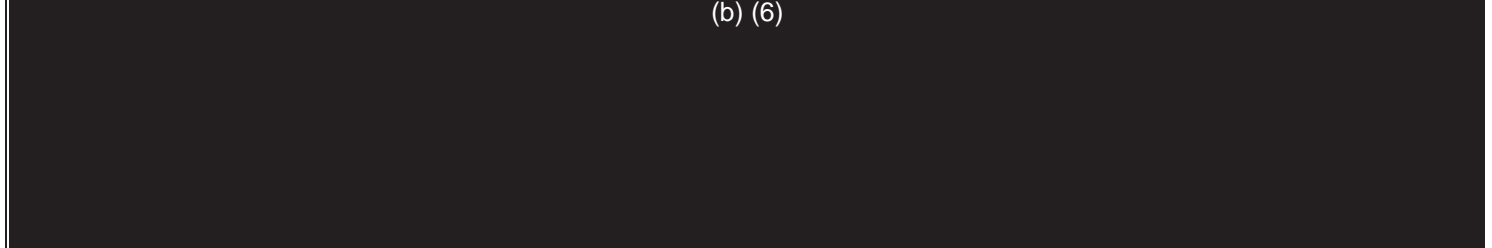
Critical Element 2 – Leading People (Weight 30%):

(b) (6)



Critical Element 3 – Business Acumen (Weight 10%):

(b) (6)



(b) (6)

Critical Element 4 – Building Coalitions (Weight 10%):

(b) (6)

Critical Element 5 – Results Driven (Weight 35%):

Performance Requirement 1 – Working Across AMS Programs:

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 2 – Cultural Transformation:

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 3 – Protect Integrity of Organic Products:

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 4 – Support Organic Market Development:

(b) (6)

(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 5 – Information Technology: (b) (6)
(b) (6)

Performance Requirement 6: Support AMS Signature Process Improvements: (b) (6)
(b) (6)

Text below this point is template ST/SL text that cannot be deleted.

Choose an item. **Performance Accomplishments Report – FY 2016**

Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
Element 1 - Choose an item.: Click here to enter text.		
Element 2 - Choose an item.: Click here to enter text.		
Element 3 - Choose an item.: Click here to enter text.		
Element 4 - Choose an item.: Click here to enter text.		
Optional Critical Element(s) : Click here to enter text.		

Choose an item. **Performance Accomplishments Report – FY 2016**

Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
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Element 1 – Choose an item.: Accomplishments for Element 1 – Table Format

Exceeds	Met	Did Not Meet	Performance Goal/Measure	Provide a brief and concise statement explaining how the result exceeded the goal/measure or why it was not met.
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Element 2 – Choose an item.: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Element 3 – Choose an item.: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Element 4 – Choose an item.: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Optional Critical Element(s): [Click here to enter text.](#)

From: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#)
To: [Summers, Bruce - AMS](#)
Subject: Fwd: as requested
Date: Wednesday, March 09, 2016 8:31:16 AM
Attachments: [2013 Award Nomination for C. Morris \(Signed\).docx](#)
[ATT00001.htm](#)
[2013 Award Nomination M. McEvoy \(signed\).docx](#)
[ATT00002.htm](#)
[2013 Distinguished Award C. Morris 030113.docx](#)
[ATT00003.htm](#)
[2014 Award Nomination M. McEvoy 043014.docx](#)
[ATT00004.htm](#)
[2014 Distinguished Award C. Morris 043014.docx](#)
[ATT00005.htm](#)

Yippee

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Jimenez, Sonia - AMS" <Sonia.Jimenez@ams.usda.gov>
Date: March 9, 2016 at 8:30:17 AM EST
To: "Morris, Erin - AMS" <erin.morris@ams.usda.gov>
Subject: as requested

Let me know if you need anything else. I sent you all I found but some may be duplicates.

Miles V. McEvoy, Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program
Agricultural Marketing Service • United States Department of Agriculture

Biography

Miles McEvoy has served as the Deputy Administrator for the National Organic Program (NOP) since November 2009, when the NOP was elevated to be its own independent program within the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). As Deputy Administrator, Mr. McEvoy leads three National Organic Program Divisions (Standards Division, Compliance and Enforcement Division, and Accreditation and International Activities Division) and oversees the work of more than 90 third party organizations that certify more than 28,000 organic farms and businesses around the world.

Prior to his appointment in AMS, Mr. McEvoy established and then led the Washington State Department of Agriculture's (WSDA) Organic Food Program, one of the nation's first state organic certification programs. In 2001, he helped establish the WSDA Small Farm and Direct Marketing Program. From 1993 to 1995, Mr. McEvoy was the founding Director of The Food Alliance, a program that blends sustainable farming practices and social welfare components into an eco-label program. In 1998, he helped establish the National Association of State Organic Programs and served as President from 2001-2004 and 2007-2009. Mr. McEvoy has inspected hundreds of organic farms and processors, has led standards development in state and federal governments, and has been involved in many investigations and enforcement actions.

Mr. McEvoy received his Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts degrees from the Evergreen State College and his Masters in Entomology from Cornell University. Mr. McEvoy lives with his wife in Washington, D.C.

Career Status: Senior Executive Service, Civil Service

Distinguished Federal Service Award Nomination

Miles V. McEvoy, Deputy Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service, National Organic Program

Summary

Mr. Miles V. McEvoy is nominated for the President's Award for Distinguished Federal Civilian Service for his exemplary leadership as Deputy Administrator for the Agricultural Marketing Service, National Organic Program. Mr. McEvoy is responsible for protecting the integrity of the organic food industry, one of the fastest growing agricultural sectors in the United States. United States consumer sales of organic products accounted for \$31.4 billion in sales in 2011, and organic food share has grown to 4.2% of total food sales (Source: Organic Trade Association). As of the end of 2011, 17,281 organic farms and businesses in the United States were certified to the USDA organic regulations. Worldwide, there are now 28,386 certified organic operators across 133 countries.

As the leader of the National Organic Program, Mr. McEvoy has primary responsibility for developing, administering, and enforcing the USDA organic regulations. This includes developing and interpreting the organic standards; enforcing organic production, handling, and labeling rules; and accrediting, auditing, and training organic certifying organizations. Mr. McEvoy's leadership has facilitated new organic equivalency agreements that increase trade opportunities for United States organic farms and businesses. He has brought together diverse and often conflicting industry and community stakeholders to collaborate on shared national standards for organic food; overseen the organic certification work of over 90 USDA-accredited organic certifying agents; and guided the development of a compliance and enforcement team that builds consumer confidence in the integrity of the organic market.

In the area of standards development, Mr. McEvoy has successfully led the development and publication of rules that have clarified expectations for organic producers and built consumer confidence that rules are being interpreted and applied evenly and fairly. Particularly important rules have included a new Access to Pasture Rule, a Residue Testing Rule, and multiple rules to outline the substances that may and may not be used in organic agriculture. Mr. McEvoy also led the development of a Program Handbook that compiles guidance, instructions, and policies in one complete document to facilitate community understanding and action. In all of this work, Mr. McEvoy has built strong and sustained relationships with other USDA agencies, and leaders at the Environmental Protection Agency and the Food and Drug Administration.

Mr. McEvoy has been a key leader in international activities related to organic agriculture. He was a leading member of the USDA team that negotiated the United States-European Union Equivalency Arrangement announced in June 2012, which opened up a \$24 billion dollar market to U.S. organic producers and handlers. Mr. McEvoy has also overseen the ongoing implementation of the United States - Canadian organic equivalency arrangement, and is responsible for organic recognition agreements with India, Israel, Japan, and New Zealand. Mr. McEvoy is responsible for the oversight of more than 90 USDA-accredited organic certifying agent organizations in the United States and other countries, which involves regular audits, ongoing training, and where necessary, corrective actions. He also led the evaluation and issuance of weather-related temporary regulatory variances, to help producers struggling with challenges such as the 2012 drought.

Leading the National Organic Program in an "Age of Enforcement," Mr. McEvoy built a high-performing Compliance and Enforcement team, launching new policies to streamline the investigation, enforcement, and appeals process; improving complaint handling to significantly decrease processing time; and reviewing and approving hundreds of case closures. Enforcement actions have dramatically increased under his guidance, with more than 30 civil penalties totaling over \$340,000 issued to those willfully violating the organic regulations. Mr. McEvoy also initiated a project to improve the timeliness of appeals, reducing in half the average time required to issue appeal decisions. Mr. McEvoy's team has also supported the Department of Justice in its investigations of high profile organic fraud cases, and has developed an excellent relationship with the Office of Inspector General's Investigative Division to address Hotline complaints and criminal investigations. Finally, he implemented a new practice of publishing fraudulent certificates, to deter fraud.

Mr. McEvoy manages a myriad of other activities associated with leading the National Organic Program. He led the development of the National Organic Program's first strategic plan, which received wide praise from the organic community. He managed a \$22 million organic certification cost share program, helping reimburse organic producers and handlers for costs associated with organic certification. Mr. McEvoy also guides the work of the National Organic Standards Board, a citizen advisory committee that provides advice to the National Organic Program.

Communication and outreach has also been a priority for Mr. McEvoy. He has improved program communication and transparency, through website improvements, by publishing a regular newsletter, and by communicating through the program's Organic Insider email service. In just two years, this electronic email service has grown to more than 14,000 subscribers. Externally, Mr. McEvoy is a frequent invited speaker at organic conferences, engages in listening sessions, and conducts training events both domestically and internationally. This outreach has led to a better understanding of the National Organic Program, increased consumer confidence, and greater compliance with the regulations.

Since 2009, Mr. McEvoy has led the expansion and development of the National Organic Program, building and coaching a leadership team of diverse professionals from a variety of backgrounds, and developing a team of specialists with deep policy and technical expertise. Mr. McEvoy is widely respected by industry members, advocacy groups, organic certifying agents, other AMS leaders, and his program team for his collaborative and transparent style, his deep technical expertise and insight, and his passion for the principles and values of organic agriculture.

Under Mr. McEvoy's leadership, the National Organic Program established a vision of "Organic Integrity from Farm to Table; Consumers Trust the Organic Label," and under his leadership, this vision is being realized for organic businesses and consumers.

Past Awards

- In 2010, Mr. McEvoy received the Outstanding Cross-Agency Team Award from the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, for his leadership facilitating USDA international trade agreement projects.

