



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Research
Education
Economics

Office
of the Under
Secretary

Room 216W
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Washington, DC 20250-0110

TO: REE Employees

FROM: Gale A. Buchanan
Under Secretary

SUBJECT: REE Human Capital Plan 2007 – 2010

I am very pleased to present to you the REE Human Capital Plan for 2007 – 2010.

This plan contains the strategies and specific actions being implemented by the REE agencies to address the Human Capital challenges we and all Federal agencies face as we complete the first decade of this century. This is our REE plan, and all REE employees have a responsibility for its successful implementation.

Our goal must be to ensure we recruit and retain a high quality, highly motivated, and technologically adept workforce capable of accomplishing the missions of the REE Agencies.

Working together, I know we can achieve this goal.

Enclosure

ARS:AFM:HRD:HCPD:RWELLS:tmh:10/04/2007:504-1317:hcplanfinal2007-2010.doc

United States Department of Agriculture
Research, Education and Extension Mission Area
HUMAN CAPITAL PLAN
2007 - 2010

“Taking Stock in Our Human Resources”



REE Human Capital Plan 2007 - 2010

Executive Summary

The Research, Education and Economics (REE) Mission Area agencies have implemented Strategic Plans that are used to guide their efforts for a five year period. The foundation for these Strategic Plans is the Farm Bill Proposals of 2007 and the USDA Strategic Plan which lay out the long term view of the Nation's agricultural and food system. The effective implementation of each of the REE agencies' Strategic Plans (revised in 2007) enables REE to meet the challenges articulated by the Administration's agricultural policies. Our success depends in large part on an available REE workforce that is highly motivated, skilled, flexible and technologically adept. Human capital planning is critical to ensuring that the REE workforce is capable of providing effective leadership on all food and agricultural issues facing the REE Mission Area.

This Human Capital (HC) Plan establishes a framework of policies and practices that will guide efforts in meeting these workforce needs. It is results oriented, contains interdependent improvement goals, and identifies initiatives, challenges and expectations necessary to meet those goals. This HC Plan updates the current 2003 REE HC Plan and is patterned after the USDA HC Plan. It commits the REE to the following improvement goals:

Strategic Workforce Planning and Alignment: REE regularly assesses its workforce requirements as a basis for human capital planning and to assure strategic alignment with the REE Agencies' mission.

Learning and Leadership Development: REE is committed to continual learning, knowledge transfer and professional development to enhance the capabilities of its workforce.

Recruitment and Retention: REE recruits, acquires, and retains a highly diverse, skilled workforce with competencies needed to achieve its mission.

Performance Culture: REE has and maintains a culture that is results oriented, motivates employees to perform, and values diversity.

The REE HC Plan is a single source for performance expectations, time lines, and measures for meeting the human capital goals within USDA and REE, a mechanism to respond to the Department regarding progress towards meeting human capital goals, and a vehicle to examine and ensure greater business efficiencies and cross-agency collaboration. The plan is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains an effective guidance tool in maintaining a workforce capable of meeting the challenges facing the REE agencies.

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Introduction

The REE Mission Area consists of 4 agencies: the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), Economic Research Service (ERS), and the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). The first REE Human Capital Plan, published in 2003, was the first step in fulfilling human capital requirements of the President's Management Agenda. That Plan provided the groundwork for each Agency's workforce plan, implementation of the Performance Appraisal Assessment Tool (PAAT), skills gap analyses, workforce restructuring, current development of the REE Succession Plan, and the defining of new career ladders and management flexibilities. Major challenges that faced the REE agencies at that time were:

1. Communicating HC terminology and concepts to managers, supervisors, and employees.
2. Developing results oriented performance plans and the matrices to support results-oriented performance.
3. Addressing and assessing employee skills gaps caused by increasing complexity in our work, including technological advances.
4. Preparing for the anticipated increase in staff turnover due to retirements through development of recruitment strategies, employee development, and succession planning.
5. Recruitment designed to reduce under-representation in most mission critical occupations.
6. Developing formal workforce plans.

