

ARS □ CSREES □ ERS □ NASS

Policies and Procedures

Title: REE Signage Policy

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Originating Office: Facilities Division, Real Property Management Branch,
ARS/AFM

This Replaces: P&P 243.2 dated 3/13/87, NASS P&P 2533-1 (Sup)
dated 6/22/91

Distribution: REE Headquarters, Areas, and Field Locations

This P&P states REE-wide policy, specifications, and criteria for a variety of signs, including directories, memorials, plaques, and cornerstones. It also includes requirements for use of the USDA Symbol and USDA Seal, criteria for posting notices on bulletin boards (such as monthly postings of missing persons or children notices), and the naming of facilities.

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1. Policy

It is REE policy to ensure the proper use of the USDA Official Symbol and Seal, communicate criteria for signs, bulletin boards, posting notices, the placement of memorials, plaques, and cornerstones, and for naming facilities or projects.

2. Authorities

- Departmental Regulation (DR) 1600-2, Posting of Notices and Information Bulletins, dated July 13, 1984
- DR 5160-2, Erection of Memorials, Plaques, and Cornerstones; Naming of USDA Facilities, dated August 25, 1992
- DR 5160-3, Identification Signs, dated June 11, 1984
- DR 1470, Policy for Visual Communication Standards, dated December 1996
- USDA, Office of Communications (OC), Design Center, Visual Management Guide, “The USDA Symbol, Its Purpose and Use,” dated August 1996
- USDA, National Food and Agricultural Council, Visual Management Guide, “Service Center Signs,” Guide 1, Volume 1, dated September 1996
- 41 CFR 101-19.6

3. Official Symbol and Seal of the Department

Inquiries regarding the Symbol and Seal and their appropriate use shall be referred to the Design Center, OC.

Official USDA Symbol. The Official Symbol will be used as the Department’s signature. It will be displayed on information products produced by USDA throughout all media (Exhibit 1). More information on the USDA Symbol and downloadable Symbols can be found at the Design Center Home Page located at the following address:

www.usda.gov/agency/oc/design/index.html

The Symbol is to be used as follows:

- displayed in REE auditoriums, lobbies, areas frequented by the public, and other locations deemed appropriate;
- on official facility, center, station, etc., and site signage, location signage, and directional signage in accordance with “Signs” found in Section 5 of this P&P;

- displayed on official exhibits and information display materials of REE;
- furnished for use in appropriate public meetings or for other educational or public purposes;
- reproduced on all electronic digital publishing, video, Internet, and Intranet means;
- reproduced on agency stationery, publications, and other printed materials in accordance with the Design Manual and Visual Management Guides issued by OC; and
- printed on employee's business cards and used only when representing REE on official business.

The Symbol will **not**:

- be used to constitute warranty of private sector products, organizations, or their endeavors; or
- be displayed or presented in a manner that suggests that REE or an REE agency recommends one product or project over another, without written permission from the Director, OC.

Official USDA Seal. The Official Seal will be used only to verify legal documents of the Department under instructions issued by OC. The Official Seal has been withdrawn from use as the designated departmental identifier and will be relegated for use on legal documents, in the Office of the Secretary, and for other protocol functions as originally mandated by Congress (Exhibit 2).

Requests to affix the Official Seal to documents will be submitted in writing to the Design Center, OC, by the REE Agency Administrator or their designee. REE agency designee names will be forwarded to the Design Center, OC.

REE Agency Symbols. REE agency symbols can be found in Exhibit 3.

4. Signs

Standards. For public convenience, buildings, offices, facilities, centers, stations, etc., of REE agencies will be marked by signs or lettering on the buildings and doors. Signs will be erected at the main entrances of buildings, centers, etc. Principal buildings of such facilities will also be identified.

Uniformity. REE signs will be uniform and conform to the standard design for the Department as prescribed by OC.

- All signs will conform with the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) as required.
- Typeface required for messages on all USDA signage is Helvetica Bold, in upper and lower case. All capital letters should not be used.

- Sign materials, letter technique, color/finish, graphic layout, sizes, and spacing are described in the “Service Center Signs” Visual Management Guide, which can be found at the Design Center Home Page. UFAS also defines such sign requirements.

NOTE: Existing signs need not be changed to conform with this policy. When replacement is necessary or when repair/maintenance is required for a building, facility, etc., new signs will be installed in accordance with the standard design.

USDA Signature. The Official USDA Symbol, when used with the Department’s name, becomes the Department’s signature and will be designated for display on signage as deemed appropriate. (Exhibit 4)

Use of Agency Symbols with USDA Symbol. When the USDA Symbol is used with agency symbols, the USDA symbol takes the dominant position, by placing it to the left or above agency symbols. Refer to Exhibit 4 for application, positions, and special conditions.

