

# Grain Transportation Quarterly Updates

Transportation and Marketing Programs  
 Transportation Services Division  
[www.ams.usda.gov/AgTransportation](http://www.ams.usda.gov/AgTransportation)

## Truck Advisory

**Table 1: U.S. Grain Truck Market, 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2010**

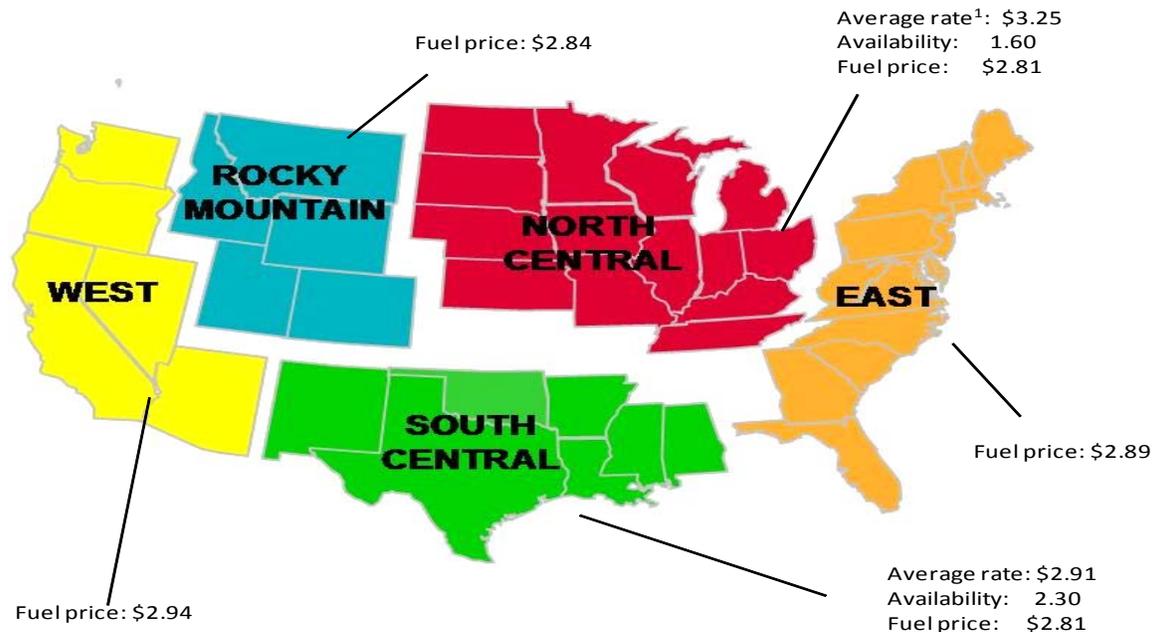
Region	25 miles	100 miles	200 miles	Truck availability	Truck usage	Future truck usage
					Quarterly Rating	
	<sup>1</sup> Rate per mile, per truckload			1=Very Easy to 5=Very Difficult	1=Much Lower to 5=Much Higher	
<b>National average<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>4.52</b>	<b>2.57</b>	<b>2.30</b>	<b>1.90</b>	<b>2.60</b>	<b>2.60</b>
North Central region	4.99	2.61	2.15	1.60	2.50	2.70
Rocky Mountain	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
South Central	3.80	2.50	2.42	2.30	2.70	2.30
West	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

<sup>1</sup>Rates are based on trucks with 80,000 lb gross vehicle weight limit, and are quoted in U.S. dollar

<sup>2</sup>National average is based on rates received from various States, but not every State is represented.