This document updates and refocuses the REE HC Plan of 2003 – 2007 by building on the accomplishments and lessons learned thus providing a foundation for success. There are four Strategic Goals outlined in this plan:

1. Strategic Workforce Planning and Alignment
2. Learning and Leadership Development
3. Recruitment and Retention
4. Performance Culture

Roles and Responsibilities

The successful management of Human Capital within the REE Mission Area requires commitment from everyone, from top management to front-line employees. Following is a brief outline of the roles and responsibilities:

Secretary/Subcabinet	Maintain and communicate commitment to the Department's Human Capital Initiative Provide leadership and resources for human capital efforts
USDA/Office	Provide leadership in development of human capital planning of Human Capital Provide oversight and training for agency HC Plan efforts
Management	Provide a mechanism for sharing best practices

	<p>Manage accountability for the Department's HC Plan progress Provide regular reports to the Secretary, OPM and OMB</p>
Agency Management/ Supervisors	<p>Integrate human capital planning with business processes Participate in the development, implementation, and oversight of human capital plans and initiatives Demonstrate commitment, support and leadership in human capital planning Communicate commitment to human capital investment and the achievement of human capital goals to all employees Work with the Human Resources Division (HRD) and Civil Rights Offices to identify and resolve impediments to HC Plan goals and achievements</p>
Human Resources Division	<p>Facilitate the implementation of human capital actions/strategies Work with agency management to identify and resolve impediments to HC Plan goals and achievements Report to USDA on progress toward goals achievement Provide updated workforce demographic information for employees to use as a recruitment and retention tool</p>
Agency Employees	<p>Provide feedback and suggestions to management Develop technical skills and sound work habits Self-assess leadership capabilities and work toward obtaining leadership skills Share program/technical knowledge with other employees</p>

Major Accomplishments Under the 2003 – 2007 Human Capital Plan

1. Each of the 4 REE Agencies published and implemented Workforce Plans. These plans have been used by the agencies to enhance and help track their decision making regarding the management of their HC plans and programs.
2. NASS established a multi-level performance management program in lieu of pass/fail. The new 5 level performance system provides clear distinctions between rating levels, has more meaning to employees, and ensures alignment with the Strategic Plan and mission of the agency.
3. The REE Agencies supported 1,079 employees in leadership development programs, ensuring a more robust pipeline of employees able to assume key leadership positions in the Mission Area.
4. ARS and ERS accomplished major workforce restructuring which included competitive sourcing and early out/buyout. The restructuring of organizations and operations has enhanced the efficiency of these agencies in meeting their mission by redeploying positions and reducing long-term operating costs.
5. NASS redefined career ladders for its occupations, and developed a new relocation incentive policy to support retention and succession planning.

6. NASS and ARS completed 79 Human Resources Management Evaluations (HRME), Human Capital Management Assessments (HCMA), and Consolidated Assistance Review and Evaluation (CARE) organizational reviews to support and improve HC Accountability. These reviews identify areas where improvements can be made in the management of an organization's Human Capital and hold managers accountable for making those improvements.
7. ARS and NASS have improved efficiencies by implementing, where appropriate, the consolidation of administrative services to multiple locations.
8. CSREES, in partnership with selected land-grant universities, made on-line personal finance learning tools available through AgLearn to all USDA employees.
9. ARS completed a skills gap competency assessment for all employees in the GS-0201 Human Resources occupational series.
10. ARS developed and implemented an agency Recruitment Plan.
11. HRD effected an internal reorganization to better align and support Human Capital activities, including leadership development and succession planning.
12. HRD implemented an internal accountability protocol focusing on automated systems to improve data integrity and published a REE HC Accountability directive.
13. ARS reduced the skills gap in the Biological Sciences Technician occupational series.
14. ARS has partnered with minority organizations to establish workable cooperative relationships through early intervention programs for training and future recruitment opportunities.
15. NASS has achieved the top USDA rating in the 2006 and 2004 Federal Human Capital Surveys.
16. CSREES implemented a new Supervisory/EEO element for supervisors' performance plans.
17. CSREES created and delivered three courses to employees to specifically meet the agency's e-Grants implementation goals, a major component of the CSREES workforce plan.
18. CSREES developed and implemented a Certificate of Competency in Accounting at Southeastern University for employees in support of succession planning activities by providing a pool of candidates for future accounting vacancies.
19. CSREES completed its first nationwide Customer Service Satisfaction Survey, and established three implementation teams to analyze survey responses and propose strategies and mechanisms for better meeting customer needs and expectations.
20. All REE agencies have piloted the Monster Government Solutions Hiring Management and have either implemented or are in the process of implementing it in their agencies.