- In 2009, Mr. McEvoy received an honorary award from the Washington State Department of Agriculture, in appreciation for his outstanding service to the Citizens of Washington State from 1988 to 2009.
- In 2004, Mr. McEvoy received an honorary award from Tilth Producers of Washington at their 30th Anniversary Conference, with a citation celebrating his "commitment to a new vision of Agriculture, and his leadership to develop an Organic Certification Program that embodies integrity and cooperation."

Award Citation

This award celebrates Mr. Miles V. McEvoy's exemplary leadership as Deputy Administrator for the Agricultural Marketing Service, National Organic Program. His leadership has led to increased trade opportunities for American Organic Producers, industry collaboration, and consumer confidence in the organic label.

Statement of Confidence

The USDA Agriculture Marketing Service has full confidence that there is nothing in the nominee's background that would embarrass the President.



David R. Shipman
Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service

Miles V. McEvoy, Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program
Agricultural Marketing Service • United States Department of Agriculture

Biography

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Mr. Miles V. McEvoy is nominated for the President's Award for Distinguished Federal Civilian Service for his exemplary leadership as Deputy Administrator for the Agricultural Marketing Service, National Organic Program. Mr. McEvoy is responsible for protecting the integrity of the organic food industry, one of the fastest growing agricultural sectors in the United States. United States consumer sales of organic products accounted for \$31.4 billion in sales in 2011, and organic food share has grown to 4.2% of total food sales (Source: Organic Trade Association). As of the end of 2011, 17,281 organic farms and businesses in the United States were certified to the USDA organic regulations. Worldwide, there are now 28,386 certified organic operators across 133 countries.

As the leader of the National Organic Program, Mr. McEvoy has primary responsibility for developing, administering, and enforcing the USDA organic regulations. This includes developing and interpreting the organic standards; enforcing organic production, handling, and labeling rules; and accrediting, auditing, and training organic certifying organizations. Mr. McEvoy's leadership has facilitated new organic equivalency agreements that increase trade opportunities for United States organic farms and businesses. He has brought together diverse and often conflicting industry and community stakeholders to collaborate on shared national standards for organic food; overseen the organic certification work of over 90 USDA-accredited organic certifying agents; and guided the development of a compliance and enforcement team that builds consumer confidence in the integrity of the organic market.

In the area of standards development, Mr. McEvoy has successfully led the development and publication of rules that have clarified expectations for organic producers and built consumer confidence that rules are being interpreted and applied evenly and fairly. Particularly important rules have included a new Access to Pasture Rule, a Residue Testing Rule, and multiple rules to outline the substances that may and may not be used in organic agriculture. Mr. McEvoy also led the development of a Program Handbook that compiles guidance, instructions, and policies in one complete document to facilitate community understanding and action. In all of this work, Mr. McEvoy has built strong and sustained relationships with other USDA agencies, and leaders at the Environmental Protection Agency and the Food and Drug Administration.

Mr. McEvoy has been a key leader in international activities related to organic agriculture. He was a leading member of the USDA team that negotiated the United States-European Union Equivalency Arrangement announced in June 2012, which opened up a \$24 billion dollar market to U.S. organic producers and handlers. Mr. McEvoy has also overseen the ongoing implementation of the United States - Canadian organic equivalency arrangement, and is responsible for organic recognition agreements with India, Israel, Japan, and New Zealand. Mr. McEvoy is responsible for the oversight of more than 90 USDA-accredited organic certifying agent organizations in the United States and other countries, which involves regular audits, ongoing training, and where necessary, corrective actions. He also led the evaluation and issuance of weather-related temporary regulatory variances, to help producers struggling with challenges such as the 2012 drought.

Leading the National Organic Program in an "Age of Enforcement," Mr. McEvoy built a high-performing Compliance and Enforcement team, launching new policies to streamline the investigation, enforcement, and appeals process; improving complaint handling to significantly decrease processing time; and reviewing and approving hundreds of case closures. Enforcement actions have dramatically increased under his guidance, with more than 30 civil penalties totaling over \$340,000 issued to those willfully violating the organic regulations. Mr. McEvoy also initiated a project to improve the timeliness of appeals, reducing in half the average time required to issue appeal decisions. Mr. McEvoy's team has also supported the Department of Justice in its investigations of high profile organic fraud cases, and has developed an excellent relationship with the Office of Inspector General's Investigative Division to address Hotline complaints and criminal investigations. Finally, he implemented a new practice of publishing fraudulent certificates, to deter fraud.

Mr. McEvoy manages a myriad of other activities associated with leading the National Organic Program. He led the development of the National Organic Program's first strategic plan, which received wide praise from the organic community. He managed a \$22 million organic certification cost share program, helping reimburse organic producers and handlers for costs associated with organic certification. Mr. McEvoy also guides the work of the National Organic Standards Board, a citizen advisory committee that provides advice to the National Organic Program.

Communication and outreach has also been a priority for Mr. McEvoy. He has improved program communication and transparency, through website improvements, by publishing a regular newsletter, and by communicating through the program's Organic Insider email service. In just two years, this electronic email service has grown to more than 14,000 subscribers. Externally, Mr. McEvoy is a frequent invited speaker at organic conferences, engages in listening sessions, and conducts training events both domestically and internationally. This outreach has led to a better understanding of the National Organic Program, increased consumer confidence, and greater compliance with the regulations.

Since 2009, Mr. McEvoy has led the expansion and development of the National Organic Program, building and coaching a leadership team of diverse professionals from a variety of backgrounds, and developing a team of specialists with deep policy and technical expertise. Mr. McEvoy is widely respected by industry members, advocacy groups, organic certifying agents, other AMS leaders, and his program team for his collaborative and transparent style, his deep technical expertise and insight, and his passion for the principles and values of organic agriculture.

Under Mr. McEvoy's leadership, the National Organic Program established a vision of "Organic Integrity from Farm to Table; Consumers Trust the Organic Label," and under his leadership, this vision is being realized for organic businesses and consumers.

Past Awards

- In 2010, Mr. McEvoy received the Outstanding Cross-Agency Team Award from the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, for his leadership facilitating USDA international trade agreement projects.

- In 2009, Mr. McEvoy received an honorary award from the Washington State Department of Agriculture, in appreciation for his outstanding service to the Citizens of Washington State from 1988 to 2009.
- In 2004, Mr. McEvoy received an honorary award from Tilth Producers of Washington at their 30th Anniversary Conference, with a citation celebrating his "commitment to a new vision of Agriculture, and his leadership to develop an Organic Certification Program that embodies integrity and cooperation."

Award Citation

This award celebrates Mr. Miles V. McEvoy's exemplary leadership as Deputy Administrator for the Agricultural Marketing Service, National Organic Program. His leadership has led to increased trade opportunities for American Organic Producers, industry collaboration, and consumer confidence in the organic label.

Anne L. Alonzo
Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service

From: [Howard, David- OSEC](#)
To: [Morris, Erin - AMS](#)
Subject: FW: USDA Statement on Complaints
Date: Thursday, October 22, 2015 12:08:26 PM

Erin,

Can we chat about where things stand on this?

David Howard
Chief of Staff, MRP
Desk: 202-720-5759

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2015 9:32 AM
To: Alonzo, Anne - AMS; Eckhouse, Sara - AMS; Howard, David- OSEC; Barnes, Rex - AMS; Rakola, Betsy - OSEC
Cc: Jones, Samuel - AMS; Bailey, Shayla - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: USDA Statement on Complaints

There continues to be requests for information regarding the Cornucopia complaints. I've received inquiries from accredited certifying agents and note chatter on social media sites. I'd like (b)(5)

[Redacted] Deliberative

The proposal is to:

- (b)(5) Deliberative
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USDA Statement on Complaints (10/21/2015)

USDA takes any complaints regarding our operations seriously, and that is why AMS looks into any formal complaints issued by outside groups. This was the case when the Cornucopia Institute filed a complaint earlier this year. AMS launched a thorough review and ultimately found and determined that the operations were in compliance and there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations. Furthermore, there is no investigation of the National Organic Program or its staff

happening by USDA's Inspector General—that is inaccurate. The focus on any one public servant in an attempt to damage his or her credibility is inappropriate and without merit. USDA values and has faith in Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy's leadership of the National Organic Program.

USDA's National Organic Program is the bedrock regulatory program responsible for developing national standards for organically-produced agricultural products. These standards assure consumers that products with the USDA organic seal meet consistent, uniform standards. The USDA organic seal and the NOP program itself have helped organic producers and businesses achieve unprecedented levels of growth for organically produced goods. The retail market for organic products is now valued at more than \$39 billion while USDA organic operations have grown more than 250% since 2002. USDA's National Organic Program is a leading global standard and major factor in this success.

Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

From: [Alonzo, Anne - AMS](#)
To: [Starmer, Elanor - OSEC](#)
Subject: Fwd: Cleared Statement
Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 2:15:57 PM

In case you did not receive.

Subject: RE: Cleared Statement

Here is the final from OC. Thanks!

USDA takes any complaints regarding our operations seriously, and that is why AMS looks into any formal complaints issued by outside groups. This was the case when the Cornucopia Institute filed a complaint earlier this year. AMS launched a thorough review and ultimately found and determined that the operations were in compliance and there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations. Furthermore, there is no investigation of the National Organic Program or its staff happening by USDA's Inspector General—that is inaccurate. The focus on any one public servant in an attempt to damage his or her credibility is inappropriate and without merit. USDA values and has faith in Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy's leadership of the National Organic Program.

USDA's National Organic Program is the bedrock regulatory program responsible for developing national standards for organically-produced agricultural products. These standards assure consumers that products with the USDA organic seal meet consistent, uniform standards. The USDA organic seal and the NOP program itself have helped organic producers and businesses achieve unprecedented levels of growth for organically produced goods. The retail market for organic products is now valued at more than \$39 billion while USDA organic operations have grown more than 250% since 2002. USDA's National Organic Program is a leading global standard and major factor in this success.

