



United  
States  
Department of  
Agriculture


Research  
Education  
Economics

Office  
of the Under  
Secretary

Room 216W  
Jamie L. Whitten Building  
Washington, DC 20250-0110

NOV 19 2007

**TO:** All Research, Education, and Economics Mission Area Employees

**FROM:** Gale A. Buchanan  
Under Secretary 

**SUBJECT:** Cost Benefit Analysis of REE IT Functions

On September 11, 2007, I sent a memo to all Research, Education, and Economics (REE) employees announcing that, under the President's Management Agenda initiative on competitive sourcing, the mission area would be proceeding with a cost benefit analysis (CBA) of all commercial Information Technology (IT) functions, beginning with the agencies' IT Help Desks. The CBA of the IT Help Desk function was completed on September 28. The analysis determined that the current IT Help Desk service can be provided at a lower cost than through outsourcing.

The next step is to conduct a CBA on REE's remaining commercial IT functions. Given the large scope and complexity of this analysis, the projected completion date for the CBA is late summer 2008.

REE's Competitive Sourcing program website, [www.afm.ars.usda.gov/initiatives/a-76/index.htm](http://www.afm.ars.usda.gov/initiatives/a-76/index.htm), provides information on this program. The REE Competitive Sourcing Working Group is in the process of updating the website to make it more user-friendly. The improvements are scheduled to be completed in a few weeks.

As REE moves forward on the CBA, we will keep you informed through postings on the website.