

Agricultural Marketing Service

Creating Opportunities for American Farmers and Businesses



Federal Grain Inspection Service

2019 Annual Report

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Each year, pursuant to section 17B (7 U.S.C. § 87f-2) of the U.S. Grain Standards Act, the Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) respectfully submits an annual report to the U.S. Congress. Activities described in this report cover Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 (October 1, 2018, through September 30, 2019).

In FY 2018, the realignment of offices within the U.S. Department of Agriculture eliminated the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) as a standalone agency. The grain inspection activities that were formerly a part of GIPSA, are now organized under the Agricultural Marketing Service.

This report is divided into four sections. After the Overview, Section I, Sections II through IV represent program updates. Any mention of firm names or trade products does not imply that they are endorsed or recommended directly or indirectly by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Inspection and weighing program data and financial information is available at:

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/reports/fgis-annual-reports>.

This document is available in an electronic 508 PDF version on our website at:

www.ams.usda.gov/about-ams/accessibility.

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SECTION I OVERVIEW

THE FEDERAL GRAIN INSPECTION SERVICE

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) establishes quality standards for grains, oilseeds, pulses, and legumes; provides impartial inspection and weighing services through a network of Federal, State, and private entities; and monitors marketing practices to enforce compliance with the U.S. Grain Standards Act (USGSA), as amended. Through these activities, FGIS facilitates the marketing of grains, oilseeds, and related products.

FGIS administers uniform national grain inspection and weighing programs established by the USGSA. Services under the USGSA are performed on a fee basis for both export and domestic grain shipments. The USGSA requires that export grain be inspected and weighed, prohibits deceptive practices with respect to the inspection and weighing of grain, and provides penalties for violations.

The USGSA also requires that all corn exported from the United States be tested for aflatoxin, prior to shipment, unless the contract stipulates that the testing is not required.

PROGRAM MISSION

FGIS' primary mission is twofold: promote the marketing of high-quality grain to domestic and international buyers and maintain objective standards for grain to certify its quality as accurately as practicable. These standards define uniform and descriptive terms to facilitate the grain trade, help determine grain storability, offer users the best possible information to determine end-product yield and quality, provide market incentive frameworks, reflect the economic value-based characteristics to end-users, and accommodate scientific advances in testing.

FEDERAL GRAIN INSPECTION SERVICE MERGER INTO AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

On November 14, 2017, Secretary Sonny Perdue issued a Memorandum that authorized the realignment of offices within the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This Memorandum eliminated the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration as a standalone agency and reorganized grain inspection activities under AMS. The merger into AMS has sparked a renewed focus in FGIS to provide gold standard inspection and weighing services to customers that deliver U.S. grain to foreign markets. AMS has improved the efficiency of service delivery and of training new samplers and graders, while condensing some of the administrative duties under the Agency umbrella to reduce redundancies and cost. An increase in stakeholder collaboration has led to a more effective Advisory Committee with a large public turnout, and an upsurge of invitations to domestic and foreign outreach events.

EMPLOYEES AND LOCATIONS

FGIS is composed of 380 permanent employees, 47 intermittent permanent employees, and 71 temporary employees. It is headquartered in Washington, DC, and has the bulk of its employees located at the National Grain Center in Kansas City, Missouri; seven (7) field offices; and one (1) Federal/State office. Field offices are located in Grand Forks, North Dakota; Kansas City, Missouri; League City, Texas; New Orleans, Louisiana; Portland, Oregon; Stuttgart, Arkansas; and Toledo, Ohio. FGIS has one Federal/State office in Olympia, Washington.

FGIS OVERSIGHT OF OFFICIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS

FGIS oversees 44 State and private agencies that provide official services under the USGSA. Of the 44, 33 are private agencies and 6 are State agencies designated to provide official inspection and/or weighing services in domestic markets; 4 are State agencies delegated to provide mandatory official export inspection and weighing services, as well as designated to provide official domestic inspection and weighing services within the State; and 1 is a State agency delegated to provide mandatory official export inspection and weighing services within the State.

These private and State agencies represent a unique network of approximately 2,500 staff members who conduct official inspection and weighing services for grain producers, handlers, processors, and exporters across the country.

GRAIN INSPECTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Grain Inspection Advisory Committee encompasses 15 members that represent all segments of the grain industry. They include grain producers, processors, merchandisers, handlers, exporters, consumers, grain inspection agencies, and scientists. The Committee votes on recommendations to help improve program services, develop new services needed in the marketplace, and suggest areas of research. On August 15-16, 2019, the Committee held a public meeting at the National Grain Center in Kansas City, Missouri. The Committee received updates from FGIS on past recommendations. It also heard presentations from the AMS Specialty Crops Program, regarding the development of hemp regulations, and the National Organic Program, that provided an overview of its certification and compliance activities. Five recommendations were passed at the meeting involving hemp inspection and grading services, length of terms for Committee members, nonuse of service exceptions, updating the FGIS-Food and Drug Administration Memorandum of Understanding, and the review of geographic boundaries. More information from the meeting is located on the AMS public website: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/about-ams/facas-advisory-councils/giac>