Sam Jones-Ellard
Public Affairs Specialist
USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service
(b) (6)

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From: Rakola, Betsy - OSEC
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 12:23 PM
To: Jones, Samuel - AMS; Alonzo, Anne - AMS; Eckhouse, Sara - AMS; Morris, Erin - AMS; Barnes, Rex - AMS; Summers, Bruce - AMS; McEvoy, Miles - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Cc: Maloney, Wayne - AMS; Bailey, Shayla - AMS
Subject: RE: Cleared Statement

Just spoke with Joanne Peters – (b)(5) Deliberative

From: Jones, Samuel - AMS

Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 12:19 PM

To: Alonzo, Anne - AMS; Eckhouse, Sara - AMS; Morris, Erin - AMS; Barnes, Rex - AMS; Summers, Bruce - AMS; McEvoy, Miles - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS; Rakola, Betsy - OSEC

Cc: Maloney, Wayne - AMS; Bailey, Shayla - AMS

Subject: Cleared Statement

Here is the statement that has cleared OSEC. OC (b)(5) Deliberative

USDA takes any complaints regarding our operations seriously, and that is why AMS **reviews** any formal complaints issued by outside groups. This was the case when the Cornucopia Institute filed a complaint earlier this year. AMS launched a thorough review and ultimately found and determined that the operations were in compliance and there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations. Furthermore, there is no investigation of the National Organic Program or its staff happening by USDA's Inspector General—that is inaccurate. The focus on any one public servant in an attempt to damage his or her credibility is inappropriate and without merit. USDA values and has faith in Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy's leadership of the National Organic Program.

USDA's National Organic Program is the bedrock regulatory program responsible for developing national standards for organically-produced agricultural products. These standards assure consumers that products with the USDA organic seal meet consistent, uniform standards. The USDA organic seal and the NOP program itself have helped organic producers and businesses achieve unprecedented levels of growth for organically produced goods. The retail market for organic products has nearly doubled in value since 2009 while USDA certified organic operations continue to grow year to year. USDA's National Organic Program is a leading global standard and major factor in this success.

Thanks,

Sam Jones-Ellard

Public Affairs Specialist

USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service

(b) (6)

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From: [Rakola, Betsy - OSEC](#)
To: [Starmer, Elanor - OSEC](#)
Subject: Fwd: Stop the bullying
Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 7:42:54 AM
Attachments: [Cornucopia Complaints.docx](#)
[ATT00001.htm](#)
[Chronology.docx](#)
[ATT00002.htm](#)

Hey there - not sure if you saw Cornucopia's press release last Friday, claiming Miles is being investigated by OIG for ethics complaints. Politico picked it up yesterday. (b)(5) Deliberative

Betsy Rakola
Organic Policy Advisor, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service

Begin forwarded message:

From: "McEvoy, Miles - AMS" <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>
Date: October 19, 2015 at 9:16:23 PM EDT
To: "Alonzo, Anne - AMS" <Anne.Alonzo@ams.usda.gov>, "Barnes, Rex - AMS" <Rex.Barnes@ams.usda.gov>, "Eckhouse, Sara - AMS" <Sara.Eckhouse@ams.usda.gov>, "Rakola, Betsy - OSEC" <Betsy.Rakola@osec.usda.gov>, "Herrick, Matthew - OC" <Matthew.Herrick@oc.usda.gov>, "Morris, Erin - AMS" <erin.morris@ams.usda.gov>, "Bailey, Shayla - AMS" <Shayla.Bailey@ams.usda.gov>
Cc: "Tucker, Jennifer - AMS" <Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov>
Subject: Stop the bullying

Attached is some background on the Cornucopia complaints including details of AMS-NOP's review of the complaints, analysis of the photographic evidence, and how we consulted with AMS accredited certifiers on the compliance of these operations with the USDA organic regulations. You will see that AMS-NOP conducted a thorough review and determined that there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations of these certified organic operations.

(b)(5) Deliberative

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Thanks,

Miles V McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service

National Organic Program

Cornucopia Complaints

Talking Points

- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

Brief Chronology

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SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS

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Complaint Investigation Chronology

Case #: (b)(5) Deliberative
Subject: [Redacted]
Compliance Specialist: [Redacted]

Date	Activity
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From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#)
Subject: RE: Capital Press Inquiry
Date: Thursday, October 22, 2015 12:40:12 PM
Attachments: [cp_response-nop.docx](#)

(b)(5) Deliberative

From: Jones, Samuel - AMS
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2015 10:19 AM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Cc: Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: RE: Capital Press Inquiry

Thanks. Attached is the final that I can send along.

Sam Jones-Ellard
 Public Affairs Specialist
 USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service

(b) (6)

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From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2015 10:03 AM
To: Jones, Samuel - AMS
Cc: Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: RE: Capital Press Inquiry

[See attached](#)

From: Jones, Samuel - AMS
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2015 8:53 AM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Cc: Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: RE: Capital Press Inquiry

We could provide the list. Do you have the list that you could send along, and are you OK with the rest of the response? The story posted. The reporter will probably update the story if we still want to provide response. Thanks.

[Organic administrator faces backlash](#)

Many organic groups that once praised USDA deputy administrator Miles McEvoy are now fighting his policies in federal court.

When Miles McEvoy was put in charge of the USDA's National Organic Program in 2009, the

appointment was strongly applauded by organic and environmental groups.

Six years later, some of those same organizations are facing off against McEvoy in federal court over his administration of the program.

While the criticisms of his policies are numerous, most boil down to the allegation that McEvoy has weakened independent oversight of the program to make life easier for large agribusiness firms.

“There is a decisive split in the organic community and McEvoy is right in the middle of it,” said Mark Kastel, co-founder of the Cornucopia Institute, an organic watchdog group, who once praised the deputy administrator as “a true believer, not a PR figurehead.”

Prior to joining USDA, McEvoy was instrumental in shaping the organic inspection program at the Washington State Department of Agriculture and was involved in launching other organic programs and organizations.

“I don’t know if we had higher expectations than McEvoy deserved or if he changed,” Kastel says now.

A spokesperson for USDA said the agency “values and has faith in Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy’s leadership of the National Organic Program.”

The program thoroughly investigates any complaints about non-compliance with organic protocols and it’s inaccurate that USDA’s internal auditors are investigating McEvoy or his department, as claimed by the Cornucopia Institute, the spokesperson said.

A major point of contention is McEvoy’s decision to change the decision-making process for which synthetic substances are allowed to remain in organic production.

Traditionally, synthetic substances were removed from the list of approved organic materials unless two-thirds of the members of the National Organic Standards Board voted to retain them.

In 2013, the USDA changed the procedure so that two-thirds of the board must vote to remove a substance. In effect, a nine-person majority of the 15-member board can vote to remove a substance and its use would still be allowed.

Earlier this year, a lawsuit was filed against McEvoy and his superiors at USDA for allegedly violating administrative law by implementing the new rule without public comment.

Among the 14 plaintiffs were the Cornucopia Institute, the Organic Consumers Association and the environmental groups Center for Food Safety, Beyond Pesticides and Food & Water Watch.

A federal judge recently dismissed the case, ruling the plaintiffs lack legal standing to challenge the rule, but they will be allowed to re-file their complaint to correct the issues identified by the judge.

The dispute over synthetic materials is just one example of heavy-handedness during McEvoy’s tenure at USDA, Kastel said.

Kastel said McEvoy has disregarded recommendations by NOSB to prohibit the use of nanotechnology and hydroponics in organic production, failed to sufficiently investigate large livestock farms for compliance with organic rules and concealed the identities of scientists who review the safety of materials.

It’s possible that McEvoy is simply carrying out orders from USDA leaders, but he is implementing these policies with zeal and a “big smile on his face,” Kastel said.

“We have a government agency operating by fiat,” said Jay Feldman, executive director of Beyond Pesticides. “Miles just happens to be the man at the helm.”

Beyond Pesticides is involved in another lawsuit against McEvoy and USDA that alleges the agency has unlawfully permitted compost that's contaminated with pesticides to be used in organic production.

A federal judge recently rejected USDA's motion to dismiss the case.

Feldman said the National Organic Program under the Bush administration ignored recommendations by NOSB but at least followed procedures that allowed for public input on policies.

The situation under the Obama administration is "clearly worse. It's a clear violation of process and law," he said. "This is just bad for business because it undercuts public trust."

It appears that McEvoy is acting at the behest of large corporations that want to capitalize on the growing popularity of organics, said Barry Flamm, a former chairman of the NOSB who once considered McEvoy a "breath of fresh air."

"Organic has grown. It has become a money-maker," said Flamm.

McEvoy's policies seem aimed at removing obstacles to the way he wants to run the National Organic Program, such as when he disbanded a key policy-setting committee, stripped the NOSB of the ability to set its own agenda and otherwise undermined the board's authority.

"I was totally shocked, surprised and angry," Flamm said. "They really cut back on the public transparency. All these changes were made unilaterally."

###

Sam Jones-Ellard

Public Affairs Specialist

USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service

(b) (6)

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From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS

Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2015 8:25 PM

To: Jones, Samuel - AMS

Cc: Tucker, Jennifer - AMS

Subject: Re: Capital Press Inquiry

I'm

(b)(5) Deliberative

Miles V McEvoy

Deputy Administrator

USDA National Organic Program

On Oct 21, 2015, at 8:11 PM, "Jones, Samuel - AMS" <Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Thank you!

Sam Jones-Ellard
Public Affairs Specialist
USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service
(b) (6)

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From: Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2015 8:00 PM
To: Jones, Samuel - AMS; McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Subject: Re: Capital Press Inquiry

Just as a first pass, Here's my try on a response to highlighted question.

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

On Oct 21, 2015, at 7:45 PM, "Jones, Samuel - AMS" <Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Yes. Miles mentioned he was reviewing so (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted] Thanks!

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 21, 2015, at 7:41 PM, Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
<Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Sorry, I lost the bubble. (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

On Oct 21, 2015, at 1:07 PM, "Jones, Samuel - AMS"
<Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

I added stuff in. (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted] Thanks!

1) The voting procedures for the sunset of synthetic materials were changed in violation of administrative law to make it easier to keep such materials on the organic list.

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

2) Similarly, the agency has allowed the use of contaminated compost in violation of administrative law.

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

3) Mr. McEvoy has sought to undermine the authority of NOSB to set its own agenda and influence NOP policy by disregarding recommendations or disbanding/replacing committees that set policy.

4) Mr. McEvoy is motivated by pressure to appease large agribusiness elements in the organic industry and has reduced transparency in the NOP.

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

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5) I am assuming that Mr. McEvoy will disagree with these characterizations. If so, why does he believe groups like Cornucopia Institute and Beyond Pesticides, which previously praised him, are now so critical?

(b)(5) Deliberative

Sam Jones-Ellard
Public Affairs Specialist
USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service

(b) (6)

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From: Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2015 12:32 PM
To: Rakola, Betsy - OSEC; Jones, Samuel - AMS
Cc: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Subject: RE: Capital Press Inquiry

Here are the current accomplishments.