Source: Transportation and Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA

**Figure 1: U.S. Grain Truck Market, 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2010**



<sup>1</sup>Average rate per loaded mile, based on truck rates for trips of 25, 100, and 200 miles

Note: Fuel prices are a quarterly average (unit per gallon)

Fuel Price Data Source: Energy Information Administration U.S. Department of Energy, [www.eia.doe.gov](http://www.eia.doe.gov)

# Truck Usage

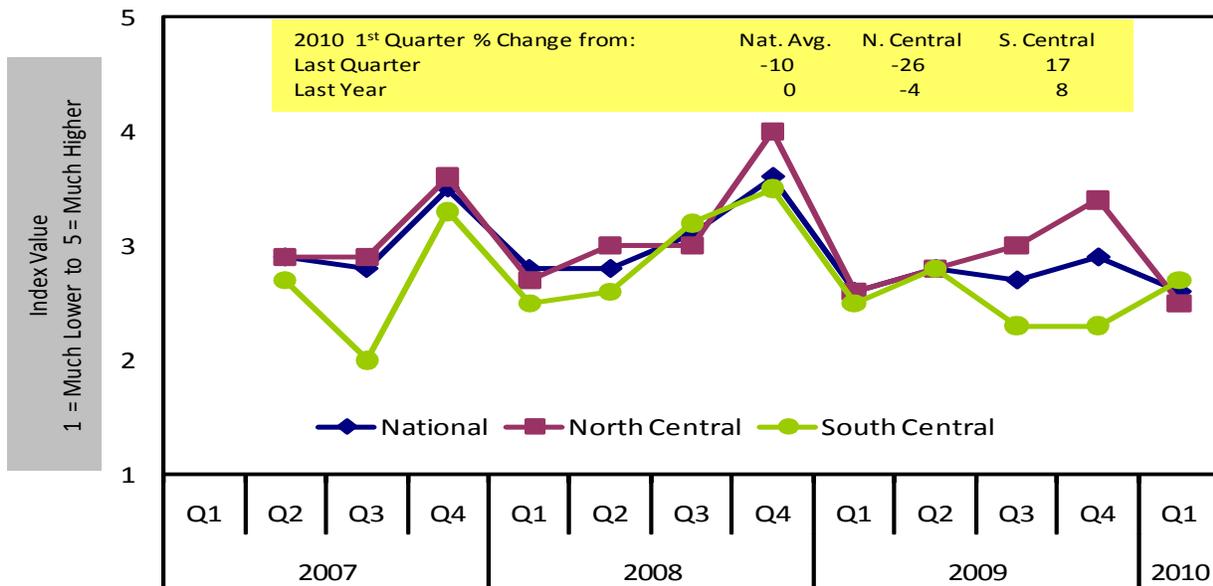
**Table 2: Regional Truck Usage**

Current Truck Usage 1 = Much Lower to 5 = Much Higher					Future Truck Usage 1 = Much Lower to 5 = Much Higher			
2008	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr
<b>National</b>	<b>2.80</b>	<b>2.80</b>	<b>3.10</b>	<b>3.60</b>	<b>2.90</b>	<b>3.10</b>	<b>3.15</b>	<b>3.15</b>
North Central	2.70	3.00	3.00	4.00	2.90	3.20	3.30	3.30
Rocky Mountain	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
South Central	2.50	2.60	3.20	3.50	3.30	3.20	3.00	3.00
West	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2009	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr
<b>National</b>	<b>2.60</b>	<b>2.80</b>	<b>2.70</b>	<b>2.90</b>	<b>2.70</b>	<b>2.70</b>	<b>2.70</b>	<b>2.80</b>
North Central	2.60	2.80	3.00	3.40	2.80	2.80	2.90	2.80
Rocky Mountain	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
South Central	2.50	2.80	2.30	2.30	2.50	2.50	2.30	2.80
West	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2010	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr	1st Qtr	2nd Qtr	3rd Qtr	4th Qtr
<b>National</b>	<b>2.60</b>				<b>2.60</b>			
North Central	2.50				2.70			
Rocky Mountain	n/a				n/a			
South Central	2.70				2.30			
West	n/a				n/a			