Front Row: Ryan Kuhl; David Ayers; Arthur Neal; Linsey Moffit-Tobin; John Lindgren; Kendra Kline *Back Row:* Sarah Sexton-Bowser; Mark Watne; Tom Tunnell; Brent Turnipseed; Randy Burns; Rick Robinette; John Morgan; Matthew Kerrigan; Todd Russom; Bruce Summers; Bruce Sutherland

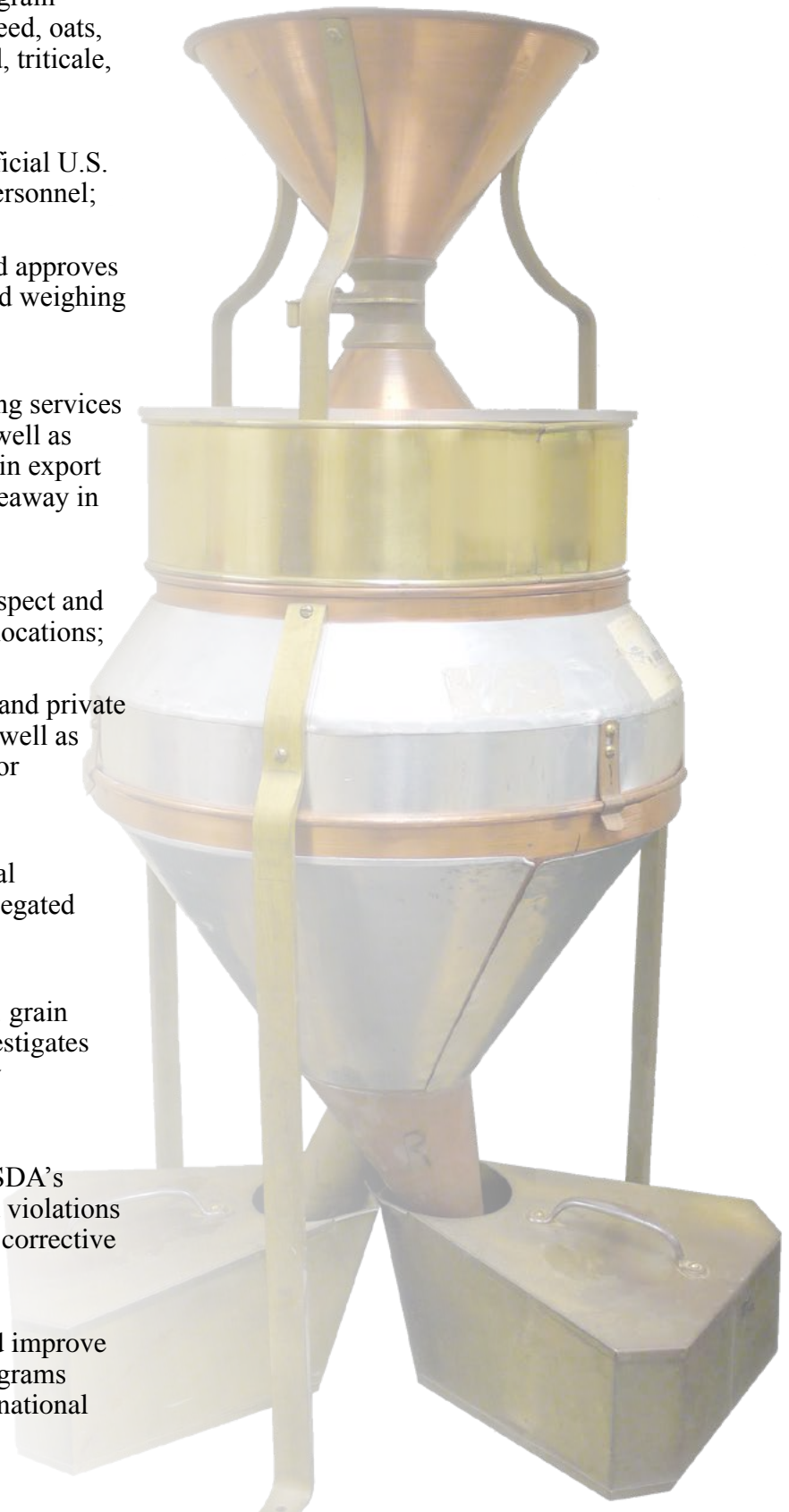


(Caption: Opening remarks from AMS Administrator, Bruce Summers)