From: Rakola, Betsy - OSEC
Sent: Wednesday, October 21, 2015 11:43 AM
To: Jones, Samuel - AMS
Cc: McEvoy, Miles - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: Re: Capital Press Inquiry

Seems like (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

On q 3, I think (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

Betsy Rakola
Organic Policy Advisor, USDA Agricultural
Marketing Service

On Oct 21, 2015, at 11:37 AM, Jones, Samuel -
AMS <Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Hi all,

In addition to the most recent cleared statement, Capital Press sent along the questions below. They need responses by 3PM today. Mind taking a look and seeing if there is anything else we should provide? Thanks so much.

1) The voting procedures for the sunset of synthetic materials were changed in violation of administrative law to make it easier to keep such materials on the organic list.

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted text block]

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted text block]

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted text block]

2) Similarly, the agency has allowed the use of contaminated compost in violation of administrative law.

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted text block]

3) Mr. McEvoy has sought to undermine the authority of

NOSB to set its own agenda and influence NOP policy by disregarding recommendations or disbanding/replacing committees that set policy.

4) Mr. McEvoy is motivated by pressure to appease large agribusiness elements in the organic industry and has reduced transparency in the NOP.

5) I am assuming that Mr. McEvoy will disagree with these characterizations. If so, why does he believe groups like Cornucopia Institute and Beyond Pesticides, which previously praised him, are now so critical?

(b)(5) Deliberative

Sam Jones-Ellard
Public Affairs Specialist
USDA | Agricultural Marketing
Service

(b) (6)

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1) The voting procedures for the sunset of synthetic materials were changed in violation of administrative law to make it easier to keep such materials on the organic list.

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

2) Similarly, the agency has allowed the use of contaminated compost in violation of administrative law.

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

3) Mr. McEvoy has sought to undermine the authority of NOSB to set its own agenda and influence NOP policy by disregarding recommendations or disbanding/replacing committees that set policy.

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1. (b)(5) Deliberative
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2. (b)(5) Deliberative
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3. (b)(5) Deliberative
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4. (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]
5. (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]
6. (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]
7. (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]
8. (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative

4) Mr. McEvoy is motivated by pressure to appease large agribusiness elements in the organic industry and has reduced transparency in the NOP.

(b)(5) Deliberative

- (b)(5) Deliberative
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- (b)(5) Deliberative

5) I am assuming that Mr. McEvoy will disagree with these characterizations. If so, why does he believe groups like Cornucopia Institute and Beyond Pesticides, which previously praised him, are now so critical?

(b)(5) Deliberative

From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Alonzo, Anne - AMS](#); [Rakola, Betsy - OSEC](#); [Eckhouse, Sara - AMS](#); [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#)
Subject: RE: Dan C's questions on Cornucopia letter
Date: Monday, April 27, 2015 2:39:08 PM

Public comments started a few minutes ago. The general sentiment is supportive of me and AMS.

My edits -

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

From: Alonzo, Anne - AMS
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2015 2:31 PM
To: Rakola, Betsy - OSEC; Eckhouse, Sara - AMS; Barnes, Rex - AMS; McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Subject: RE: Dan C's questions on Cornucopia letter

Betsy...Its your note but these are my tweaks. Sara/others welcome.

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

From: Christenson, Daniel - OSEC
Sent: Monday, April 27, 2015 12:59 PM
To: Rakola, Betsy - OSEC
Subject: FW: Watchdog group calls for new organic program management

Have you seen this letter? (b)(5) Deliberative

From: POLITICO Pro Agriculture Whiteboard [<mailto:politicoemail@politicopro.com>]
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2015 1:31 PM
To: Christenson, Daniel - OSEC
Subject: Watchdog group calls for new organic program management

4/24/15 1:31 PM EDT

The Cornucopia Institute, an organic industry watchdog group, is calling on USDA to “replace the current management and oversight” of the National Organic Program, arguing that the current leadership and personnel of the program is not holding to the spirit of the Organic Foods Production Act.

In a [letter](#) today to Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, Will Fantle, Cornucopia’s co-director, writes that many in the industry “have grown severely disappointed by the direction taken by NOP management over the past several years.” Fantle points in particular to what he says is the “usurpation of National Organic Standards Board” authority by NOP staff, changes to the sunset review process and delays in enforcement action, among other things.

NOP has been led since 2009 by Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy, who joined USDA after more than 20 years at the helm of Washington State’s organic food program.

The letter comes as NOSB is set to kickoff its second [meeting](#) of 2015 on Monday, in La Jolla, Calif.. During the four-day event, the board is expected to start reviewing the more than 100 synthetic and non-organic materials that are set to hit their five-year review to stay in the program in 2017.

— Jenny Hopkinson

To view online:

<https://www.politicopro.com/go/?wbid=52377>

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This email alert has been sent for the exclusive use of POLITICO Pro subscriber Dan

Christenson. Forwarding or reproducing the alert without the express, written permission of POLITICO Pro is a violation of federal law and the POLITICO Pro subscription agreement. Copyright © 2015 by POLITICO LLC. To subscribe to Pro, please go to www.politicopro.com.

From: [Bailey, Shayla - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Cc: [Wilson, SonyaD - AMS](#); [Brown, MaryD - AMS](#); [Williams, SharonC - AMS](#); [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#); [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#); [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)
Subject: RE: NOP High Priority Web Request: USDA Statement on Complaints
Date: Friday, October 23, 2015 5:54:44 PM

The statement has been posted as a Notice to Trade. It is available at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/content/clarification-regarding-organic-operations-staff>

As a notice to trade, in the next hour or so, it will show up under "News & Announcements" in the right sidebar of organic-related content pages until it is rotated out by newer announcements.

(b)(5) Deliberative

Thank you,

--Shayla

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Friday, October 23, 2015 4:51 PM
To: Bailey, Shayla - AMS
Cc: Wilson, SonyaD - AMS; Brown, MaryD - AMS; Williams, SharonC - AMS; Jones, Samuel - AMS; Courtney, Cheri - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: Re: NOP High Priority Web Request: USDA Statement on Complaints

Please provide the link. Certainly need it for Sunday's meeting

Miles V McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
USDA National Organic Program

On Oct 23, 2015, at 1:26 PM, "Bailey, Shayla - AMS" <Shayla.Bailey@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Hi, Sonya.

Thank you for putting this request together. (b)(5) Deliberative

Thank you,

--Shayla

From: Wilson, SonyaD - AMS
Sent: Friday, October 23, 2015 12:12 PM
To: Bailey, Shayla - AMS
Cc: Brown, MaryD - AMS; Williams, SharonC - AMS; Jones, Samuel - AMS; Courtney, Cheri

- AMS; McEvoy, Miles - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS

Subject: NOP High Priority Web Request: USDA Statement on Complaints

Hi Shayla,

Welcome back!! I'm sure you're pretty swamped catching up from being out all week.

It appears [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Let me know if you have questions.

Thanks for your help!!!

Sonya

Page: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/organic>

Create new page titled "Current Topics"

Add a link to the new page in the left nav of [Rules & Regulations/Organic](#)

Post the following text to the Current Topics page:

USDA Statement on Complaints (10/21/2015)

USDA takes any complaints regarding our operations seriously, and that is why AMS looks into any formal complaints issued by outside groups. This was the case when the Cornucopia Institute filed a complaint earlier this year. AMS launched a thorough review and ultimately found and determined that the operations were in compliance and there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations. Furthermore, there is no investigation of the National Organic Program or its staff happening by USDA's Inspector General—that is inaccurate. The focus on any one public servant in an attempt to damage his or her credibility is inappropriate and without merit. USDA values and has faith in Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy's leadership of the National Organic Program.

USDA's National Organic Program is the bedrock regulatory program responsible for developing national standards for organically-produced agricultural products. These standards assure consumers that products with the USDA organic seal meet consistent, uniform standards. The USDA organic seal and the NOP program itself have helped organic

producers and businesses achieve unprecedented levels of growth for organically produced goods. The retail market for organic products is now valued at more than \$39 billion while USDA organic operations have grown more than 250% since 2002. USDA's National Organic Program is a leading global standard and major factor in this success.

Future Content Strategy for Current Topics page: On the new page, we would initially simply post the notice above. Over time, we would start to add back in the current issues pages that had been previously posted that remain of interest (hydroponics) – topics would be indexed at the top of the page for easy indexing.

Sonya D. Wilson

Phone: (b) (6)

SonyaD.Wilson@ams.usda.gov

Begin forwarded message:

From: "McEvoy, Miles - AMS" <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>
Date: October 22, 2015 at 5:54:59 PM EDT
To: "Alonzo, Anne - AMS" <Anne.Alonzo@ams.usda.gov>, "Rakola, Betsy - OSEC" <Betsy.Rakola@osec.usda.gov>
Cc: "Eckhouse, Sara - AMS" <Sara.Eckhouse@ams.usda.gov>, "Howard, David- OSEC" <David.Howard@osec.usda.gov>, "Barnes, Rex - AMS" <Rex.Barnes@ams.usda.gov>, "Jones, Samuel - AMS" <Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov>, "Bailey, Shayla - AMS" <Shayla.Bailey@ams.usda.gov>, "Tucker, Jennifer - AMS" <Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov>
Subject: RE: USDA Statement on Complaints

I'm on the road tomorrow but available by cell and email.
Miles

From: Alonzo, Anne - AMS
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2015 5:54 PM
To: Rakola, Betsy - OSEC; McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Cc: Eckhouse, Sara - AMS; Howard, David- OSEC; Barnes, Rex - AMS; Jones, Samuel - AMS; Bailey, Shayla - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: RE: USDA Statement on Complaints

Shayla returns tomorrow. PA please meet w/Miles and Erin in am and land please.

I am out of the office in am and then have a speech to make.
Back by 3.

From: Rakola, Betsy - OSEC

Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2015 5:18 PM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Cc: Alonzo, Anne - AMS; Eckhouse, Sara - AMS; Howard, David- OSEC; Barnes, Rex - AMS; Jones, Samuel - AMS; Bailey, Shayla - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: Re: USDA Statement on Complaints

I've gotten several requests as well. Can we (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Betsy Rakola
Organic Policy Advisor, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service

On Oct 21, 2015, at 9:32 AM, McEvoy, Miles - AMS
<Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

There continues to be requests for information regarding the Cornucopia complaints. I've received inquiries from accredited certifying agents and note chatter on social media sites. I'd like (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

The proposal is to:

- ? (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- ? (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- ? (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- ? (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- ? (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- ? (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative

USDA Statement on Complaints (10/21/2015)

USDA takes any complaints regarding our operations seriously, and that is why AMS looks into any formal complaints issued by outside groups. This was the case when the Cornucopia Institute filed a complaint earlier this year. AMS launched a thorough review and ultimately found and determined that the operations were in compliance and there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations. Furthermore, there is no investigation of the National Organic Program or its staff happening by USDA's Inspector General—that is inaccurate. The focus on any one public servant in an attempt to damage his or her credibility is inappropriate and without merit. USDA values and has faith in Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy's leadership of the National Organic Program.