n/a: not data available

The truck usage index tracks the trends of truck utilization at grain elevators

**Figure 2: National Truck Usage, 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2010**



Source: Transportation and Marketing Programs, AMS/USDA

No data available for 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2007

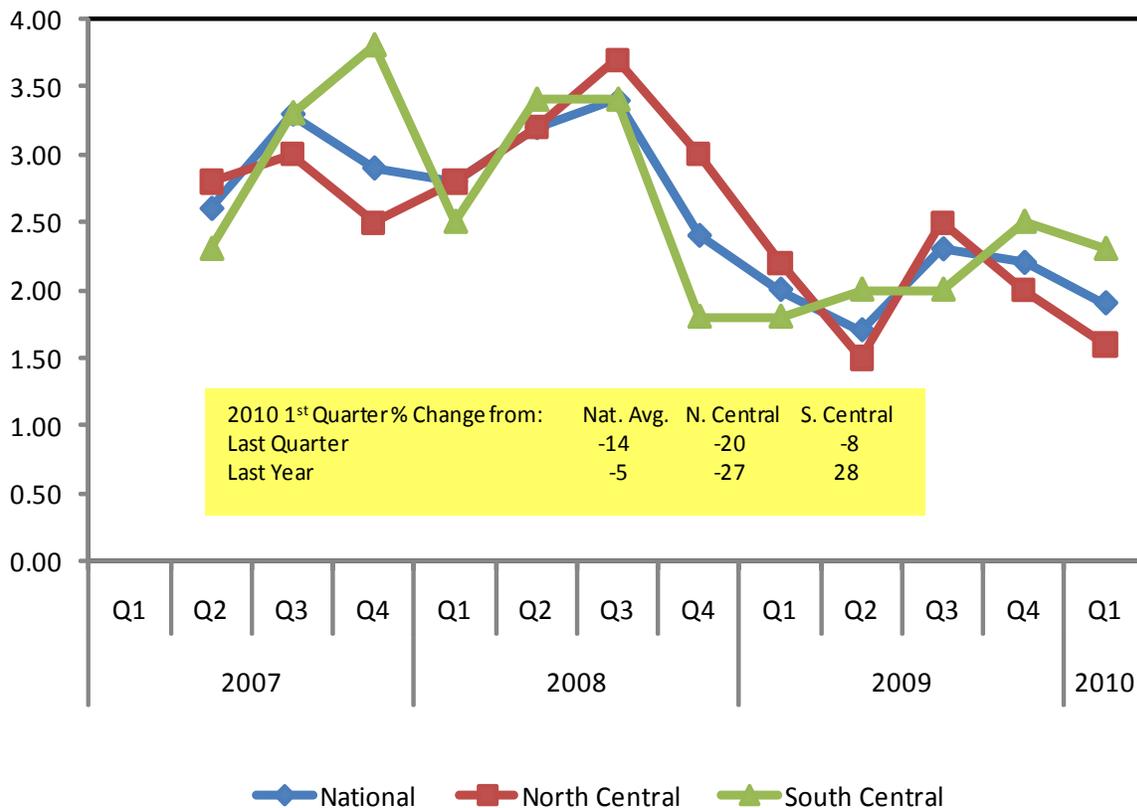
# Truck Availability

**Table 3: Quarterly National Truck Availability**

Region	1= Very Easy 5=Very Difficult		Current qtr as % change from		
	1st Quarter 2010	Previous Quarter	Same Quarter Last Year	Previous Qtr	Same Qtr Last Year
National	1.9	2.2	2.0	-14%	-5%
North Central	1.6	2.0	2.2	-20%	-27%
South Central	2.3	2.5	1.8	-8%	28%

The truck availability index tracks the trends in perceived ease of hiring a truck as reported by grain elevators.