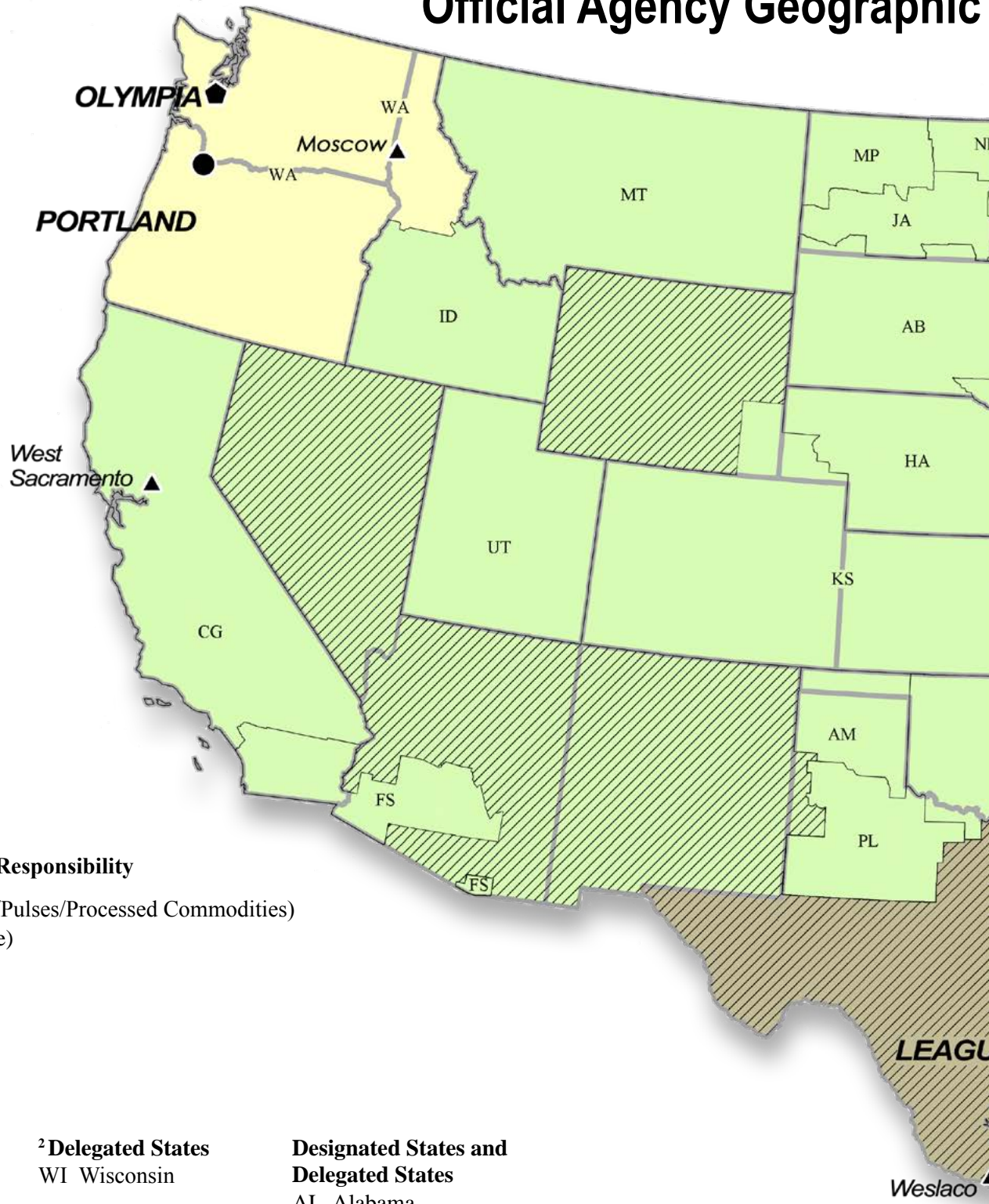
KEY ACTIVITIES

In administering and enforcing the USGSA, FGIS:

- Establishes and maintains official U.S. grain standards for barley, canola, corn, flaxseed, oats, rye, sorghum, soybeans, sunflower seed, triticale, wheat, and mixed grain;
- Promotes the uniform application of official U.S. grain standards by official inspection personnel;
- Establishes methods and procedures and approves equipment for the official inspection and weighing of grain;
- Provides official inspection and weighing services at certain U.S. export port locations as well as official inspection of U.S. grain at certain export port locations along the St. Lawrence Seaway in eastern Canada;
- Delegates qualified State agencies to inspect and weigh grain at certain U.S. export port locations;
- Designates and licenses qualified State and private agencies to inspect and weigh grain, as well as perform other official services, at interior locations;
- Provides Federal oversight of the official inspection and weighing of grain by delegated States and designated agencies;
- Monitors the quality and weight of U.S. grain as received at destination ports and investigates complaints or discrepancies reported by international buyers;
- Investigates, in cooperation with the USDA's Office of the Inspector General, alleged violations of the USGSA and initiates appropriate corrective action; and
- Helps U.S. trading partners develop and improve their grain inspection and weighing programs through education and outreach to international buyers.