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Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

From: [Rakola, Betsy - OSEC](#)
To: [Starmer, Elanor - OSEC](#)
Subject: RE: Stop the bullying
Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 8:26:04 AM

No – there seems [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative
 [REDACTED]

From: Starmer, Elanor - OSEC
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 8:16 AM
To: Rakola, Betsy - OSEC
Subject: Re: Stop the bullying

I did see it - thanks for this background. I [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 20, 2015, at 7:42 AM, Rakola, Betsy - OSEC <Betsy.Rakola@osec.usda.gov> wrote:

Hey there - not sure if you saw Cornucopia's press release last Friday, claiming Miles is being investigated by OIG for ethics complaints. Politico picked it up yesterday. [REDACTED] (b)(5)
 [REDACTED]

Betsy Rakola
 Organic Policy Advisor, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service

Begin forwarded message:

From: "McEvoy, Miles - AMS" <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>
Date: October 19, 2015 at 9:16:23 PM EDT
To: "Alonzo, Anne - AMS" <Anne.Alonzo@ams.usda.gov>, "Barnes, Rex - AMS" <Rex.Barnes@ams.usda.gov>, "Eckhouse, Sara - AMS" <Sara.Eckhouse@ams.usda.gov>, "Rakola, Betsy - OSEC" <Betsy.Rakola@osec.usda.gov>, "Herrick, Matthew - OC" <Matthew.Herrick@oc.usda.gov>, "Morris, Erin - AMS" <erin.morris@ams.usda.gov>, "Bailey, Shayla - AMS" <Shayla.Bailey@ams.usda.gov>
Cc: "Tucker, Jennifer - AMS" <Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov>
Subject: Stop the bullying

Attached is some background on the Cornucopia complaints including details of AMS-NOP's review of the complaints, analysis of the photographic evidence, and how we consulted with AMS accredited certifiers on the compliance of these operations with the USDA organic regulations. You will see that AMS-NOP conducted a thorough review and

determined that there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations of these certified organic operations.

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted text block]

Thanks,

Miles V McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program

<Cornucopia Complaints.docx>

<Chronology.docx>

From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Rakola, Betsy - OSEC](#)
Subject: RE: Stop the bullying
Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 11:02:52 AM

Best if you come here to read the statement. We should have it within the next 30 minutes

From: Rakola, Betsy - OSEC
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 10:49 AM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Subject: Re: Stop the bullying

Yes.

Betsy Rakola
Organic Policy Advisor, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service

On Oct 20, 2015, at 10:28 AM, McEvoy, Miles - AMS <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Are you available at 1 pm to read a statement at the beginning of the NOSB webinar?

From: Rakola, Betsy - OSEC
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 9:42 AM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Subject: Re: Stop the bullying

I've flagged for Elanor. (b)(5) Deliberative

Betsy Rakola
Organic Policy Advisor, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service

On Oct 19, 2015, at 9:16 PM, McEvoy, Miles - AMS <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Attached is some background on the Cornucopia complaints including details of AMS-NOP's review of the complaints, analysis of the photographic evidence, and how we consulted with AMS accredited certifiers on the compliance of these operations with the USDA organic regulations. You will see that AMS-NOP conducted a thorough review and determined that there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations of these certified organic operations.

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

Thanks,

Miles V McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program

<Cornucopia Complaints.docx>

<Chronology.docx>

From: [Courtney, Cheri - AMS](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Cc: [Wilson, SonyaD - AMS](#); [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#)
Subject: RE: USDA Statement on Complaints
Date: Friday, October 23, 2015 7:49:10 AM

I will Miles.

Cheri

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Friday, October 23, 2015 7:34 AM
To: Courtney, Cheri - AMS
Cc: Wilson, SonyaD - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: Fwd: USDA Statement on Complaints

Cheri -

Please monitor this. We plan (b)(5) Deliberative

Miles V McEvoy
 Deputy Administrator
 USDA National Organic Program

Begin forwarded message:

From: "McEvoy, Miles - AMS" <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>
Date: October 22, 2015 at 5:54:59 PM EDT
To: "Alonzo, Anne - AMS" <Anne.Alonzo@ams.usda.gov>, "Rakola, Betsy - OSEC" <Betsy.Rakola@osec.usda.gov>
Cc: "Eckhouse, Sara - AMS" <Sara.Eckhouse@ams.usda.gov>, "Howard, David- OSEC" <David.Howard@osec.usda.gov>, "Barnes, Rex - AMS" <Rex.Barnes@ams.usda.gov>, "Jones, Samuel - AMS" <Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov>, "Bailey, Shayla - AMS" <Shayla.Bailey@ams.usda.gov>, "Tucker, Jennifer - AMS" <Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov>
Subject: RE: USDA Statement on Complaints

I'm on the road tomorrow but available by cell and email.
 Miles

From: Alonzo, Anne - AMS
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2015 5:54 PM
To: Rakola, Betsy - OSEC; McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Cc: Eckhouse, Sara - AMS; Howard, David- OSEC; Barnes, Rex - AMS; Jones, Samuel - AMS; Bailey, Shayla - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: RE: USDA Statement on Complaints

Shayla returns tomorrow. PA please meet w/Miles and Erin in am and land please.
 I am out of the office in am and then have a speech to make.

Back by 3.

From: Rakola, Betsy - OSEC
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2015 5:18 PM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Cc: Alonzo, Anne - AMS; Eckhouse, Sara - AMS; Howard, David- OSEC; Barnes, Rex - AMS; Jones, Samuel - AMS; Bailey, Shayla - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: Re: USDA Statement on Complaints

I've gotten several requests as well. Can [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Betsy Rakola
Organic Policy Advisor, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service

On Oct 21, 2015, at 9:32 AM, McEvoy, Miles - AMS <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

There continues to be requests for information regarding the Cornucopia complaints. I've received inquiries from accredited certifying agents and note chatter on social media sites. I'd like [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

The proposal is to:

- ? [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- ? [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- ? [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
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[REDACTED]
- ? [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- ? [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative [REDACTED]

USDA Statement on Complaints (10/21/2015)

USDA takes any complaints regarding our operations seriously, and that is why AMS looks into any formal complaints issued by outside groups. This was the case when the Cornucopia Institute filed a complaint earlier this year. AMS launched a thorough review and ultimately found and determined that the operations were in compliance and there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations. Furthermore, there is no investigation of the National Organic Program or its staff happening by USDA's Inspector General—that is inaccurate. The focus on any one public servant in an attempt to damage his or her credibility is inappropriate and without merit. USDA values and has faith in Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy's leadership of the National Organic Program.

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Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

From: [Vega, Alberto](#)
To: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Cc: [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#); [Dori, Kimberly](#); [Tomlinson, Sonja -DM](#); [Johnson-Yeargins, Anna](#); [Avila, Joan - AMS](#)
Subject: RE: FY2014 Presidential Rank Award Nomination Form
Date: Tuesday, May 27, 2014 10:38:07 AM

The form can be sent by email. Thank you.

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Tuesday, May 27, 2014 10:25 AM
To: Vega, Alberto
Cc: Barnes, Rex - AMS; Dori, Kimberly; Tomlinson, Sonja -DM; Johnson-Yeargins, Anna; Avila, Joan - AMS
Subject: RE: FY2014 Presidential Rank Award Nomination Form

Yes, the information is correct. The signed form will be coming over to you today. Thanks.

Miles V. McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20250-0268

(b) (6)

www.ams.usda.gov/nop

Organic Integrity from Farm to Table, Consumers Trust the Organic Label

From: Vega, Alberto
Sent: Tuesday, May 20, 2014 4:32 PM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Cc: Barnes, Rex - AMS; Dori, Kimberly; Tomlinson, Sonja -DM; Johnson-Yeargins, Anna
Subject: FY2014 Presidential Rank Award Nomination Form

Good Afternoon Mr. McEvoy,

I am preparing the package for your Presidential Rank Award. Please review the attached document and let me know if your information is correct. If not, please update as necessary. Once the form is completed, please provide the document to your rating official for signature and send it to me by COB 5/22/14.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thanks, Alberto

Alberto Vega

Human Resources Specialist
Office of Human Resources Management
Departmental Management/USDA
Room 4007 South Building
Washington, DC 20250

Phone (b) (6)

Fax 202-720-9148

Email: Alberto.Vega@dm.usda.gov

Please take a moment to provide us with feedback by answering this [survey](#). Thanks!

From: [Starmer, Elanor - OSEC](#)
To: [Herrick, Matthew - OC](#)
Cc: [Kiel, Alyn - OC](#)
Subject: Organic flag for S?
Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 8:15:13 AM
Attachments: [Cornucopia Complaints.docx](#)
[ATT00001.htm](#)
[Chronology.docx](#)
[ATT00002.htm](#)

(b)(5) Deliberative

Elanor

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Rakola, Betsy - OSEC" <Betsy.Rakola@osec.usda.gov>
Date: October 20, 2015 at 7:42:53 AM EDT
To: "Starmer, Elanor - OSEC" <Elanor.Starmer@osec.usda.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Stop the bullying

Begin forwarded message:

From: "McEvoy, Miles - AMS" <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>
Date: October 19, 2015 at 9:16:23 PM EDT
To: "Alonzo, Anne - AMS" <Anne.Alonzo@ams.usda.gov>, "Barnes, Rex - AMS" <Rex.Barnes@ams.usda.gov>, "Eckhouse, Sara - AMS" <Sara.Eckhouse@ams.usda.gov>, "Rakola, Betsy - OSEC" <Betsy.Rakola@osec.usda.gov>, "Herrick, Matthew - OC" <Matthew.Herrick@oc.usda.gov>, "Morris, Erin - AMS" <erin.morris@ams.usda.gov>, "Bailey, Shayla - AMS" <Shayla.Bailey@ams.usda.gov>
Cc: "Tucker, Jennifer - AMS" <Jennifer.Tucker@ams.usda.gov>
Subject: Stop the bullying

Attached is some background on the Cornucopia complaints including details of AMS-NOP's review of the complaints, analysis of the photographic evidence, and how we consulted with AMS accredited certifiers on the compliance of these operations with the USDA organic regulations. You will see that AMS-NOP conducted a thorough review and determined that there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations of these certified organic operations.