**Figure 3: National Truck Availability**



No data available for 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2007

# Truck Rates

**Table 4: Average Grain Truck Rates for Short and Long Hauls, 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2010 (\$/per mile per truckload)**

Region	25 miles	100 miles	200 miles	% increase from:					
				Last qtr			Same qtr Last year		
				25 mi	100 mi	200 mi	25 mi	100 mi	200 mi
National Average	\$4.52	\$2.57	\$2.30	-7%	-7%	-13%	12%	15%	-6%
North Central	\$4.99	\$2.61	\$2.15	-4%	-8%	-8%	13%	28%	-8%
Rocky Mountain	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
South Central	\$3.80	\$2.50	\$2.42	-14%	-18%	-3%	4%	3%	-5%
West	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

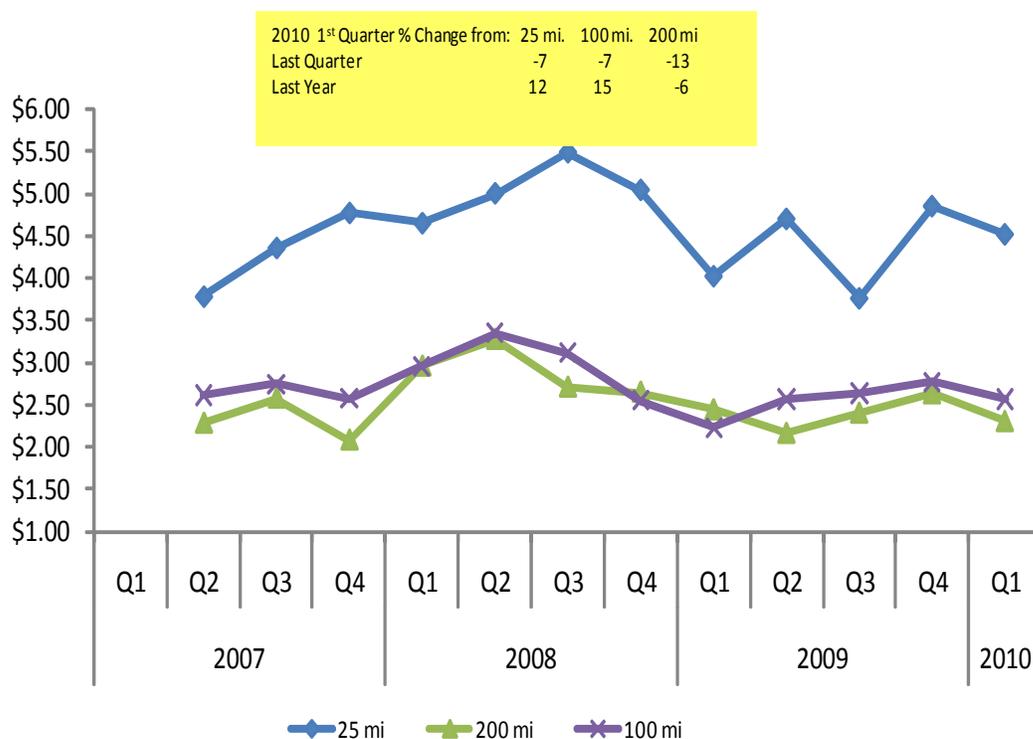
n/a: data not available

Rates are based on trucks with 80,000 lbs gross vehicle weight limit

**Source: Transportation and Marketing Programs/AMS/USDA**

A truck is assumed to carry 55,000 lbs or 25 metric tons of grain. Rates per metric ton per mile can be calculated from rates per truckload.