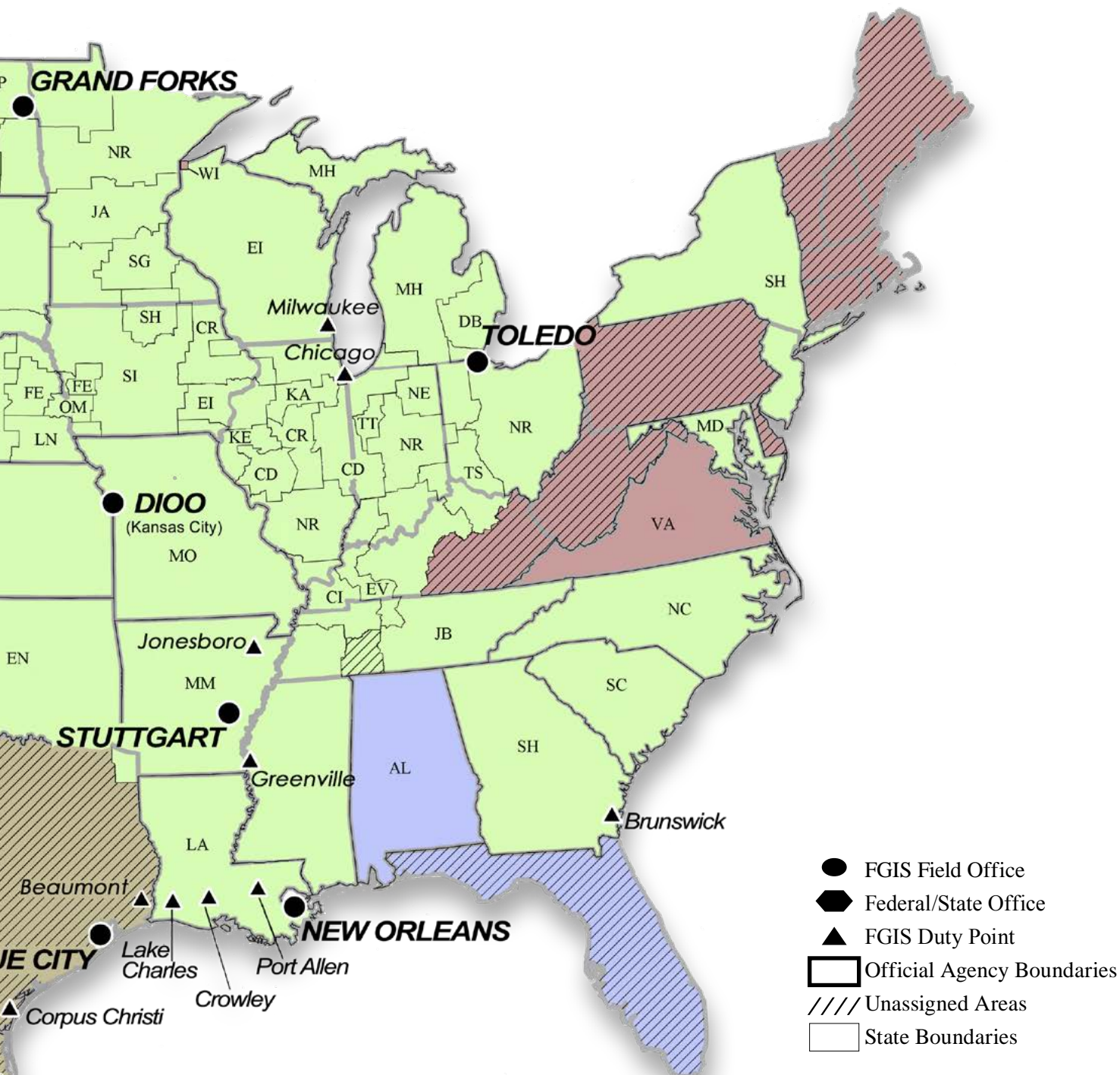
Official Agency Geographic



¹ Designated State agencies and designated private agencies (i.e., official agencies) may perform permissive official grain inspection and/or weighing services at domestic locations under designations awarded up to a 5-year period.

² Delegated States may provide mandatory official grain inspection, weighing, and scale testing services at export port locations within their respective State. Delegated States are reevaluated and recertified every 5 years in accordance with the Act.

