

Program Notice

FGIS-PN-03-06

September 4, 2003

ISSUANCE RETENTION POLICY

Contents

1.PURPOSE	2
2.EFFECTIVE DATE	2
3.BACKGROUND	2
4.POLICY	2
5.QUESTIONS	3

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

To file a complaint, write to the USDA, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal employment opportunity employer.

1. PURPOSE

This notice announces a new policy regarding the retention of Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) program notices, directives, and handbooks by FGIS field offices and official agencies.

2. EFFECTIVE DATE

This action is effective upon receipt.

3. BACKGROUND

FGIS field offices and official agencies are required to maintain a complete and up-to-date set of FGIS program notice, directives, and handbooks. Since 1998, field offices and official agencies have been allowed to download new or revised FGIS issuances from the FGIS website (www.ams.usda.gov) and maintain these issuances as electronic files, instead of hard copies. These electronic files were required to be stored on either computer hard drives, floppy disks, or some other suitable computer storage medium that allowed for easy retrieval by the user.

On July 1, 2003, AMS suspended printing and distributing of FGIS program notices, directives, and handbooks. Now, AMS posts all new or most currently-active FGIS program notices, directives, and handbooks on the [AMS website](#) so that persons with Internet access may view or download these issuances at their convenience. The issuances are posted in the PDF format, which allows them to be printed directly from the webpage.

AMS notifies FGIS field offices, official agencies, and other interested parties by email when a new program notice, directive, or handbook has been posted to the AMS website. The e-mail gives a brief summary of the new issuance and provides directions for viewing, printing, or downloading the issuance from the AMS website. Information about all new FGIS issuances are also provided in the current issues of the AMS News, a monthly newsletter that is sent to AMS offices, official agencies, and interested groups and individuals

4. POLICY

FGIS and official agency service points 1/ that have Internet access are not required to maintain printed or electronic copies of FGIS issuance (e.g. program notices, directives and handbooks) when those issuances are posted on the AMS website. Printed copies are required for all issuances which are not posted on the AMS website.

FGIS and official agency service points¹ 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.

5. QUESTIONS

Direct questions to the Safety and Issuance Management Branch at (202) 720-0244.

¹ Includes FGIS field offices, FGIS sub-offices, official agency headquarters or main offices, seasonal duty points, auxiliary specified service points, and applicant specific specified service points.