

# A Guide to USDA's International Programs

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This guide provides detailed information 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 Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service. Suggestions about how to make the document more useful or complete should be directed to [Hiram Larew](#) at or [Rose Gregory](#).

## 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 nearly 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](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](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/international/visitor_prog.html)

## **Mission Area: Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services**

### **Farm Service Agency (FSA)**

Stabilizing farm income, helping farmers conserve land and water resources, providing credit to new or disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, and helping farm operations recover from the effects of disaster are the missions of the Farm Service Agency.

<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. agriculture in the global marketplace, and provide food aid and technical assistance to foreign countries.

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

## Opportunities

FAS has the primary responsibility for USDA's international activities – market development agreements and negotiations, and the collection and analysis of statistics and market information. It also administers USDA's export credit guarantee and food aid programs, and helps increase income and food availability in developing nations by mobilizing expertise for agriculturally led economic growth. FAS also enhances U.S. agriculture's competitiveness by providing linkages to global resources and international organizations. For information on FAS programs and opportunities, visit

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

## International Development

FAS offers a wide range of technical assistance, education and outreach programs for emerging markets and developing countries that are designed to support the development of science-based regulatory policies and promote food security.

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/itp/biotech/internationaldevelopment.asp>

## Mission Area: Rural Development

Rural Development is committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in all of rural America by providing financial programs to support essential public facilities and services as water and sewer systems, housing, health clinics, emergency service facilities and electric and telephone service. Rural Development promotes economic development by providing loans to businesses through banks and community-managed lending pools, while also assisting communities to participate in community empowerment programs.

The Mission Area includes programs focused on:

- Businesses and Cooperatives
- Housing and Community Facilities
- Utilities, and
- Community Development.

Information on international Rural Development activities can be found by using the search tool on the Mission Area's website

<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](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/>

## **Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES)**

CSREES' unique mission is to advance knowledge for agriculture, the environment, human health and well-being, and communities by supporting research, education, and extension programs in the Land-Grant University System and other partner organizations.

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

## **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.csrees.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.csrees.usda.gov/fo/fundview.cfm?fonum=1180>

## **International Programs (IP)**

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. CSREES' International Programs office is working with universities to find ways of engaging students, faculty, and staff in the world outside our borders.

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

## **National Initiative to Internationalize Extension**

The National Initiative to Internationalize Extension is a 3-year program funded by CSREES 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.csrees.usda.gov/nea/international/in\\_focus/intl\\_if\\_internationalize.html](http://www.csrees.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.csrees.usda.gov/fo/fundview.cfm?fonum=1240>

## Competitive Programs

The CSREES 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.csrees.usda.gov/about/offices/compprogs.html>

**National Research Initiative:** Agriculture markets more than \$900 billion worth of food annually; 20 percent of U.S. agricultural production is exported to global markets, accounting for significant additional trade value and potential for increased income to U.S. producers. This program invites both fundamental and mission-linked proposals for innovative research in the following priority: Analyses of strategic issues of importance to U.S. agriculture that effect competitiveness of food, fiber, and bio-based products in domestic and foreign markets, including models of competition and cooperation that grow domestic U.S. markets and expand U.S. global trade opportunities.

<http://www.csrees.usda.gov/fo/fundview.cfm?fonum=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>

### International Programs Office

The International Programs Office of NASS has provided technical assistance and training in other countries for more than 40 years to help improve agricultural statistics programs. It offers assistance in data collection methodology using a wide range of survey designs and procedures to improve statistical systems and data quality. Planning and implementation of agricultural statistics improvement programs remains a function of the country receiving assistance.

<http://www.usda.gov/nass/nassinfo/internl.htm>

## **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/is/>

### **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**

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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**

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