Areas and FGIS Field Office



Designated Private Agencies

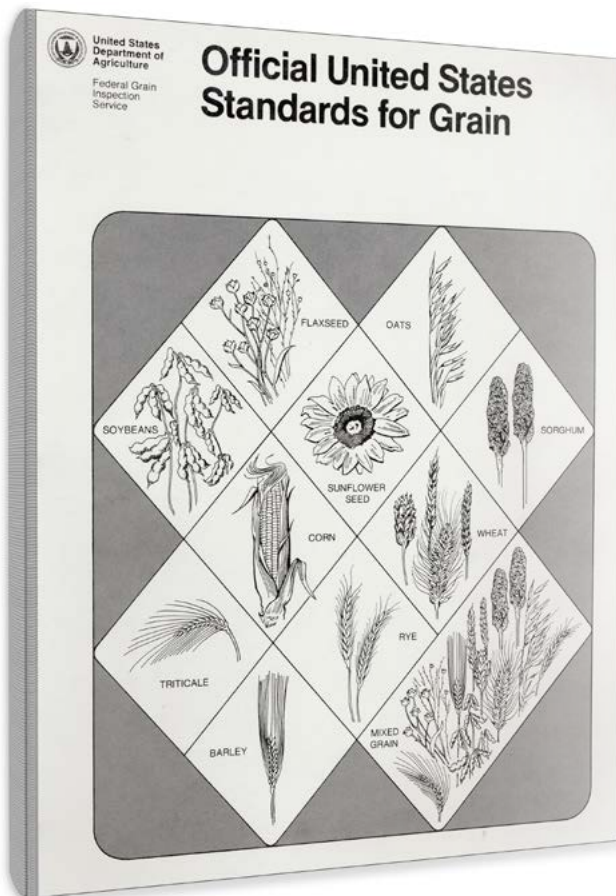
AB	Aberdeen	FS	Farwell Southwest	MH	Michigan	PL	Plainview
AM	Amarillo	FE	Fremont	CR	Mid-Iowa	SH	Schaal
JB	Barton	HA	Hastings	MM	Midsouth	SI	Sioux City
CI	Cairo	ID	Idaho	MP	Minot	SG	State Grain
CG	California Agri	JA	Jamestown	NR	North Dakota	TT	Titus
CD	Champaign	KA	Kankakee	NE	Northeast Indiana	TS	Tri-State
DB	Detroit	KS	Kansas	NP	Northern Plains		
EI	Eastern Iowa	KE	Keokuk	EV	Ohio Valley		
EN	Enid	LN	Lincoln	OM	Omaha		

SECTION II

STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT

U.S. STANDARDS FOR GRAIN

FGIS regularly reviews the official standards for grain and commodities to ensure the standards remain relevant to the marketplace. In FY 2019, FGIS completed its review of the U.S. Standards for Corn and Soybeans. Based on comments received on the Request for Comment documents, FGIS published a Final Notice in the Federal Register closing the review of the standards for those grains without amendment. In FY 2020, FGIS will publish a Final Notice based on its review of the U.S. Standards for Canola.



SECTION III

THE NATIONAL GRAIN CENTER

PROVIDING THE MARKET WITH TERMS AND METHODS FOR QUALITY ASSESSMENT

The National Grain Center (NGC), located in Kansas City, Missouri, hosts numerous events/tours each year. In FY19, NGC hosted 52 events, of which 28 engaged international trade teams. USDA cooperators, such as the U.S. Grains Council and the U.S. Wheat Associates, sponsor many of the trade teams. The primary purpose of the tours is to share knowledge about U.S. grain grading standards and the services provided by FGIS.

Beyond tours, NGC employees provide technical training and give in-depth presentations on relevant quality control methods for visual inspection, mycotoxin, pesticide residue, and biotechnology. These presentations allow stakeholders the opportunity to interact with subject matter experts and bestow a better understanding and greater confidence in the U.S. grain inspection system.



BOARD OF APPEALS AND REVIEW

The Board of Appeals and Review (BAR) is a team of six senior-level grain inspectors, led by a Chairman and an Assistant Chairman. The BAR is the final adjudication body for all disputes regarding subjective grain quality issues presented by any interested party in a grain transaction. The BAR performs appeal inspections after the issue has been considered by other FGIS field offices. The BAR rendered decisions on 484 grain appeals during FY 2019.

The BAR provided grain grading presentations and “hands on” grain grading training to domestic grain associations and international trade teams. BAR members also provided annual training for Federal and official agency grain inspectors at FGIS field offices.

The BAR is responsible for ensuring alignment of sensory inspections throughout the entire official inspection system. This is accomplished through a network of Quality Assurance Specialists (QAS) at both Federal and official agency inspection points. To maintain inspection alignment, the BAR holds annual QAS seminars for Federal and official agency QASs at the National Grain Center in Kansas City, Missouri. In FY 2019, the BAR provided technical grain grading training for seven newly appointed QASs, and a 1 week training course for five new QASs.



PESTICIDE RESIDUE TESTING AND METHOD DEVELOPMENT

FGIS provides pesticide residue testing services for applicants, along with domestic and export surveys. In addition, FGIS develops analytical methods to support these activities, which play a critical role in demonstrating the quality of U.S. grain as it relates to food safety, value, and adherence to U.S. and international regulatory limits. In FY 2019, FGIS analyzed 200 export soybean samples for 103 pesticide residues, and 100 export corn samples for 60 pesticide residues. In addition to the survey work, FGIS analyzed 15 corn, soybean, and popcorn applicant-submitted samples for 56 pesticide residues, and analyzed 10 applicant-submitted wheat samples for 75 pesticide residues. A FGIS certificate was issued to the customer for each of the submitted samples.

In support of these programs, FGIS modified an existing method for paraquat and diquat determination to increase accuracy of test results. FGIS, also, developed one new analytical method for the analysis of 2, 4-D, dicamba, and relevant metabolites of dicamba.