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

A large section of the document is redacted with five thick black horizontal bars. The first bar contains the text "(b)(5) Deliberative".

Thanks,

Miles V McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service
National Organic Program

Cornucopia Complaints

Talking Points

- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
- (b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

Brief Chronology

(b)(5) Deliberative	(b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]
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(b)(5) Deliberative [Redacted]

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Deliberative

SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

Complaint Investigation Chronology

Case #: (b)(5) Deliberative
Subject: [Redacted]
Compliance Specialist: [Redacted]

Date	Activity
(b)(5) Deliberative	(b)(5) Deliberative
	(b)(5) Deliberative
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	(b)(5) Deliberative	
(b)(5)	(b)(5) Deliberative	

From: [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
To: [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#)
Subject: RE: USDA Statement on Complaints
Date: Thursday, October 22, 2015 6:06:14 PM

Electronically?
 Is it ready? I'm still in the building.

From: Barnes, Rex - AMS
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2015 5:59 PM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Subject: RE: USDA Statement on Complaints

You have to sign your rating!!!

From: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2015 5:55 PM
To: Alonzo, Anne - AMS; Rakola, Betsy - OSEC
Cc: Eckhouse, Sara - AMS; Howard, David- OSEC; Barnes, Rex - AMS; Jones, Samuel - AMS; Bailey, Shayla - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: RE: USDA Statement on Complaints

I'm on the road tomorrow but available by cell and email.
 Miles

From: Alonzo, Anne - AMS
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2015 5:54 PM
To: Rakola, Betsy - OSEC; McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Cc: Eckhouse, Sara - AMS; Howard, David- OSEC; Barnes, Rex - AMS; Jones, Samuel - AMS; Bailey, Shayla - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: RE: USDA Statement on Complaints

Shayla returns tomorrow. PA please meet w/Miles and Erin in am and land please.
 I am out of the office in am and then have a speech to make.
 Back by 3.

From: Rakola, Betsy - OSEC
Sent: Thursday, October 22, 2015 5:18 PM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS
Cc: Alonzo, Anne - AMS; Eckhouse, Sara - AMS; Howard, David- OSEC; Barnes, Rex - AMS; Jones, Samuel - AMS; Bailey, Shayla - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Subject: Re: USDA Statement on Complaints

I've gotten several requests as well. Can we (b)(5) Deliberative

Betsy Rakola
 Organic Policy Advisor, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service

On Oct 21, 2015, at 9:32 AM, McEvoy, Miles - AMS <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

There continues to be requests for information regarding the Cornucopia complaints. I've received inquiries from accredited certifying agents and note chatter on social media sites. I'd like (b)(5) Deliberative

The proposal is to:

- (b)(5) Deliberative
- (b)(5) Deliberative
- (b)(5) Deliberative
- (b)(5) Deliberative
- (b)(5) Deliberative

(b)(5) Deliberative

USDA Statement on Complaints (10/21/2015)

USDA takes any complaints regarding our operations seriously, and that is why AMS looks into any formal complaints issued by outside groups. This was the case when the Cornucopia Institute filed a complaint earlier this year. AMS launched a thorough review and ultimately found and determined that the operations were in compliance and there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations.

Furthermore, there is no investigation of the National Organic Program or its staff happening by USDA's Inspector General—that is inaccurate. The focus on any one public servant in an attempt to damage his or her credibility is inappropriate and without merit. USDA values and has faith in Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy's leadership of the National Organic Program.

USDA's National Organic Program is the bedrock regulatory program responsible for developing national standards for organically-produced agricultural products. These standards assure consumers that products with the USDA organic seal meet consistent, uniform standards. The USDA organic seal and the NOP program itself have helped organic producers and businesses achieve unprecedented levels of growth for organically produced goods. The retail market for organic products is now valued at more than \$39 billion while USDA organic operations have grown more than 250% since 2002. USDA's National Organic Program is a leading global standard and major factor in this success.

Miles McEvoy
Deputy Administrator
National Organic Program

From: [Rakola, Betsy - OSEC](#)
To: [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#)
Cc: [Alonzo, Anne - AMS](#); [Eckhouse, Sara - AMS](#); [Morris, Erin - AMS](#); [Barnes, Rex - AMS](#); [Summers, Bruce - AMS](#); [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#); [Tucker, Jennifer - AMS](#); [Maloney, Wayne - AMS](#); [Bailey, Shayla - AMS](#)
Subject: Re: Cleared Statement
Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 12:41:39 PM

Joanne and David are aware that I will be reading this statement on the webinar at 1:00.

Betsy Rakola
 Organic Policy Advisor, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service

On Oct 20, 2015, at 12:29 PM, Jones, Samuel - AMS <Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Here is the final from OC. Thanks!

USDA takes any complaints regarding our operations seriously, and that is why AMS looks into any formal complaints issued by outside groups. This was the case when the Cornucopia Institute filed a complaint earlier this year. AMS launched a thorough review and ultimately found and determined that the operations were in compliance and there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations. Furthermore, there is no investigation of the National Organic Program or its staff happening by USDA's Inspector General—that is inaccurate. The focus on any one public servant in an attempt to damage his or her credibility is inappropriate and without merit. USDA values and has faith in Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy's leadership of the National Organic Program.

USDA's National Organic Program is the bedrock regulatory program responsible for developing national standards for organically-produced agricultural products. These standards assure consumers that products with the USDA organic seal meet consistent, uniform standards. The USDA organic seal and the NOP program itself have helped organic producers and businesses achieve unprecedented levels of growth for organically produced goods. The retail market for organic products is now valued at more than \$39 billion while USDA organic operations have grown more than 250% since 2002. USDA's National Organic Program is a leading global standard and major factor in this success.

Sam Jones-Ellard
 Public Affairs Specialist
 USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service
 (b) (6)

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From: Rakola, Betsy - OSEC
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 12:23 PM

To: Jones, Samuel - AMS; Alonzo, Anne - AMS; Eckhouse, Sara - AMS; Morris, Erin - AMS; Barnes, Rex - AMS; Summers, Bruce - AMS; McEvoy, Miles - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS
Cc: Maloney, Wayne - AMS; Bailey, Shayla - AMS
Subject: RE: Cleared Statement

Just spoke with Joanne Peters – (b)(5) Deliberative

From: Jones, Samuel - AMS
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 12:19 PM
To: Alonzo, Anne - AMS; Eckhouse, Sara - AMS; Morris, Erin - AMS; Barnes, Rex - AMS; Summers, Bruce - AMS; McEvoy, Miles - AMS; Tucker, Jennifer - AMS; Rakola, Betsy - OSEC
Cc: Maloney, Wayne - AMS; Bailey, Shayla - AMS
Subject: Cleared Statement

Here is the statement that has cleared OSEC. OC plans to give this to reporters now and talk to them OTR as well to explain.

USDA takes any complaints regarding our operations seriously, and that is why AMS **reviews** any formal complaints issued by outside groups. This was the case when the Cornucopia Institute filed a complaint earlier this year. AMS launched a thorough review and ultimately found and determined that the operations were in compliance and there was not sufficient evidence to conduct additional investigations. Furthermore, there is no investigation of the National Organic Program or its staff happening by USDA's Inspector General—that is inaccurate. The focus on any one public servant in an attempt to damage his or her credibility is inappropriate and without merit. USDA values and has faith in Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy's leadership of the National Organic Program.

USDA's National Organic Program is the bedrock regulatory program responsible for developing national standards for organically-produced agricultural products. These standards assure consumers that products with the USDA organic seal meet consistent, uniform standards. The USDA organic seal and the NOP program itself have helped organic producers and businesses achieve unprecedented levels of growth for organically produced goods. The retail market for organic products has nearly doubled in value since 2009 while USDA certified organic operations continue to grow year to year. USDA's National Organic Program is a leading global standard and major factor in this success.

Thanks,
Sam Jones-Ellard
 Public Affairs Specialist
 USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service
 (b) (6)

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From: [Peters, Joanne - OC](#)
To: [Jones, Samuel - AMS](#); [Howard, David - OSEC](#); [Cochran, Catherine - OC](#); [Mabry, Brian - OSEC](#)
Cc: [Bailey, Shayla - AMS](#); [Morris, Erin - AMS](#); [Maloney, Wayne - AMS](#); [Eckhouse, Sara - AMS](#); [Rakola, Betsy - OSEC](#)
Subject: RE: National Organic Program questions
Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 6:42:56 PM

Thanks Sam. I did speak to CNBC earlier. Jane seems to understand (b)(5) Deliberative

I think (b)(5) Deliberative

From: Jones, Samuel - AMS
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 3:33 PM
To: Howard, David - OSEC; Peters, Joanne - OC; Cochran, Catherine - OC; Mabry, Brian - OSEC
Cc: Bailey, Shayla - AMS; Morris, Erin - AMS; Maloney, Wayne - AMS; Eckhouse, Sara - AMS; Rakola, Betsy - OSEC
Subject: RE: National Organic Program questions

Hi all,

I am not sure if you have spoken with CNBC yet, but the reporter reached out and asked permission to send a camera crew to the NOSB meeting next week. Below is her request. Given that this is a public meeting/open press, permission isn't required. (b)(5) Deliberative

I'm a reporter for CNBC who covers agriculture. I am working up some stories about growth in the organics industry and the challenges in keeping up with it from a certification standpoint. You are having a meeting next week in Vermont, and I wanted to get permission to send a camera crew there to get some video and possibly some interviews. Can you help? Thanks. Jane Wells

Thanks,
Sam Jones-Ellard
 Public Affairs Specialist
 USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service
 (b) (6)

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From: Howard, David - OSEC
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 12:32 PM
To: Peters, Joanne - OC
Cc: Jones, Samuel - AMS; Cochran, Catherine - OC; Bailey, Shayla - AMS; Mabry, Brian - OSEC; Morris, Erin - AMS
Subject: Re: National Organic Program questions

Thanks, Joanne! I am going to share this with OCR as well.