Building Directories. When the REE agency is in a multitenant, non-USDA facility, the words “U.S. Department of Agriculture” will *precede* the REE agency name in letters not smaller or less conspicuous than size used for the agency name. Otherwise, when the REE agency name comes first, it must be followed by “U.S. Department of Agriculture,” in letters the same size or smaller than those used in the agency name.

Building Identification. Buildings are to be identified or marked to allow identification by emergency response personnel. For example, building numbers of sufficient size should be affixed to the building exterior to allow for easy identification.

Braille. Any permanent signs, such as those for elevators/elevator lobbies, must include braille.

Sign Examples. Examples of a variety of signs can be found in Exhibit 5.

Exceptions. The following exceptions to the standard sign are permitted:

- When local environment dictates a different type of sign, such as raised bronze or carved stone letters on buildings, or when university sign specifications must be adhered to (when REE personnel are collocated with a university). On all such signs, if the name of the REE agency is used, the words “of the U.S. Department of Agriculture” must also appear.
- Special purpose control, warning, or directional signs when a REE agency name is not involved. Directional signs for federally-owned roads and highway intersections, when needed, will conform to city, county, or State regulations.

- When activities are carried on cooperatively with another agency outside of the Department. However, on such signs where the name of the REE agency appears, the words “of the U.S. Department of Agriculture” must also appear.
- Individual buildings of a facility, center, station, etc., will have only the name of the REE program or research activity when the principal entrance of the facility has been properly identified.
- Federal multitenant or leased multitenant buildings. Exterior signs need not be displayed, but appropriate identification will be presented by door lettering and sign as follows:
 - Door lettering and office signs with inserts/name plates will have the words “U.S. Department of Agriculture” *first*, in letters not smaller or less conspicuous than those used elsewhere in the lettering. Exceptions prevail for buildings devoted exclusively to activities of the Department and where, for public convenience, the name of the office or center should stand out.
 - If the name of the REE agency comes first, it must be *followed* by the words “U.S. Department of Agriculture,” in letters the same size or smaller than those used in the agency name.

Waiver. When a waiver from these established requirements is desired, a memo justifying the special circumstance, with a copy of the proposed sign (size, wording, color, etc.), will be submitted by the Area Administrative Officer (AAO) or REE Agency Representative to the Real Property Management Branch (RPMB). On behalf of the REE Agency Head, approval for the waiver will be requested from the Director, Design Center, OC, through the Director, Office of Procurement and Property Management (OPPM), Policy Analysis and Coordination Center.

5. Bulletin Boards and Posting Notices

Bulletin boards will be installed only with the approval of the building manager/owner of the building. Items for posting will be placed only on bulletin boards and at **no** other locations.

Maintenance and Control. Bulletin boards should be placed under the jurisdiction of a designated person whose name and telephone number are registered with the building manager/owner of the building. This person will be responsible for installing and maintaining the board, removing any objectionable material, and monitoring the posting of the following:

- Monthly postings of missing persons or children notices. Hard copies for posting may be obtained from the following General Services Administration address:

www.R6.gsa.gov/pbs/kids/posters/Posters.htm

- Information concerning recognized, nonprofit, communitywide activities. Prices may be included.
- Information on organizations or events recognized as profit making activities, such as concerts, lectures, etc., so long as the activities are recreational or educational in nature. Prices may be included.

Approved Postings. Employee organizations, agency officials, and individual employees may post the following types of information:

- Notices of missing persons and children. Notices will be placed in high traffic areas. It is not necessary to post notices in buildings where there are no visitors and few employees housed.
- Official business notices of the occupant agency.
- Agency approved campaigns (charity, blood, safety, etc.).
- Information concerning:
 - recognized nonprofit, communitywide activities, including prices;
 - recognized profit making organization or event activities, including prices, if they are recreational or educational in nature (concerts, lectures, etc.);
 - USDA employee organizations, including prices of recreational activities, but not including discount price lists or other material of this nature;
 - notices to Federal employees by concessionaires and employee organizations recognized by the occupant agency; and
 - recognized labor organization notices and issuances on space provided by the agency. If the agreement between the agency and recognized labor organization grants exclusive recognition, other unions may not post information except about meetings held off the Federal premises.
- Personal notices of REE agency employees, such as the sale of any employee's home, requests for car pool participation, etc. Advertisements are to be dated and not exceed 3x5 inches in size.

Prohibited Postings. The following postings are **not** authorized:

- Advertisements by REE employees offering services or items for sale when such services or items can be obtained from commercial sources on a continuous basis; for example: calendars; offers by employees to sell honey; offers to paint houses.