**Figure 4: National Average Truck Rates by Trip Distance**

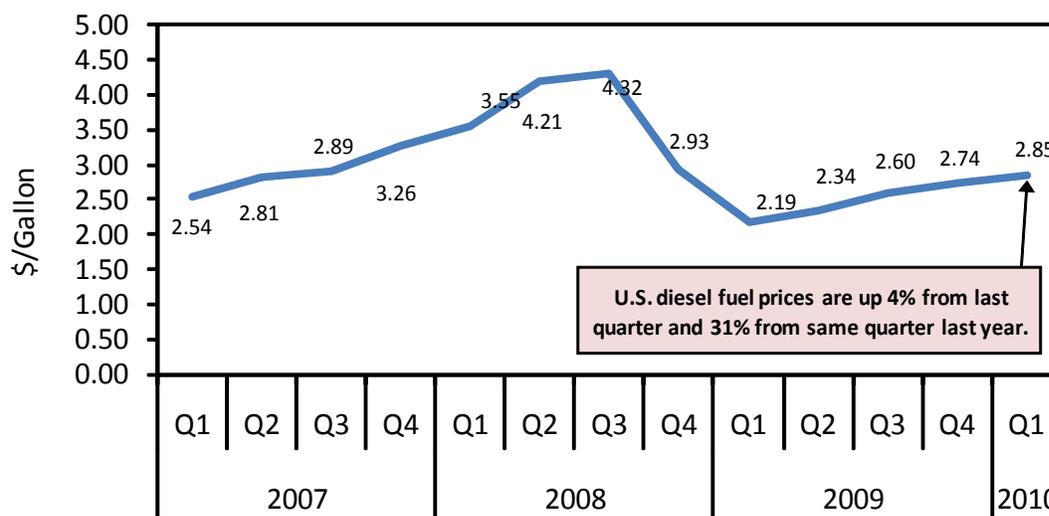


No data available for 1<sup>st</sup> quarter 2007

## U.S. Diesel Fuel Prices

The **diesel fuel price** provides a proxy for trends in U.S. truck rates. Diesel fuel is a significant expense for grain movements.

**Figure 5: U.S. Average On-Highway Diesel Fuel Prices**



Source: Energy Information Administration/U.S. Department of Energy

**Table 5: 1st Quarter 2010 Average Diesel Fuel Prices (All Types - \$/Gallon)**

Location	Price	Change From	
		Last Quarter	Same Qtr Last Year
East Coast	2.89	0.14	0.63
New England	3.02	0.19	0.50
Central Atlantic	3.00	0.13	0.59
Lower Atlantic	2.84	0.14	0.67
Midwest	2.82	0.10	0.68
Gulf Coast	2.82	0.13	0.68
Rocky Mountain	2.84	0.08	0.69
West Coast	2.94	0.09	0.69
California	3.00	0.10	0.04
U.S.	2.85	0.11	0.67

Source: Energy Information Administration/U.S. Department of Energy

## Ultra Low Diesel Fuel Prices

**Table 6: U.S. Average Ultra Low Diesel Prices (\$/Gallon)**

2010	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter
Ultra Low	2.86	-	-	-

Source: Energy Information Administration/U.S. Department of Energy

# Ocean Rates

Table 7: Ocean Shipping Rates for Bulk Grain (\$/metric ton)