Current REE Demographics

Although much work has been done, many of these challenges continue. The REE workforce demographics are:

						RETIREMENTS BY CALENDAR YEAR						
	Current Onbrd*	Retire Eligible Now**	Retire Eligible thru CY 2010	Percent Eligible to Retire		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
				Now	2010							
REE Management and Leadership												
Senior Leadership	66	29	44	44%	67%	4	6	2	4	1	7	3
Senior Management	775	280	428	36%	55%	44	39	36	39	52	32	47
Mid-Level Mgmt	2127	277	541	13%	25%	51	50	48	47	67	58	65
Other Supervisors	134	26	54	19%	40%	10	13	9	14	20	19	10
Mission Critical Occupational Series as defined by USDA												
0301	78	15	32	19%	41%	0	3	5	1	6	4	3
0343	73	11	22	15%	30%	3	0	3	1	5	3	3
0401	447	65	113	15%	25%	6	5	3	11	3	14	6
0403	274	46	78	17%	28%	2	4	4	2	4	1	4
0404	1646	129	283	8%	17%	18	32	35	22	29	27	27
0440	276	37	51	13%	18%	3	2	3	5	4	4	4
0470	169	28	52	17%	31%	1	7	4	2	2	4	8
0471	100	13	28	13%	28%	4	2	3	3	2	2	1
0630	52	12	20	23%	38%	0	0	1	1	1	0	1
0701	43	5	6	12%	14%	2	2	2	2	0	1	3
0890	105	14	26	13%	25%	9	3	7	4	10	5	7
1101	77	9	15	12%	19%	1	2	3	1	2	0	2
1311	147	23	42	16%	29%	1	2	0	5	1	5	3
1320	338	88	126	26%	37%	8	18	15	24	20	15	17
1530	518	63	123	12%	24%	12	12	11	8	14	12	16
2210	445	41	107	9%	24%	0	0	2	6	13	8	18

*Includes permanent positions only

**As of June 9, 2007

Senior Leadership: SES

Senior Management: Grade 15

Mid-level Management: Grades 13 and 14

Other Supervisors: All other supervisors

An REE agency breakdown has been provided as Appendix D to this plan.

Goals

Goal 1: Strategic Workforce Planning and Alignment

REE regularly assesses its workforce requirements as a basis for human capital planning and to assure strategic alignment with USDA's mission. Human Capital goals are embedded in the Agency Strategic and Workforce Plans. The challenges facing REE in workforce planning and alignment include current and probable future flat budgets as well as the anticipated increase in the rates of retirements resulting in brain drains and the loss of experienced leadership and corporate knowledge.

