

Program Notice

FGIS PN-25-04

Aug 18, 2025

ISSUANCE RETENTION POLICY

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In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

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1. PURPOSE

This notice replaces FGIS PN-03-06 and provides updates to the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) policy for the retention of FGIS handbooks, directives, program notices, and policy bulletins by FGIS field offices and official agencies.

2. BACKGROUND

FGIS field offices and official agencies are required to maintain a complete and current set of FGIS handbooks, directives, program notices, and applicable policy bulletins, and make them available to official personnel. Since 1998, field offices and official agencies were allowed to download and store electronic copies of FGIS issuances for easy access and viewing, instead of maintaining hard copies. In 2003, FGIS suspended printing and distributing issuances and provided electronic access to active versions of handbooks, directives, and program notices on the [AMS website](#). In addition to online posting, AMS notifies FGIS field offices, official agencies, and other interested parties of new issuances by emailing recipients a current PDF copy and summary.

3. EFFECTIVE DATE

This program notice supersedes FGIS PN-03-06 dated September 4, 2003, and is effective August 18, 2025.

4. POLICY

a. FGIS Issuance Retention.

- (1) FGIS and official agency service points that have Internet access (including access through cellular phone and data services) are not required to maintain printed or electronic copies of FGIS issuances (e.g., handbooks, directives, program notices, and policy bulletins) that are posted and available on the [AMS website](#) or through [FGISonline](#). Printed or electronic copies are required for all issuances which are not posted on the AMS website or are not available through *FGISonline*.
- (2) FGIS and official agency service points that do not have Internet access must maintain printed or electronic copies of FGIS issuances that are specific to the nature of the duties performed at those locations.

Note: Accessing FGIS issuances through web browser searches may not always yield the current version of the issuance. It is possible that web servers could actively store older versions of pages or documents which might be pulled up in a search or query. It is recommended to always access FGIS issuances directly through the links provided in the [AMS website](#). Dependent upon your settings, your web browser can also store older versions of web pages and files for quick access. To prevent this, clear the web browser “cache” before accessing FGIS issuances on the website.

b. Use and Display of FGIS Issuances.

- (1) Official personnel must have access to and use the current versions of FGIS issuances for providing official services.
- (2) All printed or downloaded FGIS issuances, including individual pages from issuances, that are made available to official personnel and/or posted or displayed to be used and referenced by official personnel must be the current version.

c. FGIS Issuances Retained for Historical Reference.

Sometimes it may be necessary to retain past FGIS issuances for historical reference. When doing so, all printed or downloaded historical issuances that are made available to official personnel must be clearly labeled “**Not for Official Use – Historical**” or with similar language to prevent official personnel from inadvertently referencing outdated or obsolete information when performing official services.

5. QUESTIONS

If there are any questions, please contact the Policies, Procedures, and Market Analysis Branch at FGISPoliciesProceduresMarketAnalysisBranch@usda.gov.