- Circulars, posters, or other material:
 - which directly or indirectly attacks or adversely reflects on the integrity or character of Members of Congress, the judiciary, the President, members of the President's Cabinet, or any other Government official in a similarly responsible position;
 - containing expressions of a derogatory or abusive character concerning any employee of the Department of Agriculture;
 - which directly or indirectly condemns or criticizes the policies of any Government Department or Agency; and
 - which relates to the campaign or election of any public official, whether the office is partisan or nonpartisan.

6. Placement of Memorials, Plaques, and Cornerstones

Memorials, plaques, and cornerstones may be placed on buildings or building sites under sole jurisdiction of an REE agency, subject to the following conditions and limitations.

Memorials and Plaques

Limitations. Except in unusual cases, the placement will be limited to:

- recognition of outstanding cooperation by a group;
- memorialization of a deceased person whose contribution to the activity and/or the Department is worthy of special recognition; or
- detail of historical association or tradition pertaining to the site of the community in general.

Approval. No memorial or plaque will be erected without the approval of the Director, OPPM. REE Agency Representative or AAO will submit a memo to RPMB justifying the need or desire,

with sketches showing the design and location on the building or site and photographs of the building or site. On behalf of the REE Agency Head, the request will be forwarded to the Director, OPPM.

Design, Material, Inscription. Material, proportion, and detail will harmonize with its surroundings in a dignified and appropriate manner. The inscription must be held to the minimum necessary to effectively accomplish the purpose, and appropriate artistic embellishment may be affixed. Living individuals may **not** be referred to by name, but existing organizations may be.

Private persons or groups. Permission to erect a memorial or plaque by private persons or groups may be granted only on a revocable basis.

Cornerstones

Limitations. The placing of a cornerstone is to be limited to major federally-owned structures.

Design and Material. Material, proportion, and detail will harmonize with the building in a dignified and appropriate manner.

Inscription. Cornerstones may bear only the following inscriptions:

- the name of the building, center, or station;
- the name and title of the Secretary of Agriculture;
- the name of the architect;
- the name of the general contractor; and
- the date the building was erected.

7. Naming of Facilities or Projects

No facility or project of the Department such as a research laboratory, building, center, or station, shall be named after a living person, except as otherwise prescribed by law.

8. Summary of Responsibilities

REE Agency Administrator or Designee

- Requests approval to affix the Official USDA Seal to documents from the Design Center, OC.
- For such official USDA Seal approvals, provides a list of agency designees to the Design Center, OC.

REE Agency Representative or AAO

- Submits justification for waiver from sign requirements to RPMB.
- Designates a person to install bulletin boards and maintain them.
- Submits justification to RPMB for memorial or plaque to be erected.

Real Property Management Branch, FD, AFM

- Reviews sign waivers that are received from the REE Agency Representative or AAO, and forwards for approval of the Agency Administrator, and then sends for final approval to the Director, Design Center, OC, through the Director, OPPM.
- Reviews REE Agency Representative or AAO request for approval for the placement of a memorial or plaque, and forwards for approval by the Agency Administrator, and then sends for final approval to the Director, OPPM.

9. Glossary

AAO. Area Administrative Officer, ARS.

Collocated. When an REE agency is physically located with another USDA agency, non-USDA agency, university, etc., or is located on federally-owned land adjacent. Land or facility can be either a USDA facility or a non-USDA facility.

CFR. Code of Federal Regulations.

DR. Departmental Regulation. Policy prescribed by USDA.

FD. Facilities Division, AFM.

Multitenant. Buildings/facilities that are not solely occupied by, or under the sole custody or control of REE.

OC. Office of Communications, USDA.

OPPM. Office of Procurement and Property Management, under the Policy Analysis and Coordination Center of USDA's Departmental Administration.

RPMB. Real Property Management Branch, Facilities Division, AFM.

-Sd-

W. G. HORNER
Deputy Administrator
Administrative and Financial Management

Exhibits

- Exhibit 1 - Official Symbol of the Department
- Exhibit 2 - Official Seal of the Department
- Exhibit 3 - REE Agency Symbols
- Exhibit 4 - Use of Agency Symbols With USDA Symbol
- Exhibit 5 - Sign Examples

Official Symbol of the Department



The Official USDA Seal was created in 1894. It was adapted for use as a general identifier, signature, within the publication of the Department's *Visual Management Manual* in 1980. The seal is being withdrawn from use as the designated Departmental Identifier. The Seal will maintain a role within the Department's information system. It will be relegated for use on legal documents, in the Office of the Secretary, and for other protocol functions as originally mandated by Congress.