Initiatives:

- ERS having realigned its administrative support structure will focus on implementing the new organization, establishing Standard Operating Procedures, training employees in new assignments, and finalizing this organization.
- Through the annual Strategic Resources Management Planning (SRMP) process, ARS develops strategic approaches for managing its fiscal, human, and physical resources to optimize research capability and output. The SRMP process will continue to focus on identifying and supporting high priority research programs.
- ARS will continue to use its Program Adjustment Decision Item (PADI) process to implement organizational changes that strengthen and streamline research programs and operations. This process is being utilized in the on-going major realignment of the ARS Beltsville Area in light of fiscal, human, and physical resource constraints.
- Fully implement the National Centers for Animal Health (NCAH) Combined Services organization supporting ARS and APHIS programs in Ames, Iowa.
- Implement the decision regarding the structure and organization of CSREES and ARS as proposed in a 2007 Farm Bill proposal.
- Develop and implement the REE Succession Plan. Evaluate existing leadership development programs in terms of the competencies focused on and whether actual development and learning occur. Develop and offer succession planning services to REE executives and managers.

Challenges:

- Flat Budgets (No anticipated Congressional appropriated funding increases).
- Increased rate of retirement leads to loss of experienced leadership and corporate knowledge.
- Achieving a more diverse workforce across REE.

Expected Results:

- Streamlined, effective administrative support to ERS programs.

- Enhance mission accomplishment through restructuring/realigning activities.
- Implementation of succession strategies to counterbalance anticipated retirements and other losses to REE leadership.
- Employment of a more diverse workforce.

Goal 2: Learning and Leadership Development

REE is committed to continual learning, knowledge transfer, and professional development to enhance the capabilities of its workforce. Commitment to developing leaders and implementing a plan to replenish the pipeline of supervisory, managerial and executive talent is key basis to continued REE's success. Like most federal agencies, a substantial percentage of our leadership workforce is eligible to retire within the next 5 years. REE will take aggressive steps to ensure there is an adequate pool of trained employees eligible to assume leadership positions as they become available.

Initiatives:

- An REE Succession Plan will be developed, with specific sections tailored to the needs of each REE agency.
- REE agencies will monitor and support the 2007 USDA SESCDP program candidates who successfully complete the assessments and enter the program.
- Provide Succession Planning training for HR staff and key program leaders in each REE agency.
- The ARS offered 2007 Training Program will include:
 - Administrative Officer Training
 - New Research Leader Training
 - Administrative and Financial Management Workshop
 - Path-to-Leadership Program or Leadership Foundations Seminar
- Close skill gaps for Human Resources (HR) Specialists in the areas of information technology and workforce planning.
- Make AFM workshops available to all REE Agencies.
- Use AgLearn to host, track and report on key employee and leadership development activities. Increase available course content in AgLearn through conversion of existing materials to computer-based training.
- Implement e-New Employee Orientation to better prepare employees for their Government career in REE.
- Administer the Federal Competency Assessment Tool (FCAT-M) to REE supervisors.
- NASS plans to conduct a leadership dialogue seminar for their managers and supervisors among their many planned career and leadership development training events.
- CSREES plans to develop and release online versions of its three e-Grants courses through AgLearn and will develop additional training, as necessary, to respond to changes in the Grants.gov website.
- CSREES will continue its development of GS-1101 mission critical employees through a three-year Grants Management Certificate Training Program.

- CSREES will monitor and support the employees in the Certificate of Competency in Accounting Program offered by Southeastern University. In 2009, the students will have completed 27 hours in accounting and will qualify for their certificate.

Challenges:

- The number of REE employees across all grades and occupations who are eligible to retire in the next 5 years leads to a loss of skills and knowledge. (56% of managers and 31% of all managers and supervisors.)
- Flat appropriated budgets with limited resources to support critical leadership development and other training activities.

Expected Results:

1. HR skills gaps are closed as evidenced by follow up survey responses.
2. REE Succession Plan published and implemented. Cadre of potential leaders is large enough that 50% of leadership vacancies can be filled by internal candidates.

Goal 3: Recruitment and Retention

REE recruits, acquires, and retains a highly diverse, skilled workforce with the competencies needed to achieve its mission. Because of projected retirements, competition from private industry, increasingly complex work, and the need for new technology skills, REE must employ aggressive recruitment and retention strategies. Recruitment strategies include the use of recruitment incentives, repayment of student loans, flexible work schedules, and varied work/life programs.