MYCOTOXIN AND BIOTECHNOLOGY RAPID TEST KIT EVALUATIONS

The grain industry needs fast reliable tests to detect and quantify the incidence of fungal-produced mycotoxins in grain, as well as to accurately identify genetically engineered (GE) traits in grains. To ensure that commercially available tests provide reliable results, FGIS offers a performance evaluation and certification program. In FY 2019, 15 rapid test kits were evaluated for the analysis of mycotoxins (aflatoxins, deoxynivalenol, fumonisins, ochratoxin A, and zearalenone). Of the 15 test kits, 11 met the FGIS performance criteria and were certified.

Technology has been developed using water, instead of more hazardous organic solvents, for the extraction of aflatoxins, deoxynivalenol, fumonisins, and zearalenone. The use of water eliminates the need for special handling of waste from hazardous organic solvents and reduces costs for conducting tests. It, also, reduces risk of exposing operators to hazardous chemicals when performing these tests. Of the 32 kits currently approved for use by FGIS for analysis of mycotoxins, 23 use water-based extraction technologies.



Mycotoxin Monitoring Programs. FGIS administers monitoring programs for deoxynivalenol (DON) and aflatoxins as part of an overall mycotoxin quality assurance program. Under the mycotoxin monitoring programs, a percentage of original inspection results obtained by service providers, using an FGIS-approved test kit, is compared to the results obtained from FGIS' reference methods. FGIS reference methods utilize highly sensitive and selective instrumentation, such as, ultra-high-performance liquid chromatography (UHPLC)/tandem mass spectrometry and UHPLC/fluorescence, for DON and aflatoxins, respectively. Weekly and annual reports showing a comparison of the results obtained from the original inspection to those obtained by FGIS' reference method are provided to testing locations to assess their performance. Routine correspondence between official service providers and FGIS chemists is maintained to aid in report interpretation, quality assurance, and resolution of testing issues. In FY 2019, FGIS continued both DON and aflatoxin monitoring programs where 1,083 samples were analyzed from 54 specified service points (SSPs) for DON and 1,600 samples from 76 SSPs for aflatoxins.



Wheat Functionality. The intrinsic qualities of wheat affect the quality of end products. To best determine the ability of wheat to meet specific end-use needs, accurate test methods are needed to differentiate functional qualities. These methods should also be practical, rapid, and reproducible among different laboratories to provide value and transparency from the producer, to the processor, and provide information that better predicts appropriate end uses, thereby enhancing the marketability of U.S. wheat. The Falling Number test is an important measure of the effect of sprout damage on wheat and an indicator of the performance of wheat during the processing of flour for making various food products. In FY 2019, FGIS completed two rounds of check sample distributions and continued Falling Number inspection monitoring to evaluate accuracy of official testing. Reports were issued for both check sample distributions and monitoring program results summarizing testing performance. FGIS personnel provided on-site falling number training and evaluated the performance of each analyst. In May 2019, FGIS implemented a new barometric pressure correction and now requires the use of the Perten Shakematic for the determination of Falling Number for wheat grain to reduce overall variation of test results within the official inspection system.



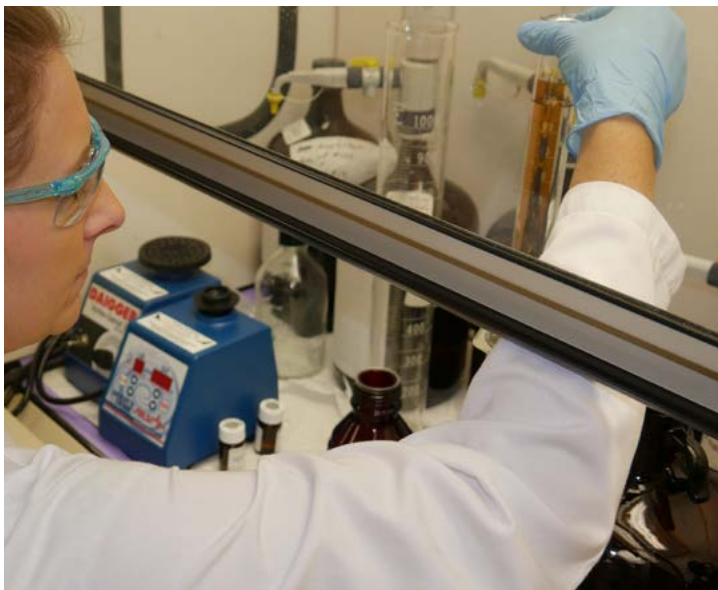
REFERENCE METHOD ANALYSES

FGIS establishes and performs reference methods for protein, moisture, oil, and mycotoxins. These methods are used to: (1) maintain the accuracy of current testing in the official inspection system; and (2) support development of new rapid field tests. The protein, moisture, oil, and fatty acid reference analyses support the near infrared spectroscopic, dielectric, and nuclear magnetic resonance instruments used for rapid inspection at field locations that perform official testing. The mycotoxin reference analyses support the evaluation and standardization of rapid tests for official and commercial grain inspection, and support quality assurance programs ensuring consistent and reliable testing results. Reference method analysis is available upon request for Board Appeals of mycotoxins – aflatoxins, deoxynivalenol, fumonisin, ochratoxin A, and zearalenone.

