



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

Office of the
Assistant Secretary
for Administration

1400 Independence
Ave, SW
Room 240-W
Washington, DC
20250

TO: Under/Assistant Secretaries and Agency Heads

FROM: LOU GALLEGOS
Assistant Secretary for Administration

SUBJECT: USDA/CAP Partnership Agreement

On October 30, 2000, the National Defense Authorization Act granted the Department of Defense Computer/Electronic Assistance Program (CAP) authority (and funding) to provide assistive technology, devices and services to any department or agency in the Federal Government, upon the request of the head of the agency. The CAP program began this partnership program by providing free assistive technology accommodations to smaller agencies, and is now prepared to provide this service to the Department of Agriculture.

The purpose for this memorandum is to announce that Secretary Ann Veneman has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the CAP Program whereby assistive technology and devices will be provided, free of charge, for USDA employees with disabilities. Assistive technologies are the technological tools (computer-related and communication devices) that enable employees with disabilities to have equal and competitive access to electronic and information technology.

The USDA TARGET Center has been identified as the Point of Contact (POC) for the USDA/CAP Partnership Program, and is responsible for conducting needs assessments, ordering, tracking, reporting, and customer service surveys. Additionally, the USDA TARGET Center has developed accessible versions of the USDA/CAP Partnership Agreement, reasonable accommodation request forms and the TARGET Center's Guide to Assistive Technology Accommodations, which can be found on the TARGET Center website at www.usda.gov/oo/target.htm.

I encourage all managers and supervisors to take advantage of this unique opportunity to provide free assistive technology accommodations for their employees with disabilities. This program is another example of how we are striving to make USDA the model employer in the federal arena.

If you have any questions or concerns about the USDA/CAP Partnership Agreement, please contact Bruce McFarlane, Acting Director of the USDA TARGET Center on 720-2600 (v/tty), or Bill Haig, USDA Disability Employment Program Manager, on 720-0516.