

A Guide to USDA's International Programs

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This guide provides detailed information of USDA international offices and programs organized by the Department's Mission Areas. Each entry includes a brief description and a related Web site address. The descriptions were taken directly from relevant Web sites without further interpretation. Readers are encouraged to check those sites for updates and revisions.

Every effort was made to obtain information about current programming opportunities; however, many programs listed may be ongoing, open for renewal, or currently closed. Please contact the individual agencies responsible for these programs for more information.

We thank our university partners for identifying the need for this document. It was developed by the International Program Office in USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Suggestions about how to make the document more useful or complete should be directed to Hiram Larew at hlarew@nifa.usda.gov or Rose Gregory at rgregory@nifa.usda.gov.

Mission Area: Natural Resources and Environment

Forest Service (FS)

Established in 1905, the Forest Service manages public lands in national forests and grasslands. The mission of the Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.
<http://www.fs.fed.us>

International Programs

International Programs coordinates the Forest Service's international work. It promotes sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation internationally. FS International Programs partners with many types of organizations, large and small, private and public, on a wide range of technical cooperation and policy development issues. It provides technical skills by tapping the expertise of a large number of FS researchers, foresters, wildlife biologists, hydrologists, policy makers, and other specialists. International Programs has three main staff units: Technical Cooperation, Policy, and Disaster Assistance Support Program (DASP).
<http://www.fs.fed.us/global/>

International Institute of Tropical Forestry (IITF)

As a scientific institution, the IITF is committed to research in tropical forestry and the transfer of technologies. To address aspects of physical, social, and economic issues in managing tropical forests, the IITF has more than sixty years of experience in interdisciplinary research.
<http://www.fs.fed.us/global/iitf/>

Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry

The Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry has grown to become a center of research and technology transfer on matters of the management, preservation, and restoration of natural ecosystems and landscapes throughout the Pacific. The Institute's work is conducted by a unique structure of teams that include both scientists funded by FS research and professionals funded through State and Private Forestry and International Forestry.
<http://www.fs.fed.us/psw/ipif/>

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

NRCS puts over 70 years of experience to work in assisting owners of America's private land with conserving their soil, water, and other natural resources. It delivers technical assistance based on sound science and suited to a customer's specific needs.

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>

International Programs

The role of international programs in NRCS is to help other countries utilize their natural resources without depleting them by providing technical assistance; exchanging scientific and technical information; contributing to the overall achievement of U.S. foreign policy that seeks to promote economic stability, reduce poverty, and solve world food problems; and providing opportunities that will broaden and increase the technical knowledge and professional capability of NRCS personnel.

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/international/>

International Technical Assistance

NRCS receives numerous requests to provide technical assistance in foreign countries. It helps improve the management and conservation of natural resources globally by providing long- and short-term technical assistance and leadership with our foreign partners. Due to lack of statutory authority to fund technical assistance outside the U.S., NRCS participates in these activities on a reimbursable basis, through USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service/International Cooperation and Development (FAS/ICD).

http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/international/tech_asst.htm

International Visitor Program

The Visitors Program is designed to provide specialized on-the-job training in the U.S. for foreign nationals from other countries. Foreign officials are given opportunities to gain a better understanding of ecosystem-based assistance by observing and discussing conservation programs in the U.S., in order to transfer applicable methods back to their home countries. There are times, however, when NRCS employees are contacted directly by universities or other institutions in order to provide assistance to these visitors. Funding sources vary from program to program.

http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/international/visitor_prog.html

Mission Area: Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services

Farm Service Agency (FSA)

Farm Service Agency is equitably serving all farmers, ranchers, and agricultural partners through the delivery of effective, efficient agricultural programs for all Americans.

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/>

Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)

The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) works to improve foreign market access for U.S. products, build new markets, improve the competitive position of U.S. agricultural in the global marketplace, and provide food aid and technical assistance to foreign countries.

<http://www.fas.usda.gov>

FAS International Production, Market & Trade Reports

Snapshot summary of supply and demand situation for various commodities.

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/current.asp>

Global Attaché Information Network (GAIN)

Web-based system developed to help disseminate agricultural knowledge. Over 3,000 reports submitted per year, GAIN provides timely information on the agricultural economy, products and issues in foreign countries.

<http://gain.fas.usda.gov/Pages/Default.aspx>

World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE)

Comprehensive forecasts of supply and demand for major U.S. and global crops and U.S. livestock

<http://www.usda.gov/oce/commodity/wasde>

Crop Explorer

Offers global food supply monitoring by region or crop via satellite imagery (includes developing countries)

<http://www.pecad.fas.usda.gov/cropexplorer>

Mission Area: Rural Development

"To increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for all rural Americans."