Initiatives:

- More aggressive use of the Student Career Enhancement Program (SCEP) appointing authority in REE agencies as a recruitment tool to improve diversity and availability of new technology knowledge. Improved accountability for converting SCEPs to permanent positions.
- Continue funding and support for the Native American Internship Program, student employment agreements, and other initiatives that support diversity within REE.
- Fully implement Monster Government Solutions Hiring Management system.
- Increase use of the Career Intern Program (CIP) in the REE agencies.
- Implement Entrance and Exit Surveys to capture the reasons people come to work for REE and the reasons they leave. Use this data to develop recruitment and retention strategies.
- Expand use of Career Enhancement Program (CEP) in REE agencies.
- Implement a Workers' Compensation Return to Work Program in REE agencies.
- Use the Career Patterns Guide to better define the structure of occupations in the mission area and to inform strategies for recruiting and retaining talent.

- Increase the utilization within REE of retention allowances to maintain staff in outlying areas and the use of recruitment incentives for professional hires, particularly in mission critical and/or hard to fill series.
- CSREES will administer the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Act Program authorized by the National Veterinary Medical Service Act (NVMSA). In a collaborative effort with other USDA agencies, a significant portion of the NVMSA funds will help facilitate recruitment (through loan repayment authority) of food animal veterinarians in designated hard to fill positions in the food safety/supply sectors in rural areas.
- ARS seeks indefinite Demonstration Project (DEMO) authority to continue the process of hiring temporary hires.
- NASS seeks special salary rate increases for Mathematical Statisticians to restore recent locality pay losses and to close the pay gap between the private and federal sectors.
- NASS plans to work cooperatively with partners to recruit minority enumerators to conduct data collection activities for NASS surveys, particularly the 2007 census of Agriculture.
- NASS will implement recruitment strategies and redeploy current workforce in order to conduct the 2007 Census of Agriculture.
- ERS will implement a research associate (post-doc) employment program.

Challenges:

- Rates of staff retirements are outpacing the rates of new hires in some REE agencies.
- Current budgets make little money available for recruitment and retention flexibilities.
- A lack of available talent in shortage categories such as Veterinary Medical Officers.
- Retain injured employees - bring them back to work, particularly in ARS.
- Achievement of a more diverse workforce in REE.

Expected Results:

- Increase minority employment, including women, by 1% of total employment using the end of FY 2006 as baseline.
- Using the FY 2006 level as a baseline, increase CEP positions by 50% over the next 3 years in those agencies using the CEP Program.
- Reduce OWCP compensation costs in REE agencies, particularly ARS, by 5% through return-to-work programs.
- Form strategic partnerships with diverse communities, persons with disabilities organizations, and minority organizations.

Goal 4: Performance Culture

REE has a culture that is results-oriented, motivates employees to perform, and values diversity. Employee and team performance is aligned with organizational goals, evaluations are based on objective measures and focus on results, and the performance management process is used as a tool to improve continuous two-way communication about goals, objectives and accomplishments.

Initiatives:

- Develop and implement Performance Appraisal Assessment Tool Improvement (PAAT) Plan strategies for each REE agency to improve employee performance and recognition programs.
- Issue a new Policies and Procedures document covering REE agencies' performance management programs.
- Assist the Department in conducting their mandated 2007 Employee Climate Survey.
- Implement a new Supervisory/EEO element in ARS to improve supervisory accountability for performance management responsibilities.

Challenges:

- REE Agencies must make improvements to their performance management programs scores by the end of 2008, based on the USDA 85 point target score.
- Continue to improve customer service. While REE agencies have achieved an excellent level of customer service in most areas, continued work is necessary to maintain and improve this service.
- Ensure that top management gives critical consideration to the supervisory and management components of leadership positions when making selections and evaluating the success of incumbents of these positions.

