



# Appendix C

## Strategic Consultations

USDA regularly consults with external stakeholders, including USDA’s customers, partners, landowners, policy experts and industry and consumer groups regarding our programs’ effectiveness. While many of the consultations were not conducted expressly for the development of USDA’s Strategic Plan, they did impact strategic goals, objectives, strategies and targets. Additionally, in the Strategic Plan’s development and in accordance with Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance and the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), USDA held 6 meetings and consulted with more than 200 external stakeholders to identify and prioritize USDA’s objectives, and construct organizational strategies to achieve them. These dialogue sessions were held in Sacramento, CA; Omaha, NE; and Washington, D.C. USDA’s customers, agricultural partners, industry groups and U.S. employees all participated in these meetings. One of the sessions was devoted specifically to examining USDA’s roles in conserving this Nation’s natural resources and preserving the environment. Representatives from major non-Government conservation organizations and various commodity groups attended the meeting. The last external stakeholder meeting, held in February 2004, addressed the concerns of small family farmers, limited resource producers and beginning, minority and women farmers and ranchers.

With the full support of its senior leadership, USDA regularly consults with stakeholders and seeks validation of all goals, objectives and performance measures from employees and the public. More than 250 internal stakeholders have participated in the development of the Department’s FY 2005 – 2010 Strategic Plan.

Strategic Consultations			
Goal	Date	Who	Purpose
<b>Goals 1 and 2 Economic Opportunities</b>	Ongoing	Official representatives of various countries.	Discuss agricultural trade issues, to reduce or eliminate trade barriers.
	October 2003 - January 2004 (Six external stakeholder dialogue sessions). Ongoing meetings and discussions with senior representatives from each functional program area regarding communications with FSA employees, and consultations with USDA officials and OMB.	Agricultural producers, trade groups, commodity groups, non-Governmental conservation organizations and wildlife protection groups, and FSA’s Federal, State, and local agricultural partners.	To obtain input into the development of the Agency’s FY 2005 - 2010 Strategic Plan.

Strategic Consultations			
Goal	Date	Who	Purpose
<b>Goals 1 and 2 Economic Opportunities (cont.)</b>	Annual conference	Farm Service Agency, Foreign Agricultural Service, Food and Nutrition Service, US Agency for International Development, State Department, and other Government employees as well as representatives from various private volunteer organizations working in famine relief, food security, and/or disaster relief.	To bring together key parties involved in the programming and delivery of food aid (to domestic and international recipients) to discuss objectives, performance, and the dismantling of barriers for delivery of an effective and efficient food aid program.
	Monthly conference calls/ Quarterly meetings	Animal Agriculture Coalition; American Veterinary Medical Association; U.S. Animal Health Association; FSIS, and ARS.	Guide development of the National Animal Health Emergency Management System.
	Ongoing	Various grain, livestock, meat, poultry, bioenergy and bioproduct trade groups and associations.	Discuss matters of mutual concern, and expand market opportunities for U.S. agricultural producers.
	Annually	Public forum for data users.	Provide updates on pending changes in statistical and informational programs. Seek feedback from data users.
	Annually	Advisory Committee on Agriculture Statistics.	Advise the Secretary of Agriculture on the scope, timing and content of the censuses and surveys of agriculture. Make recommendations regarding the content of agriculture reports. Present the views of major suppliers and users of statistics.
	Annually	Land-grant university agricultural economists.	Identify topics requiring management, marketing, policy research, education and extension outreach.
	Annually	USDA Agricultural Outlook Forum.	Discuss developments in global agricultural markets and exchange information with customers.
	Quarterly	Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee (APAC) and Agricultural Technical Advisory Committees (ATACs).	Provide advice on U.S. trade negotiations including strategy and goals.
	Ongoing	Producers and producer groups.	Discuss any proposed new crop insurance program or evaluations of existing programs.
	Ongoing	Crop Insurance Companies.	Discuss operations and plan, and implement program improvement.