In an effort to reduce associated costs with administrative operations and signatures of products produced by the Department, the new USDA symbol was created in conjunction with the Department's recent reorganization of 1996. It represents all of USDA's activities in its mission areas and agencies. The symbol resulted from a collaborative effort of private and public sector team members working through an objective process. Over 21,000 existing agriculture-related symbols were created and modified before a working committee made its recommendations. The committee represented all mission areas within the Department from across the Nation and Washington, D.C. From the recommendations presented, the Secretary of Agriculture made the final selection in 1996 with concurrence from all Assistant Secretaries.

The symbol is designated for display on information products of the Department throughout all media. The symbol is not to be used to constitute warranty of private sector products, organizations, or their endeavors. It shall never be displayed or presented in a manner that suggests that the Department recommends one product or project over another without written permission from the Director, Office of Communications.

The USDA Symbol is designated for use in one or two colors. When reproduced in one color, it shall be the color of that ink or paint. When "reversed" (dropped out) out of a color, it shall be the color of the paper, material, paint, laminate, embedment, or other application. The official colors for the USDA symbol are dark purple for the letters USDA, and dark green for the soil graphic. The two colors are specified in the Pantone Matching System (PMS), a standard in the printing and graphic arts industry. When paint, laminates, or other applications are used, match the PMS as specified by the manufacturer. For four-color process printing, the PMS colors are "built" out of the standard four-color printing inks - cyan, yellow, magenta, and black, specified as CYMK. Four-color process printing to match PMS is: Dark Purple is PMS 288 = cyan 100%, yellow 0%, magenta 65%, and black 30%; Dark Green is PMS 343 = cyan 100%, yellow 69%, magenta 0%, and black 60%.

For reference, the proportion of the symbol is 1:685. It is to be reproduced only from camera ready art supplied by the Office of Communications' Design Center. It is available electronically as well.

Official Seal of the Department



By an Act of Congress, approved August 8, 1894, the Secretary of Agriculture was authorized and directed to procure a proper seal to be known as the Official Seal of the Department of Agriculture. By an order dated June 21, 1895, Honorable J. Sterling Morton, at that time Secretary of Agriculture, proclaimed the adoption of an Official Seal for the Department of Agriculture in the following terms:

“ORDERED, That the Official Seal of the Department of Agriculture shall be (as described in Heraldic terms), two and three-eighths inches in diameter (azure), a shock of corn (or), upon a vase (vert) an American plough proper. All within a double annulet (argent), outer roped, inner beaded, charged with the inscription: UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, and at the base, a scroll bearing the legend: “1862. AGRICULTURE IS THE FOUNDATION OF MANUFACTURE AND COMMERCE. 1889.” (or), A diapered background of 44 stars (argent) for the States of the Union.”

Records indicate that the design for the Official Seal of the Department of Agriculture was drawn by A. H. Baldwin, an artist in the employ of the Department, and submitted for criticism to Bailey, Banks, and Biddle, of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Secretary Morton showed a great amount of interest in the design of the Official Seal, even to the point of holding several conferences with Department officials and commercial concerns.

A green or gold seal and green ribbon are used on many documents with the impression of the seal. There are no official requirements for the use of green; however, it is deemed to be appropriate for use by this Department.

REE Agency Symbols:



The USDA Signature

Typical Application

The new symbol, when used with the Department's name, becomes the Department's signature. These examples show the proper use of the USDA signature. The typeface to be used with the symbol is Helvetica.



Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services

Foreign Agricultural Service



United States Department of Agriculture

Used With Other Symbols

Position

When used with other symbols of the Department, the USDA symbol takes the dominant position. It is placed to the left or above agency symbols. When used in conjunction with symbols of other public and private sector partners, it is desirable for the USDA symbol to have equal placement.



Used With Intervening Descriptions

Special Conditions

For signs and special situations, other descriptions may come between the symbol and the Department's name.



Service Center

U. S. Department of Agriculture



**Dale Bumpers
National Rice Research Center**
Agricultural Research Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Site signs, freestanding



Farm Service Agency
U.S. Department of Agriculture

7500

Farm Service Agency
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Site address sign, building mounted

Directional,
freestanding or
wall-mounted



Farm Service Agency
U.S. Department of Agriculture
➔

Office identification,
wall-mounted
(USDA Facility)

103

Farm Service Agency
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Office identification,
wall-mounted
(Non-USDA Facility)

103

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Farm Service Agency

Building directory,
wall-mounted
(USDA Facility)



Farm Service Agency
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Administration	103
Publications	105
Conference Room	108
Snack Bar	112

Building directory,
wall-mounted
(Non-USDA Facility)

XYZ Office Building

Tenant A	101
Tenant B	104
U.S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency	112
Tenant C	115