David

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 20, 2015, at 12:22 PM, "Peters, Joanne - OC" <Joanne.Peters@oc.usda.gov> wrote:

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

From: Jones, Samuel - AMS
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 12:15 PM
To: Peters, Joanne - OC; Cochran, Catherine - OC; Bailey, Shayla - AMS
Cc: Mabry, Brian - OSEC; Morris, Erin - AMS; Howard, David- OSEC
Subject: RE: National Organic Program questions

Thanks, Joanne! (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

Thanks again,
Sam Jones-Ellard
Public Affairs Specialist
USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service
(b) (6)

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From: Peters, Joanne - OC
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 12:05 PM
To: Jones, Samuel - AMS; Cochran, Catherine - OC; Bailey, Shayla - AMS
Cc: Mabry, Brian - OSEC; Morris, Erin - AMS; Howard, David- OSEC
Subject: RE: National Organic Program questions

All – here is the statement that has cleared OSEC. OC will give this to reporters now and talk to them OTR as well to explain.

(b)(5) Deliberative

[Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative

[Redacted]

From: Peters, Joanne - OC
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 10:25 AM
To: Jones, Samuel - AMS; Cochran, Catherine - OC; Bailey, Shayla - AMS
Cc: Mabry, Brian - OSEC; Morris, Erin - AMS; Howard, David- OSEC
Subject: RE: National Organic Program questions

Hello – I wanted to make sure this group was updated on the latest here. We have a

(b)(5) Deliberative

[Redacted]

Feel free to call if you want to discuss further (b) (6) .

From: Jones, Samuel - AMS
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 9:24 AM
To: Cochran, Catherine - OC; Bailey, Shayla - AMS
Cc: Mabry, Brian - OSEC; Peters, Joanne - OC; Morris, Erin - AMS; Howard, David- OSEC
Subject: RE: National Organic Program questions

+ David Howard

Sam Jones-Ellard
 Public Affairs Specialist
 USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service
 (b) (6)

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From: Jones, Samuel - AMS
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 8:08 AM
To: Cochran, Catherine - OC; Bailey, Shayla - AMS
Cc: Mabry, Brian - OSEC; Peters, Joanne - OC; Morris, Erin - AMS
Subject: RE: National Organic Program questions

We are working on the other items you asked for. Here is what was provided to WaPo in May.

“These operations are certified organic and in good standing with the independent organizations that verify their organic practices. The recent photos submitted do not provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate violations to the USDA organic standards. One photo captures only a moment without context and does not effectively demonstrate that producers are denying outdoor access at all times. Under the USDA organic regulations, certifiers are required to check a full year of records, inspect all production and handling sites, and audit production records to ensure organic integrity.”

Sam Jones-Ellard
 Public Affairs Specialist
 USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service
 (b) (6)

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From: Cochran, Catherine - OC
Sent: Tuesday, October 20, 2015 7:56 AM
To: Bailey, Shayla - AMS
Cc: Mabry, Brian - OSEC; Peters, Joanne - OC; Jones, Samuel - AMS
Subject: Re: National Organic Program questions

Hi Shayla,

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

Let us know if any new inquiries come in or if you see any new stories on this.

Cathy

Catherine Cochran
USDA Office of Communications
[202.720.6959](tel:202.720.6959) (o)
(b) (6) (m)

On Oct 19, 2015, at 10:17 PM, Bailey, Shayla - AMS <Shayla.Bailey@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

Thanks, Cathy. I let Sam know. Can you (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted]

--Shayla

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 19, 2015, at 6:42 PM, Cochran, Catherine - OC <Catherine.Cochran.1@oc.usda.gov> wrote:

Hi Shayla,

I just spoke to CNBC. They are going to be working on this for a week or more. No immediate deadline. Tell Sam I've been in touch so we don't overlap!

Cathy

Catherine Cochran
 USDA Office of Communications
[202.720.6959](tel:202.720.6959) (o)
 (b) (6) (m)

On Oct 19, 2015, at 4:37 PM, Bailey, Shayla - AMS
 <Shayla.Bailey@ams.usda.gov> wrote:

FYI... these are the CNBC questions that just came in. Thanks. --Shayla

From: Jones, Samuel - AMS
Sent: Monday, October 19, 2015 4:29 PM
To: Bailey, Shayla - AMS
Subject: FW: National Organic Program questions

This request just came in regarding the ethics investigation. Also, Capital Press called requesting an interview on it.

Thanks,
Sam Jones-Ellard
 Public Affairs Specialist
 USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service
 (b) (6)

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From: Wells, Jane (NBCUniversal)
[\[mailto:Jane.Wells@nbcuni.com\]](mailto:Jane.Wells@nbcuni.com)
Sent: Monday, October 19, 2015 4:26 PM
To: AMS - AMSPublicAffairs; Wells, Jane (NBCUniversal)
Subject: National Organic Program questions

Hey folks,

It's Jane Wells from CNBC, and I'm working up some stories about the growing popularity and challenges facing the organics industry. Cornucopia says after its complaints about the certification process, AMS has begun an ethics investigation into Miles McEvoy, who heads the National Organic Program.

Is this true? Does the Secretary fully back McEvoy, and are there any changes expected in the certification process for organic? The Wall Street Journal reported last December there were 81 accredited certifying agents, is that number accurate?

Please point me in the right direction.
Thanks.

Jane Wells
CNBC Los Angeles
Brokaw News Center
100 Universal City Plaza
Bldg 1126, Suite 3387A
Universal City, CA 91608
(818) 684-2626 (O)
[REDACTED] (b) (6) (C)
Jane.Wells@nbcuni.com
Twitter: @janewells

From: [Bailey, Shayla - AMS](#)
To: [Starmer, Elanor - AMS](#); [McEvoy, Miles - AMS](#)
Subject: RE: NOSB issue - need a Holding Statement
Date: Tuesday, October 18, 2016 3:33:05 PM

(b)(5) Deliberative

From: Starmer, Elanor - AMS
Sent: Tuesday, October 18, 2016 3:31 PM
To: Bailey, Shayla - AMS <Shayla.Bailey@ams.usda.gov>; McEvoy, Miles - AMS <Miles.McEvoy@ams.usda.gov>
Subject: RE: NOSB issue - need a Holding Statement

(b)(5) Deliberative

. I will be on the call.

Elanor Starmer
 Administrator
 Agricultural Marketing Service
 U.S. Department of Agriculture
 (b) (6)
elanor.starmer@ams.usda.gov

From: Bailey, Shayla - AMS
Sent: Tuesday, October 18, 2016 3:28 PM
To: McEvoy, Miles - AMS; Starmer, Elanor - AMS
Subject: Fwd: NOSB issue - need a Holding Statement

FYI. Our draft. I tried to stop by Elanor's office to discuss it first, but didn't catch you. Thanks!

--Shayla

Shayla Mae Bailey
 Agricultural Marketing Service
 U.S. Department of Agriculture
 202-720-9771
 (b) (6)

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Jones, Samuel - AMS" <Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov>
Date: October 18, 2016 at 3:24:11 PM EDT
To: "Mabry, Brian - OSEC" <Brian.Mabry@oc.usda.gov>, "Bailey, Shayla - AMS" <Shayla.Bailey@ams.usda.gov>
Subject: RE: NOSB issue - need a Holding Statement

Hi Brian,

Here is our draft. Thanks!

Proposed Statement:

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted text block]

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted text block]

(b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted text block]

Sam Jones-Ellard
Public Affairs Specialist
USDA | Agricultural Marketing Service
(b) (6)

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From: Mabry, Brian - OSEC
Sent: Tuesday, October 18, 2016 1:44 PM
To: Bailey, Shayla - AMS <Shayla.Bailey@ams.usda.gov>; Jones, Samuel - AMS <Samuel.Jones@ams.usda.gov>
Subject: NOSB issue - need a Holding Statement
Importance: High

I'm sure (b)(5) Deliberative
[Redacted text block]

It should (b)(5) Deliberative .

I don't [REDACTED] (b)(5) Deliberative [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[Amid Controversy, Secrecy, and Lawsuits, 5,000 Organic Stakeholders Calling for New Management at USDA National Organic Program](#)

Secret Documents Released: Reading Room Established for Material Obtained from USDA through Federal Lawsuits

CORNUCOPIA, Wisconsin - The Cornucopia Institute has delivered to the USDA more than 5,000 individually signed letters from farmers and consumers calling for new management of the National Organic Program (NOP). The Wisconsin-based organic food and farm policy research group collected the letters from concerned organic advocates across the country.

"This is one more indication of the growing dissatisfaction with Deputy Administrator Miles McEvoy's direction and oversight of the rapidly growing organic industry," said Mark Kastel, who acts as Cornucopia's Senior Farm Policy Analyst.

The Cornucopia Institute, along with many other public interest groups, has been highly critical of what they describe as a "corporate takeover" of the regulatory process that Congress designed specifically to protect organic rulemaking from the influence of agribusiness lobbyists.

"Under the direction of Deputy Administrator McEvoy, the independence of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB), an expert policy panel convened by Congress to act as a buffer between lobbyists, like the powerful Organic Trade Association, and USDA policymakers has been seriously undermined," stated Dr. Barry Flamm, a Montana farmer, scientist, and past chairperson of the NOSB.

In the [cover letter](#) to USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack, the organization cited

several areas where USDA management is failing. These include:

- A serious lack of enforcement activities on major fraud and alleged violations of organic regulations occurring with “factory farm” livestock activities — all cloaked in secrecy.
- Turning a blind eye towards the questionable authenticity of the flood of organic imports coming into this country from China, India, a number of former Soviet Bloc states and Central America that have effectively shut American organic grain farmers out of the U.S. market.
- Allowing, in violation of the law, giant industrial-scale soilless production of organic produce (hydroponic and other management systems), along with ignoring NOSB prohibitions on nanotechnology, using conventional livestock on organic dairies, and other issues.
- Usurpation of NOSB governance and authority by USDA/NOP staff and other violations of the Organic Foods Production Act (Cornucopia has a federal lawsuit being adjudicated that charges the USDA with appointing agribusiness executives to the NOSB in seats Congress had specifically earmarked for stakeholders who “own or operate an organic farm”).
- Unilateral changes to the Sunset review process for synthetic and non-organic materials, making it difficult for unnecessary or harmful substances to be removed from organics when agribusinesses lobby for them (the USDA is currently [involved in litigation](#) with Cornucopia and other stakeholders on this Sunset issue).

"We want organics to live up to the true meaning envisioned by the founders of this movement," Kastel added. "For both organic farmers and organic consumers, that means sound environmental stewardship, humane animal husbandry, wholesome and nutritious food derived from excellent soil fertility, and economic justice for those who produce our food. The USDA needs to act to preserve consumer trust in the organic label."