Strategic Consultations			
Goal	Date	Who	Purpose
<b>Goals 1 and 2 Economic Opportunities (cont.)</b>	Ongoing	University risk management specialists and economists.	Review proposed new crop insurance tools or programs; conduct research and education.
	Ongoing	State and local governments and other Federal agencies.	Coordinate risk-management initiatives.
	Ongoing	Producers, producer groups and associations, commercial lenders, land grant colleges and universities.	Share information and provide input on program delivery and outreach.
<b>Goal 3 Rural Opportunities</b>	Ongoing	National Association of Homebuilders.	Share information.
	Ongoing	Council for Affordable and Rural Housing.	
	Ongoing	National Association of Government Guaranteed Lenders.	Share information and provide input on program delivery and outreach.
	Ongoing	National Association of Development Organizations.	
<b>Goal 4 Protect Agriculture</b>	Ongoing since 9/11/01	Department of Homeland Security.	Develop strategies to protect our Nation.
	Annually	National Wildlife Service Advisory Committee.	Provide input to Wildlife Services on resolving issues related to conflicts between humans and wildlife.
	Quarterly	National Animal Health Emergency Management Steering Committee.	Provide input to Veterinary Services around program policy related to animal health emergencies.
	Three times per year	National Plant Board.	Provide input to Plant Protection & Quarantine around program policy related to plant health issues.
	Three times per year	National Advisory Committee on 1) Meat and Poultry Inspection and 2) Microbiological Criteria for Foods.	Provide input to Food Safety and Inspection Service policy.
	Periodic	Public meetings to include Industry, public health officials, academia, consumers, Federal and State officials, and other interested parties.	Communicate information and seek input to Agency initiatives or proposed regulations.
	Ongoing	State and local governments, foreign countries.	Ensure food safety inspection and issues are addressed.
	Ongoing	<i>Codex Alimentarius</i> Commission and subcommittees.	Develop strategies for strengthening international food safety.

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Goal	Date	Who	Purpose
<b>Goal 4 Protect Agriculture (cont.)</b>	Ongoing	Outside organizations.	Maintains numerous partnerships with outside entities, covering a range of topics, to ensure a safer food supply.
	Annually	National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges.	Seek input of University leadership to improve science, information, and technology development and distribution.
	Annually	Board on Agriculture Assembly.	Provide input to Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service leadership in agricultural administration, teaching, research, extension, forestry, international programs, human sciences, and veterinary medicine.
	Quarterly	National Agriculture, Research, Education, Economics, and Extension Advisory Board.	Advise the USDA and its land-grant university partners on research, extension, education and economic policies, priorities, and on the effectiveness of those policies and priorities.
<b>Goal 5 Nutrition and Health</b>	Ongoing	FNS Regional Stakeholder Outreach Meetings: open to Federal, State and local partners and others interested in domestic nutrition assistance programs.	Seek public reaction to proposed strategic plan for nutrition assistance programs. Written comments were accepted from persons unable to attend.
	9/03-12/04	Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee.	Review Dietary Guidelines for Americans in light of current scientific and medical knowledge. Recommend changes.
<b>Goal 6 Natural Resources</b>	Ongoing	Farmers and ranchers, organizations, persons interested in acting as third- party vendors for conservation technical assistance.	Hold listening sessions in each State to gather input on implementation of the third-party strategy, and determine how to make the effort user-friendly for farmers and ranchers receiving the service and for those providing the service.
	Ongoing	Commodity groups, environmental groups, conservation groups.	Hold national listening session to obtain input for implementing the third-party vendor strategy
	Ongoing	Coalition of environmental and conservation groups.	Provide continuing input to the third-party vendor initiative.
	Ongoing	Federal agencies and national and field personnel in USDA.	Discuss CRP policy and environmental index issues related to the 2002 FSRIA.
<b>All Goals</b>	Ongoing	OMB Program Performance Assessment using the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART).	Structured OMB Review as part of the budget process to help determine program effectiveness.