Expected Results:

- All agency performance plans contain measurable results oriented goals in at least one element.
- All supervisors' performance plans contain a supervisory performance element.
- Federal Human Capital Survey and other employee climate surveys indicate improvement in employee perceptions of how their supervisors manage human resources.
- All REE agencies achieve a score of at least 85 points on their PAAT scores.
- AFM will conduct a customer satisfaction survey on administrative services once every 3 years and publish survey results with strategies for improvement.

APPENDIX A

Human Capital Plan Initiatives Implementation Strategy			
	Initiative	Implementing Document	Agency Impacted
Goal 1. Strategic Workforce Planning and Alignment	ERS having realigned its administrative support structure will focus on implementing the new organization, establishing Standard Operating Procedures, training employees on new assignments, and finalizing this reorganization.	Agency Specific Project Plan	ERS
	Through the annual Strategic Resources Management Planning (SRMP) process, ARS develops strategic approaches for managing its fiscal, human and physical resources to optimize research capability and output. The SRMP process will continue to focus on identifying and supporting high priority research programs.	SRMP Submissions	ARS
	ARS will continue to use its Program Adjustment Decision Item (PADI) process to implement organizational changes that strengthen and streamline research programs and operations. This process is being utilized in the on-going major realignment of the ARS Beltsville Area in light of fiscal, human, and physical research programs.	PADI Submissions	ARS
	Fully implement the NCAH Combined Services organization supporting ARS and APHIS programs in Ames, Iowa.	NCAH Implementation Plan	ARS
	Implement Congressional decisions regarding the structure and organization of ARS and CSREES.	Agency Merger Project Plan	ARS & CSREES
	Develop and implement the REE Succession Plan. Evaluate existing leadership development programs in terms of the competencies they focus on and whether actual development and learning occur. Develop and offer succession planning services to REE executives and managers.	HRD Business Plan	All REE Agencies

Goal 2. Learning and Leadership Development	An REE Succession plan will be developed, with specific sections tailored to the needs of each REE agency.	HRD Business Plan	All REE Agencies
	REE agencies will monitor and support those of the 2007 USDA SES CDP program candidates who successfully complete the assessments and enter the program.	Ongoing	All REE Agencies
	Provide Succession Planning training for HR managers and specialists and for key program leaders in each REE agency.	HRD Business Plan	All REE Agencies
	2007's training program will include: Administrative Officer Training; New Research Leader Training; Administrative and Financial Management Workshop; and Path-to-Leadership Program or Leadership Foundations.	HRD Business Plan	All REE Agencies
	Close skill gaps for Human Resources (HR) Specialists in the areas of information technology and workforce planning.	HRD Business Plan	ARS
	Make AFM workshops available to all REE Agencies.	HRD Business Plan	All REE Agencies
	Use AgLearn to host, track and report on key employee and leadership development activities. Increase available course content in AgLearn through conversion of existing materials to computer-based training.	HRD Business Plan	All REE Agencies
	Implement e-New Employee Orientation to better prepare selectees for their career with REE.	HRD Business Plan	All REE Agencies
	Administer the Federal Competency Assessment Tool (FCAT) to REE supervisors GS-13 and above.	HRD Business Plan	All REE Agencies
	NASS plans to conduct a leadership dialogue seminar for their managers and supervisors among their many planned career and leadership development training events.	Workforce Plan	NASS
	CSREES plans to develop and release online versions of its three e-Grants courses through AgLearn and will develop additional training, as necessary, to respond to changes in the Grants.gov website.	CSREES Taskforce	CSREES
	CSREES will continue its development of GS-1101 mission critical employees through a three year Grants Management Certificate Training Program.	Ongoing	CSREES
	CSREES will monitor and support the employees in the certificate of Competency in Accounting Program offered by Southeastern university. In 2009, the students will have completed 27 hours in accounting and will qualify for their certificate.	Ongoing	CSREES