Due in part to the issues that Cornucopia is spotlighting, Consumer Reports has downgraded the credibility of the USDA organic label from its previous top-tier ranking.

“The corporations that are part of the Organic Trade Association, like Driscoll’s, General Mills (Cascadian Farms, Muir Glenn, Annie’s), WhiteWave (Horizon, Silk, Earthbound Farms, Wallaby) and Clif Bar, have the power to trade the credibility of the organic seal for short-term profit. The USDA needs to step in and protect the public,” Kastel stated.

The Cornucopia Institute is continuing to encourage organic stakeholders to join in this campaign by printing, signing, and returning a proxy letter, which

can be accessed at <https://www.cornucopia.org/2015/09/sign-the-proxy-letter-remove-current-usda-organic-management/>.

Nine Lawsuits Filed over Secrecy and Alleged Violations of the Freedom of Information Act

Relatedly, Cornucopia has filed nine federal lawsuits against the USDA concerning the agency's failure to comply with access to public records under the federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The documents are now housed on the Cornucopia website in its [FOIA Reading Room](#) for public viewing.

"We have, over the years, made FOIA requests to the USDA to learn more about organic fraud enforcement and better understand decision making on organic issues," explained Will Fantle, Cornucopia's Codirector.

Originally passed in 1966 and amended over the years, the Freedom of Information Act pushes the federal government towards transparency, compelling federal agencies to provide the public with documents and communications. The Obama administration had pledged to increase transparency, but they have been [harshly criticized for their failure](#) to do so by many civil society groups and [transparency advocates](#).

Over the past several years, Cornucopia's FOIA requests have, the group contends, become increasingly meaningless. According to Fantle, the FOIA requests are characterized by years-long delays in response time, even though the government is legally bound to reply within 20 days. In addition, Cornucopia has found abuse of legal exceptions used by the USDA to essentially "black out" (redact) the majority of text before publicly sharing documents.

One of Cornucopia's unanswered FOIAs dated from 2012. This request relates to a factory farm enforcement action taken by the USDA against Shamrock Dairy in Arizona. The Shamrock case was opened by the USDA in 2008 when Cornucopia filed a formal legal complaint alleging organic law violations, by milking conventional and organic cows in the desert with a modicum of required pasture land. Since filing a lawsuit in early 2016, Cornucopia has received, and is reviewing, almost 2,000 pages of documents related to this request.

While the USDA confirmed that Shamrock Dairy was milking thousands of cows in violation of the organic standards, and proposed sanctions against the operation and its certifier, Quality Assurance International (QAI), both organizations remain in the organic business today.

Cornucopia initially requested documents on the Shamrock scandal because the USDA failed to inform the public as to how they could legally allow this giant scofflaw to continue in operation.

“In a democracy, private citizens and public interest groups should not have to invest their money hiring lawyers to enforce their rights to documents that, by law, they are entitled to,” stated Fantle.

Cornucopia said it hopes the current administration will take action to correct the allegations of ethical improprieties and mismanagement at the National Organic Program, bringing in new management that respects Congress’s intent to protect the public when it passed the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990.

###

The Cornucopia Institute, a Wisconsin-based nonprofit farm policy research group, is dedicated to the fight for economic justice for the family-scale farming community. Their Organic Integrity Project acts as a corporate and governmental watchdog assuring that no compromises to the credibility of organic farming methods and the food it produces are made in the pursuit of profit. Their web page can be viewed at www.cornucopia.org.



CORNUCOPIA
INSTITUTE

April 24, 2015

The Hon. Thomas J. Vilsack
Room 200-A Whitten Building
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

It is with extreme reluctance that The Cornucopia Institute calls upon you to replace the current management and oversight at the National Organic Program (NOP) with a qualified professional dedicated to carrying out the intent and spirit of the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA) — an individual who is highly respected by the organic industry. We were among the many in the organic community who sincerely welcomed the changes, and new personnel, you brought to the organic program in 2009.

But that bright promise has dimmed, and many important organic industry participants have grown severely disappointed by the direction taken by NOP management over the past several years. It is the opinion of many, including The Cornucopia Institute, that the deep fissures that have developed are now undermining the public/private partnership with the organic sector that Congress envisioned upon passage of OFPA 25 years ago.

This growing divide is threatening the credibility and reputation of the organic label, which has already been downgraded by the largest consumer public interest group, Consumers Reports.

Among the troubling developments are:

- The usurpation of National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) governance and authority by NOP staff;
- The unilateral imposition of dramatic changes to the Sunset review process for synthetic and non-organic materials intended for temporary use in organics;
- The rejection and dismissal of well-reasoned concerns raised by the NOSB, after serious deliberations and stakeholder input, on nanotechnology, hydroponics, aquaculture and other issues;
- A long track record of unacceptable delays in implementing enforcement actions, failure to share names of operations, fines and penalties with the public, and delegating investigative functions to certifiers (some of whom may have contributed to the violations by either incompetence or as co-conspirators); and
- The newly invoked cloaking in anonymity of authors of scientific technical reviews for the NOSB (a public body), so as to mask public scrutiny of credentials and possible conflicts of interest.

Board of Directors
Helen Kass
Organic Livestock Producer
Durand, Wisconsin

Kevin Engelbert
Nation's First Certified Organic Dairy
Former NOSB Member
Nichols, New York

Barry Flamm, PhD
Conservation Consultant
Former NOSB Member
Polson, MT

Roger Featherstone
Director - Arizona
Mining Reform Coalition
Tucson, Arizona

William Hart
Wildlife Conservationist
Ashland, Wisconsin

Dave Minor
Organic Dairy Producer
Cedar Summit Farm
New Prague, Minnesota

Goldie Caughlan
Organic Food Retailer
PCC Natural Markets (retired)
Former NOSB Member
Seattle, Washington

Mitch Blumenthal
Global Organic Specialty Source, Inc.
Organic Produce Distributor
Sarasota, Florida

Policy Advisory Panel
Francis Thicke, PhD
Organic Dairy Producer
Radiance Dairy
NOSB Member
Fairfield, Iowa

Michael James
Restaurateur/Urban Activist
The Heartland Cafe
Chicago, Illinois

Tony Acevedo
Organic Dairyman/Agricoarism
San Joaquin Valley, California

Tom Wiley
T & D Wiley Farms
Organic Vegetable Grower/CSA
Madera, California

Jim Gerritsen
Organic Vegetable Grower
President, OSGATA
Bridgewater, Maine

Amanda Love
Natural Foods Chef/Educator
The Barefoot Cook
Austin, Texas

Cameron Mulberg
Organic Livestock Producer/Feed Mill
Austin, Texas

Co-founders
Will Faude
Research Director

Mark A. Kastel
Senior Farm Policy Analyst

Other Staff
Lisley Dixon, PhD
Farm and Food Policy Analyst

Jérôme Rigot, PhD
Farm and Food Policy Analyst

Jessie Cain
Research Associate

Gayle Nielsen
Membership Coordinator

Melody Morrill
Data Analyst and
Research Specialist

Therese Lardan
Membership Assistant

Elizabeth Wolf
Communications and
Development Director

Zuri Allen
Social Media Specialist

Jeremy Vossman
Webmaster / IT support

Celeste Gibson
Accountant

Organizations listed are for
identification purposes only

Organic agriculture has proven to be one of the true bright spots in agriculture over the past 25 years. It has created new opportunities for family-scale farmers to make a decent living, and has literally connected millions of consumers in a more conscious, environmentally sound and health-affirming approach to procuring food. Consumer hunger for this type of food and agriculture is demonstrated by the dramatic growth in the marketplace for organics, now close to a \$40 billion a year industry.

However, the great future potential for organic agriculture is endangered by both arbitrary actions and cases of inaction by NOP management. Furthermore, the disrespectful behavior towards the power vested by Congress in the NOSB, and organic stakeholders involved in the collaborative process, threatens to alienate consumers and farmers from the well-deserved cache that organics has earned in the market.

We are bringing these concerns to your attention because you have the ability to make the needed changes regarding NOP oversight and management. We know that not all organic stakeholders share the concerns we are bringing forward for your review (many of these issues have actually been applauded by the agribusiness sector). But we also know that many in the organic community do share our concerns, and that the fissures occurring in organics are growing wider by the day. You have an opportunity to address this situation and make the proper corrections. We encourage you to do so.

Sincerely,



Will Fantle
Codirector

cc: President Barack Obama

From: Will Fantle <wfantle@cornucopia.org>
Sent: Friday, April 24, 2015 9:54 AM
To: AGSEC - OES
Cc: president@whitehouse.gov
Subject: Change in the management of the National Organic Program
Attachments: Sec Vilsack letter-2015-FINAL.pdf

Importance: High

Dear Secretary Vilsack –

Please find the attached letter calling for change at the National Organic Program.

You may contact us at your convenience should you have comments, questions or a desire to discuss any of the issues raised within.

Sincerely,

Will Fantle
The Cornucopia Institute
715-839-7731

Mr. Will Fantle
Codirector
The Cornucopia Institute
Post Office Box 126
Cornucopia, Wisconsin 54827

Dear Mr. Fantle:

In your correspondence dated April 24, 2015, you outlined your concerns about the current management and oversight of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service National Organic Program. Your letter detailed your dissatisfaction with the direction of the program, and you called for a change in leadership.

I am proud of the National Organic Program (Program) and its leadership. Working hand-in-hand with the National Organic Standards Board (Board), the Program engages the public to facilitate transparent dialogue both during public meetings and during the rulemaking process. The Program has increased its speed of response to Board recommendations over the past five years, while it also adhered to the Organic Foods Production Act and the USDA organic regulations. The Program has mechanisms in place that ensure that technical report writers have no conflicts of interest and writers are well qualified to complete analyses responsibly. The Program responds to enforcement-related requests, while it also protects due process rights of farms and businesses. The Program's leaders work tirelessly to protect organic integrity, and they have my full support.

The National Organic Program offers many opportunities for public comment. We encourage you to use those forums to voice both your support and your concerns about proposed Program changes in the future.

Thank you for your support of organic agriculture.

Sincerely,

Thomas Vilsack
Secretary



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

JUL 29 2015

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Codirector
The Cornucopia Institute
Post Office Box 126
Cornucopia, Wisconsin 54827

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Thank you for your support of organic agriculture.

Sincerely,

Edward Avalos
Under Secretary
Marketing and Regulatory Programs

Control Number 8114671