

Intergovernmental Affairs

LPA'S INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

ensures consistency in APHIS' communications with congressional offices, State legislatures, Governors' offices, and State departments of agriculture. The Intergovernmental Affairs staff prepares congressional testimony for APHIS and USDA officials who are called to testify before Congress, coordinates briefings by APHIS experts for Members of Congress and their staffs, assists Congress in drafting APHIS-related legislation, and articulates the agency's position on pending legislation. Staff members field hundreds of congressional inquiries each year on a wide array of topics—many of them controversial—and coordinate responses. Intergovernmental Affairs employees also coordinate hearings and meetings with State legislatures and communicate with key stakeholders on breaking issues to ensure that they have accurate information about APHIS programs and regulations.



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Public Affairs

LPA'S PUBLIC AFFAIRS is a fast-paced, creative environment where highly trained public affairs specialists act as agency spokespeople to provide accurate and timely information to print and broadcast reporters from across the Nation and around the world. In addition, LPA's public affairs specialists are strategic thinkers who work closely with program experts to develop and implement targeted communications and outreach plans that support agency objectives and initiatives. These efforts ensure that APHIS' message is both consistent and far reaching.



The outreach tools visualized by the public affairs specialists take shape under the hands of experienced inhouse professionals in design, video, Web design and content management, and photography. These great ideas become finished publications, posters, exhibits, and videos.

Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts

By analyzing, processing, and coordinating all requests for APHIS records—both hardcopy and electronic—under the Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts, LPA'S FREEDOM OF INFORMATION staff plays a significant role in promoting Government transparency and accountability. Balancing two critical needs, the staff provides public access to



Executive Communications

Writers in LPA'S EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS answer correspondence—concerning a variety of topics from all APHIS program areas—sent by Members of Congress, industry groups, other stakeholders, and private citizens to the President and to high-level officials in USDA and APHIS. Writers also compose talking points, speeches, and briefings on critical issues specific to regional or stakeholder groups that APHIS officials plan to address. Executive Communications writers regularly participate in special projects, such as composing memos to congressional committees, working on materials specific to certain APHIS programs, and writing articles for the agency's internal newsletter. And the Executive Communications unit also provides professional in-house editing for all publications distributed outside the agency.

Government information while ensuring that information protected by privacy laws (e.g., people's personal information) is not disclosed. The staff works closely with program officials throughout APHIS to respond to an average of 1,000 requests each year, on topics ranging from animal welfare and disease response to biotechnology and foreign trade.

INTRODUCTION

As the Federal agency responsible for protecting America's agricultural resources, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is in the news every day. Issues such as animal diseases, genetically engineered crops, invasive pests, animal welfare, and overabundant wildlife populations generate national and international interest that APHIS must address in a timely and strategic manner. APHIS' Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA) office takes the lead in responding to these inquiries, whether orally or in writing, especially those from the media and Congress. LPA also proactively reaches out to the public to ensure that accurate information is available to anyone who is interested in agency activities and announcements. To provide the most effective support, LPA is divided into four specific units: Intergovernmental Affairs, Public Affairs, Executive Communications, and Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts.



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LPA Intergovernmental Affairs

(202) 720-2511



LPA Public Affairs

(301) 734-7799



LPA Executive Communications

(301) 734-7776



LPA Freedom of Information

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APHIS' LEGISLATIVE AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

*Working Together To
Communicate Effectively*



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