Goal 3. Recruitment and Retention	More aggressive use of the Student Career Enhancement Program (SCEP) appointing authority as a recruitment tool to improve diversity and availability of new technology knowledge. Improved accountability for converting SCEPs to permanent positions.	HRD Business Plan	All REE Agencies
	Continue funding and support for student employment agreements with Miami-Dade University, the Native American Tribal Colleges, and other initiatives that grow diversity within the Mission Area.	Ongoing	All REE Agencies
	Fully implement Monster Government Solutions Hiring Management.	HRD Business Plan	All REE Agencies
	Increase use of the Career Intern Program (CIP) in the REE agencies.	HRD Business Plan	All REE Agencies
	Implement Entrance and Exit Surveys to capture the reasons people come to work for us and the reasons they leave. Use this data to develop informed recruitment and retention strategies.	HRD Business Plan	All REE Agencies
	Expand use of Career Enhancement Program (CEP) in REE agencies.	HRD Business Plan	All REE Agencies
	Implement a Workers' Compensation Return to Work Program in REE.	HRD Business Plan	All REE Agencies
	Use the Career Patterns Guide to better define the structure of occupations in the mission area and to inform strategies for recruiting and retaining talent.	HRD Business Plan	All REE Agencies
	Increase the use within REE of retention allowances to maintain staff in outlying areas and the use of recruitment incentives for professional hires, particularly in mission critical and/or hard to fill positions.	HRD Business Plan	All REE Agencies
	CSREES will administer the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Act Program authorized by the National Veterinary Medical Service Act (NVMSA). In a collaborative effort with other USDA agencies, a significant portion of the NVMSA funds will help facilitate recruitment (through loan repayment authority) of food animal veterinarians in designated hard to fill positions in the food safety/supply sectors in rural areas.	NVMSA Act	CSREES
	ARS seeks indefinite Demonstration Project (DEMO) authority to continue the process of hiring temporary hires.	HRD Business Plan	ARS
	NASS seeks special salary rate increases for Mathematical Statisticians to restore recent locality pay losses and to close the pay gap between the private and federal sectors.	Agency Initiative	NASS
	NASS will implement recruitment strategies and redeploy current workforce in order to conduct the Agriculture Census.	AG Census Project Plan	NASS
	NASS plans to work cooperatively with partners to recruit minority enumerators to conduct data collection activities for NASS surveys, particularly the 2007 Census of Agriculture.	Workforce Plan	NASS
	ERS will implement a research associate (post-doc) employment program.	Workforce Plan	ERS

Goal 4. Performance Culture	Develop and implement a Performance Appraisal Assessment Tool Improvement Plan for each REE agency.	HRD Business Plan	All REE Agencies
	Issue a new Policies and Procedures document covering REE agencies' performance management programs.	HRD Business Plan	All REE Agencies
	Use data from the Performance Appraisal Assessment Tool (PAAT) action plan to improve awards and recognition programs.	HRD Business Plan	All REE Agencies
	Assist the Department in conducting the 2007 Employee Climate Survey.	HRD Business Plan	All REE Agencies
	Implement a new Supervisory/EEO element in ARS to improve supervisory accountability for performance management responsibilities.	HRD Business Plan	ARS

APPENDIX B

CIVIL RIGHTS POLICY STATEMENT

The REE embraces the Department's civil rights policy of building and maintaining a dynamic and effective workforce inextricably linked to creating and sustaining:

- A high-quality, high performing diverse workforce
- A workplace environment free from discrimination, harassment, intolerance and reprisal

Underlying the accomplishment of our goals of service to customers and efficient management are principles providing, ensuring, and promoting a workplace where employees and applicants for employment are:

- Treated equitably, fairly, and justly
- Assured equal opportunity for development and advancement
- Encouraged and supported to reach their full potential in the performance of their job
- Recognized and rewarded for their achievement and the value of their contributions to ensuring customers experience excellent customer service and equal access to all programs

Our civil rights policy prohibits reprisal, harassment, or discrimination based on age, color, disability, national origin and race, family, parental or marital status, political affiliation, religion, sex (gender), sexual orientation, workforce violence, and public assistance status.