The Japan Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) is considering new regulations for ochratoxin A (OTA) in wheat and barley. At the request of MAFF, FGIS agreed to participate in a 4-year study with MAFF for comparison of results from origin and destination testing of OTA in wheat and barley. Starting in FY 2019, composite samples of lots exported to Japan were tested using the FGIS reference method and results were reported to MAFF.

BIOTECHNOLOGY PROFICIENCY PROGRAM

FGIS' Biotechnology Proficiency Program now involves 210 organizations on five continents – Africa, Asia, Europe, and North and South America, with more than 80 percent of the participants from organizations outside the United States. FGIS bi-annually distributes blind test samples to participants and compiles and disseminates the results of tests. This program, which FGIS initiated in 2002, enables organizations to assess and improve their accuracy and precision in identifying genetically engineered (GE) events in grains and oilseeds and gives grain buyers and sellers confidence in the results produced by GE testing laboratories: www.ams.usda.gov/services/fgis/standardization/proficiency.



Response to Inadvertent Release of Unapproved Traits into the Marketplace. In recent years, there have been rare occasions when unapproved GE events entered into the U.S. grain handling system. When such an inadvertent release occurs, a rapid response is necessary to identify and validate methods to detect the trait and thereby protect the integrity of U.S. grain markets. The testing methods must be highly specific and sensitive to effectively maintain confidence in U.S. grain marketing systems. Current detection methods within FGIS' Biotechnology Laboratory focus on high-throughput DNA extraction, methodologies, which enables FGIS to more effectively respond to inadvertently released products. FGIS has completed the development of high-throughput DNA extraction methods for corn, soybeans, wheat, and rice. FGIS assists government and private laboratories that use protein and DNA-based technologies by performing impartial third-party verification of their methods for both qualitative and quantitative detection of transgenic events in GE crops. FGIS involvement in responding to such incidents facilitates harmonization of sampling plans and of international testing for GE grains and oilseeds. FGIS provides expertise to USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) when responding to inadvertent releases of unapproved GE events.

Harmonizing Biotech Reference Methods. There is a need for highly specific and accurate tests for the various GE crops grown in the United States. FGIS has developed intra-laboratory validated real-time polymerase chain reaction methods and has evaluated the accuracy, reliability, and proficiency of publicly available methods used to detect and identify GE grains and oilseeds. FGIS participated on a scientific panel of experts engaging U.S. stakeholders and influencing outcomes on issues related to testing of GE traits in grains with the goal of developing global scientific consensus regarding the analysis of transgenic events. FGIS continues to collaborate with international organizations such as Analytical Excellence through Industry Collaboration, International Organization for Standardization, American Association of Cereal Chemists International, The Global Low-level Presence Initiative, and the Canadian Grain Commission to harmonize testing technologies for GE grains and oilseeds.

STANDARDIZING COMMERCIAL GRAIN INSPECTION EQUIPMENT

In FY 2019, FGIS continued the cooperative effort with the National Conference on Weights and Measures (NCWM) and the National Institute for Standards and Technology to standardize commercial inspection equipment. The commercial inspection equipment includes moisture meters and any test weight modules contained within moisture meters, as well as near-infrared analyzers for protein, oil, and starch. FGIS served as the sole evaluation laboratory for grain inspection equipment under the NCWM NTEP.



FGIS collected grain moisture meter calibration data for eight instrument models as part of the NTEP ongoing calibration program. Calibrations developed in this program provide traceability throughout the official FGIS moisture program, including the air oven reference method, and they are used in the majority of moisture meters used for



commercial grain transactions throughout the United States.

In FY 2019, FGIS' NTEP laboratory coordinated its issuance of Certificates of Conformance with FGIS' implementation of calibrations for the official moisture meter models for use with the major grains. This close coordination ensured that State-regulated commercial moisture meter users could use the same meters and calibrations as those used in official inspection.

In FY 2017, the NTEP laboratory began an evaluation of a near-infrared analyzer for moisture, oil, and protein. In FY 2019, the NTEP laboratory began an evaluation of a near-infrared analyzer for moisture, oil, protein, and test weight per bushel. The evaluations of these devices are ongoing. In FY 2019, the NTEP laboratory completed an evaluation for a new grain moisture meter with test weight per bushel. In FY 2020, FGIS will collect grain moisture meter calibration data for eight NTEP models and will conduct NTEP testing for new grain inspection equipment models upon request.

SECTION IV

PROMOTING U.S. GRAIN TO INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMERS

FGIS personnel frequently meet with delegations visiting from other countries to brief them on the U.S. grain marketing system, our national inspection and weighing system, U.S. grain standards, and FGIS' mission. Many of these delegations are sponsored by USDA Cooperator organizations like the U.S. Wheat Associates and the U.S. Grains Council.