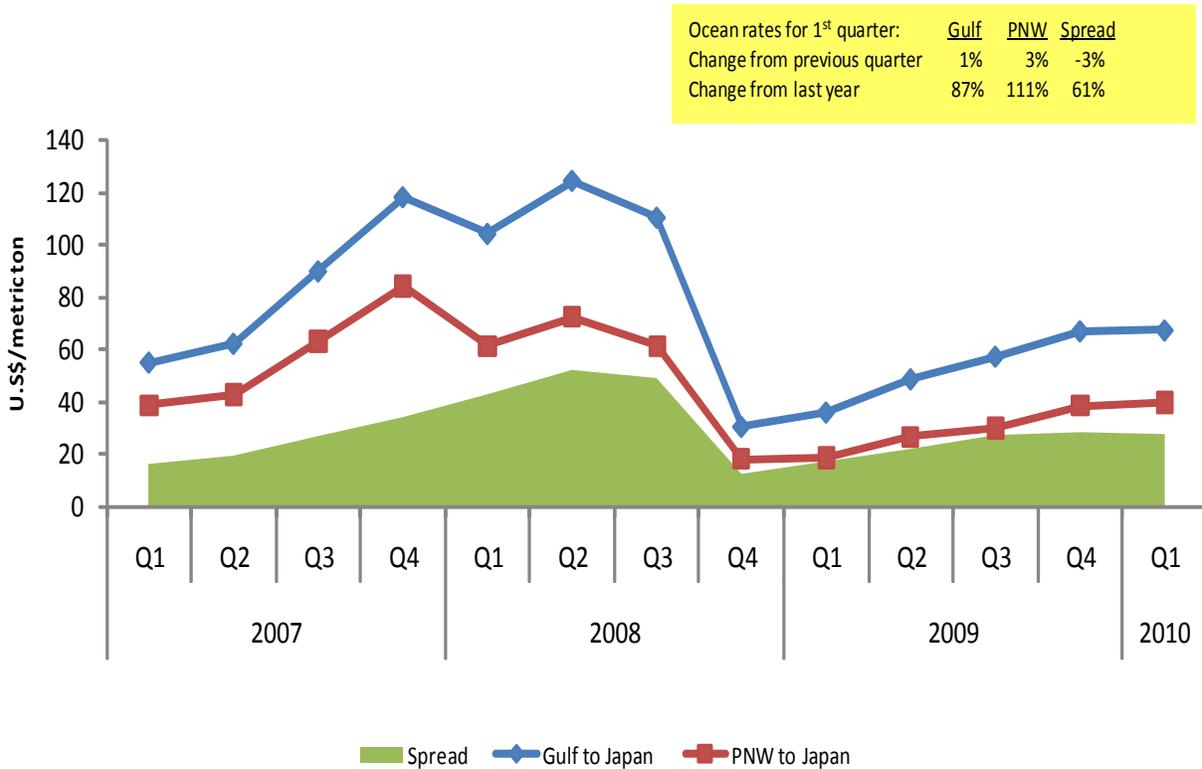
Gulf to										
Country	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 2009	2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr 2009	3 <sup>rd</sup> Qtr 2009	4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 2009	Average	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 2010	2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr 2010	3 <sup>rd</sup> Qtr 2010	4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 2010	Average
Japan	35.93	48.63	57.28	66.95	52.20	67.29				67.29
Rotterdam	16.88	21.33	19.81	26.38	21.10	24.92				24.92
China	35.47	47.19	56.53	65.64	51.21	65.54				65.54
Mexico	11.46	15.46	17.78	20.22	16.23	20.75				20.75
Colombia: Atlantic Port (East)	17.30	20.93	21.29	25.20	21.18	25.83				25.83
Colombia: Pacific Ports (West)	22.48	29.62	31.37	36.48	29.99	37.75				37.75

PNW to										
Country	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 2009	2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr 2009	3 <sup>rd</sup> Qtr 2009	4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 2009	Average	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 2010	2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr 2010	3 <sup>rd</sup> Qtr 2010	4 <sup>th</sup> Qtr 2010	Average
Japan	18.78	26.69	30.03	38.60	28.53	39.67				39.67

Source: ONeil Commodity Consulting

Figure 6: Grain Vessel Rates and Spread, U.S. to Japan



Source: The Baltic Exchange/Drewry Shipping Consultants

# Contacts and Links

Surajudeen Olowolayemo  
(Economist) [Surajudeen.Olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Surajudeen.Olowolayemo@ams.usda.gov) (202) 694-3050

April Taylor  
(Economist) [April.Taylor@ams.usda.gov](mailto:April.Taylor@ams.usda.gov) (202) 295-7374

Brian McGregor  
(Supervisory Agricultural  
Marketing Specialist) [Brian.McGregor@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Brian.McGregor@ams.usda.gov) (202) 694-2509

Daniel Nibarger  
(Economist) [Daniel.Nibarger@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Daniel.Nibarger@ams.usda.gov) (202) 436-9713

Pierre Bahizi  
(Economist) [Pierre.Bahizi@ams.usda.gov](mailto:Pierre.Bahizi@ams.usda.gov) (202) 694-2503

Subscription Information: Send relevant information to [GTRContactUs@ams.usda.gov](mailto:GTRContactUs@ams.usda.gov) for an electronic copy of this report (printed copies available upon request).

## **Related Websites**

[Grain Transportation Report](#)  
[Mexico Transport Cost Indicator Report](#)  
[Brazil Soybean Transportation Indicator](#)  
[Agricultural Refrigerated Truck Quarterly](#)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs). Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact the USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (Voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14<sup>th</sup> and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.