REE is dedicated to strategic, administrative, advocacy, change management, and employee developmental actions in line with the HC Plan, that do not adversely affect or disproportionately impact any group of employees or applicants.

APPENDIX C

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL DRIVERS

The REE HC Plan supports our most important resource: PEOPLE (our employees). Our current strategic planning efforts indicate a variety of external and internal drivers that impact human capital planning. These are:

External drivers

Department-wide focus on the 2007 Farm Bill proposals

Federal laws including the Government Performance and Results Act and PMA initiatives including Budget and Performance Integration and use of the Performance Assessment Rating Tool (PART)

Heightened national focus on Homeland Security

USDA Strategic Plan, REE Agency Strategic Plans and USDA Strategic Human Capital Plan

Collaboration and coordination with local, state, and other Federal emergency management groups

Citizen and congressional interest focused on civil rights issues

Changing citizen expectations of the role of Government including more collaboration and citizen involvement

Human Resources regulations and statutes including classification systems, the competitive recruitment process, recruitment and retention incentives, and other policies and regulations

Various other Federal Human Capital Initiatives such as the Performance Appraisal Assessment Tool (PAAT), Career Patterns, Federal Competency Assessment Tool (FCAT), and Succession Planning

Internal Drivers

A potential significant loss of leadership due to projected high rate of Senior Executive Service (SES) and management employees eligible for retirement and projected dearth of replacements

Implementation of major policy initiatives such as the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 involving close coordination and tight deadlines and the new 2007 Farm Bill

Funding constraints and competing requirements within the human resources area and REE as a whole, notably other facets of the President's Management Agenda (PMA), such as competitive sourcing

Strategic Plan and related policy initiatives of the four REE agencies

The potential for downsizing coupled with the need for new knowledge, skills and abilities

Shift to an enterprise IT system and other automation to better support the REE mission

These internal and external drivers help to reinforce the types of human capital initiatives that must be in place to ensure that we have the right number and skill mix of employees in our workforce. They will also help to determine the impact of technology on the types of skills we need and how our work can be performed more efficiently while continuing to be more responsive to the customer.

APPENDIX D
REE AGENCY DEMOGRAPHICS

		Current Onbrd*	Retire Eligible Now**	Retire Eligible thru CY 2010	Percent Eligible to Retire		RETIREMENTS BY CALENDAR YEAR						
					Now	CY 2010	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
							0	0	0	0	0	0	0
							0	1	2	3	4	5	6
REE Management and Leadership by Agency													
ARS	Senior Leadership	41	21	29	51%	71%	3	5	1	2	1	5	2
	Senior Management	592	215	328	36%	55%	34	32	27	31	46	27	38
	Mid-Level Mgmt	1516	190	356	13%	23%	38	37	35	31	38	36	37
	Other Supervisors	130	26	53	20%	41%	10	12	9	14	20	19	10
CSREES	Senior Leadership	9	2	5	22%	56%	0	0	0	2	0	0	1
	Senior Management	74	23	35	31%	47%	4	2	5	6	2	2	3
	Mid-Level Mgmt	89	7	20	8%	22%	0	4	1	2	8	2	4
	Other Supervisors	2	0	1	0%	50%	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
ERS	Senior Leadership	6	1	3	17%	50%	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
	Senior Management	70	25	40	36%	57%	4	3	2	1	1	2	2
	Mid-Level Mgmt	186	30	61	16%	33%	4	4	3	6	9	12	10
	Other Supervisors	2	0	0	0%	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NASS	Senior Leadership	10	5	7	50%	70%	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
	Senior Management	39	17	25	44%	64%	2	2	2	1	3	1	4
	Mid-Level Mgmt	336	50	104	15%	31%	9	5	9	8	12	8	14
	Other Supervisors	0	0	0	0%	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

*Includes permanent positions only

**As of June 9, 2007

Senior Leadership: SES

Senior Management: Grade 15

Mid-level Management: Grades 13 and 14

Other Supervisors: All other supervisors