Rural Development is working to eliminate substandard housing from rural America by helping rural people buy, build or rent decent housing. We also create jobs by funding the growth and creation of rural businesses and cooperatives. In a typical year, Rural Development programs create or preserve more than 150,000 rural jobs, enable 40,000 to 50,000 rural Americans to buy homes and help 450,000 low-income rural people rent apartments or other housing.

Other Rural Development programs help rural communities build or improve community facilities, such as schools, health clinics and fire stations. We also have programs that help rural communities build or extend utilities, including water, electricity and telecommunications services.

Our assistance is provided in many ways, including direct or guaranteed loans, grants, technical assistance, research and educational materials. To accomplish our mission, USDA Rural Development often works in partnership with state, local and tribal governments, as well as rural businesses, cooperatives and nonprofit agencies.

Rural Development programs are delivered through our [Utilities Programs](#), which address rural America's need for basic services such as clean running water, sewers and waste disposal, electricity, and telecommunications; our [Housing Programs](#), which address rural America's need for single-family and multi-family housing as well as health facilities, fire and police stations, and other community facilities, and; our [Business Programs](#), which provide help to rural areas that need to develop new job opportunities, allowing businesses and cooperatives to remain viable in a changing economy. We also have [Community Development Programs](#) that operate special initiatives to demonstrate effective community development techniques and address unique and pressing economic development issues

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>

Mission Area: Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)

For more information please visit the FNS website and search for international activities.

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/>

Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP)

For more information please visit CNPP website and search for international activities.
<http://www.usda.gov/cnpp/>

Mission Area: Food Safety

Food Safety Inspection Service (FSIS)

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is the public health agency in the U.S. Department of Agriculture responsible for ensuring that the nation's commercial supply of meat, poultry, and egg products is safe, wholesome, and correctly labeled and packaged.
<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/>

Office of International Affairs (OIA)

OIA provides leadership in international food safety activities. It consists of the International Equivalence Staff, Import-Export Programs Staff, Import Inspection Division, and FSIS Codex Program Staff.
<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/about/oia/index.asp>

Mission Area: Research, Education and Economics

Agricultural Research Service (ARS)

ARS is USDA's main in-house scientific research agency. ARS conducts research to develop and transfer solutions to agricultural problems of high national priority and provide information access and dissemination.
<http://www.ars.usda.gov/>

Office of International Research Programs (OIRP)

OIRP is the principle ARS contact for international issues. Its mission is to enhance the productivity, effectiveness, and impact of the ARS National Programs through mutually beneficial international research and development collaborations in agriculture and natural resources science.

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/research/docs.htm?docid=1428>

Research Internships for Early Career South African Agricultural Scientists: The objective of this project is to provide through work experience, cooperative research, and scientific and technology exchange, methodologies useful for solving technical problems within the South African agricultural context and to enhance or establish income generating opportunities in rural communities.

http://www.ars.usda.gov/research/projects/projects.htm?accn_no=405339

ARS International Research Projects:

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/research/projects.htm?slicetype=International>

National Agricultural Library (NAL)

As the Nation's primary source for agricultural information, the National Agricultural Library (NAL) has a mission to increase the availability and utilization of agricultural information for researchers, educators, policymakers, consumers of agricultural products, and the public. The Library is one of the world's largest and most accessible agricultural research libraries and plays a vital role in

supporting research, education, and applied agriculture.
<http://www.nal.usda.gov/>

National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)

Science and Education Resources Development (SERD)

SERD strives for excellence in academic, research, extension, and international programs in the food and agricultural sciences, building coalitions with public and private organizations.

<http://www.nifa.usda.gov/about/offices/serd.html>

Food and Agricultural Sciences National Needs Graduate Fellowships Grants Program -Special International Study or Thesis/Dissertation Research Travel Allowances: Proposals may be submitted by universities or colleges who currently have active Food and Agricultural Sciences National Needs Graduate Fellowships Grants. These supplemental grants provide support for Fellows to conduct thesis/dissertation research or to undertake studies outside of the United States.

<http://www.nifa.usda.gov/fo/fundview.cfm?fnum=1180>

Center for International Programs (CIP)

With today's increasingly global society, USDA and its partner American colleges and universities must play a major role in preparing U.S. citizens to work and succeed in a rapidly changing world. NIFA'S Center for International Programs office is working with universities to find ways of engaging students, faculty, and staff in the world outside our borders.