These organizations arrange delegation visits to grain production areas, FGIS field offices, onsite laboratories at export grain elevators, and the National Grain Center. At the National Grain Center, delegations often receive technical training on analytical testing procedures and grain inspection methods and procedures.

Briefings are tailored to address each group's interests and concerns. Presentations include explanations of the various services available from FGIS and Official Agencies use of the latest technology to provide grain traders with accurate and reliable inspection and weighing information. For importers or potential importers new to the U.S. grain market, FGIS provides information on how to contract for the quality they desire.

These briefings foster a better understanding of the entire U.S. grain marketing system and serve to enhance purchasers' confidence in U.S. grain. They also help move our Nation's harvest to end-users around the globe. During FY 2019, FGIS personnel met with 28 teams from 20 countries.

Technical Assistance. Exporters, importers, and end-users of U.S. grains and oilseeds, as well as other USDA agencies, USDA cooperator organizations and foreign governments, occasionally request outreach, education, and technical assistance from FGIS. In most cases FGIS conducts workshops at grain marketing and grain grading seminars, meets with foreign governments and grain industry representatives to resolve grain quality and weight discrepancies, helps other countries develop domestic

grain and commodity standards and marketing infrastructures, assists importers with quality specifications, and trains foreign inspectors in U.S. inspection methods and procedures. Such activities typically have been funded through various programs administered by USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) or directly by FGIS.



In March, FGIS sent a representative to the Philippines to participate in a U.S. Soybean Export Council (USSEC) conference to address U.S. soybean quality concerns in the region. The conference was attended by 240 participants from several countries. Our representative, then, traveled to Indonesia to meet with FAS representatives and soybean importers who had complained about high moisture content and moldy kernels.

In July, an FGIS representative traveled to Peru, at the request of the U.S. Wheat Associates (USW), where he gave 5 wheat grading workshops and trained a total of 53 mill personnel. USW reported the millers gained a better understanding of the FGIS inspection process and left with more confidence in the U.S. grading system and U.S. wheat quality.

In August, at the request of USSEC, FGIS sent an inspector to Indonesia where he gave five soybean grading workshops to Indonesian importers and end users. He also gave presentations on the Agency's role in export inspection procedures and soybean standards.

Also, in August, an FGIS representative traveled to Singapore to participate in the Annual Southeast Asia Agricultural Cooperators Conference (ACC). The conference is an example of the collaboration undertaken by USDA cooperators who share the objective of fostering U.S. feed grain and oilseed sales in the Southeast Asia region. Over the last 17 years, the conference has become a premier industry event that brings together high-level executives from major feed, livestock production and grain trading companies from the region. Every year the conference results in actual sales of U.S. corn, DDGS, soybean meal, wheat, and soybeans.

Southeast Asia Outreach. In September, two FGIS representatives traveled to Southeast Asia for 3 weeks to work with importers and their governments. FGIS was able to address immediate and long-term issues in the region and promote a better understanding of U.S. sampling and inspection methods, which leads to fewer differences in test results. This assignment also provides FGIS with the opportunity to develop face-to-face relationships with FAS agricultural attaches, customers, USDA Cooperators, and government officials.

During their time in Asia, the FGIS representatives traveled to Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand to conduct grading seminars and meet with individuals and groups involved in the grain and milling industry. The seminars, organized with the help of the USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, U.S. Wheat Associates, U.S. Grains Council, and U.S. Soybean Export Council, provided much-needed technical education to foreign buyers and end users. While in Southeast Asia, the FGIS representatives were also able to attend FAS agricultural attaché regional meetings where they met with incoming attaches and representatives of regional cooperator groups.

Corn, Soybean, and Wheat Quality Surveys.

FGIS coordinated with the U.S. Grains Council and U.S. Wheat Associates to conduct export corn, soybean, and wheat quality surveys. FGIS assisted with the surveys by collecting, grading, and testing samples and providing export inspection data. These surveys are conducted annually.



FGIS administers a formal process for investigating grain quality and weight discrepancies. When an importer of U.S. grain submits a claim regarding quality or weight, FGIS analyzes samples retained on file from the original inspection and analyzes samples submitted from the complainant (if the buyer chooses to submit them) to evaluate the accuracy of the initial inspection. This process allows FGIS to verify whether the original inspection and weighing service provided at the time of loading was correct, based on all available information. FGIS then issues a report outlining its findings.

Occasionally, a buyer or importing country reports repeated discrepancies that cannot be resolved by a shipment-by-shipment review under this process. In such cases, FGIS may conduct collaborative sample studies or joint monitoring activities to address the discrepancy in a more comprehensive manner.

In FY 2019, FGIS received eight quality complaints and one weight complaint from importers on grains inspected under the U.S. Grain Standards Act, as amended.



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. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the State or local Agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY). Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992.

Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Mail Stop 9410, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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