<http://www.nifa.usda.gov/nea/international/international.html>

National Initiative to Internationalize Extension

The National Initiative to Internationalize Extension is a 3-year program funded by NIFA to strengthen the international dimension of state extension programs. The initiative hopes to bring attention to the urgent need for engagement with American audiences around global issues, interdependence and the critical role that extension can play in today's world.

http://www.nifa.usda.gov/nea/international/in_focus/intl_if_internationalize.html

International Science and Education (ISE) Competitive Grants Program

The ISE Competitive Grants Program supports research, extension, and teaching activities that will enhance the capabilities of American colleges and universities to conduct international collaborative research, extension, and teaching.

<http://www.nifa.usda.gov/fo/fundview.cfm?fnum=1240>

Competitive Programs

The NIFA Competitive Programs Unit manages funding opportunities that challenge the nation's top researchers to identify, solve, and put into practice solutions to problems that improve the safety, quality, productivity, and security of our food supply, the well-being of animals, humans, the environment and natural resources, and rural and urban communities.

<http://www.nifa.usda.gov/about/offices/compprogs.html>

Agriculture and Food Research Initiative - Food Safety

This AFRI Challenge Area promotes and enhances the scientific discipline of food safety, with an overall aim of protecting consumers from microbial and chemical contaminants that may occur during all stages of the food chain, from production to consumption. This requires an understanding of the interdependencies of human, animal, and ecosystem health as it pertains to food-borne pathogens.

<http://www.nifa.usda.gov/fo/fundview.cfm?fnum=1106>

Economic Research Service (ERS)

ERS is the main source of economic information and research from the USDA. The mission of ERS is to inform and enhance public and private decision making on economic and policy issues related to agriculture, food, natural resources, and rural development.

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/>

International Agriculture

ERS specialists provide wide-ranging research and analysis on production, consumption, and trade of key agricultural commodities and on agricultural policies of countries and regions important to U.S. agriculture, as well as on international trade agreements and food security issues.

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/browse/international>

Market and Trade Economics Division

The Market and Trade Economics Division conducts economic research and analysis on U.S. and global economic and policy factors affecting the structure and performance of agricultural markets and trade. The Division monitors market indicators; provides mid- to long-term forecasts of agricultural market conditions; and assesses the technological, economic, policy, and institutional forces that influence U.S. and world agricultural markets.

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/AboutERS/mteddiv.htm>

National Agricultural Statistics Service NASS

The NASS mission is to provide timely, accurate, and useful statistics in service to U. S. agriculture. Each year, the employees of NASS conduct hundreds of surveys and prepare reports covering virtually every facet of U.S. agriculture -- production and supplies of food and fiber, prices paid and received by farmers, farm labor and wages, farm aspects of the industry.

<http://www.nass.usda.gov>

Mission Area: Marketing and Regulatory Programs

Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)

AMS includes six commodity programs--Cotton, Dairy, Fruit and Vegetable, Livestock and Seed, Poultry, and Tobacco. The programs employ specialists who provide standardization, grading and market news services for those commodities. They enforce such Federal Laws as the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act and the Federal Seed Act.

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/>

International Marketing Services

AMS offers an array of valuable services that give buyers and sellers of agricultural products a competitive advantage in the global marketplace.

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/international/>

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)

APHIS is responsible for protecting and promoting U.S. agricultural health, administering the Animal Welfare Act, and carrying out wildlife damage management activities. In recent years, the scope of APHIS' protection function has expanded beyond pest and disease management. Because of its technical expertise and leadership in assessing and regulating the risks associated with agricultural imports, APHIS has assumed a greater role in the global agricultural arena.
<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/>

International Services (IS)

To reduce the threat to U.S. agriculture, IS cooperates in a number of major surveillance, eradication, and control programs in foreign countries, focusing on nations where economically significant pests or diseases are found. It plays a major role in ensuring that U.S. agricultural exports are accessible to foreign countries, and works with countries seeking to establish preclearance programs. IS also represents the U.S. Government in dealing with many international and regional organizations concerned with animal and plant health.
http://www.aphis.usda.gov/international_safeguarding/

Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA)

The Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) facilitates the marketing of livestock, poultry, meat, cereals, oilseeds, and related agricultural products, and promotes fair and competitive trading practices for the overall benefit of consumers and American agriculture.

GIPSA is part of USDA's Marketing and Regulatory Programs, which are working to ensure a productive and competitive global marketplace for U.S. agricultural products.
<http://www.gipsa.usda.gov/GIPSA/webapp?area=home&subject=landing&topic=landing>

International Educational Programs

GIPSA provides [educational programs](#), including briefings about the U.S. grain market and national inspection system to international trade teams and government representatives. In addition, the Agency can arrange visits to GIPSA field offices, onsite laboratories at export grain elevators, and the Agency's Technical Services Division (TSD) in Kansas City, Missouri.

International Outreach Programs

GIPSA personnel participate in a variety of [international assistance programs](#).