

Your Career at USDA

Protecting & Promoting American Agriculture



Agricultural Marketing Service



Animal and Plant Health
Inspection Service



Grain Inspection, Packers and
Stockyards Administration



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)—founded in 1862 under President Abraham Lincoln—is called “The People’s Department.” Because everybody eats and everybody wants a wholesome and affordable variety of foods to choose from, USDA created its Marketing and Regulatory Programs (MRP). Three agencies make up MRP: the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), and the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA). Collectively, these three agencies promote animal and plant health and help U.S. farmers market their grain, livestock, and products here and abroad.

That's a lot of work! All three MRP agencies need the best qualified employees they can get. This leaflet describes some of the jobs available in MRP and explains how you can find out more about specific openings of interest. The work is challenging, but the benefits of Federal employment are considerable: job security, a portable social-security-based retirement plan, generous annual and sick leave, flexible scheduling, family-friendly policies, chances for advancement, and more.

MRP is looking for outstanding candidates to work in these fields:

- Biological sciences and veterinary medicine
- Engineering
- Information technology and computer science
- Public affairs and communication
- Human resources and civil rights
- Program management
- Accounting, auditing, and budget
- Contracting and procurement
- Economics
- Marketing
- Agricultural commodity grading



Agricultural Marketing Service

AMS facilitates the efficient, fair marketing of U.S. agricultural products, including food, fiber, and specialty crops. The agency also helps make sure that the U.S. marketing system remains world class. Here is information on the types of job opportunities consistently available in AMS.

Agricultural commodity graders

inspect and make grade or quality determinations on cotton, dairy, fruits and vegetables, poultry, meat, and tobacco products. Preferred qualifications: successful completion of a full 4-year course of study in an accredited college or university leading to a bachelor's degree in marketing, economics, business administration, agriculture, accounting, statistics, commerce, or related fields.

Microbiologists examine meat, poultry, and related products to determine the presence, number, and species of micro-organisms with particular emphasis on *Salmonella*, *Listeria*, *E. coli*, *Staphylococcus* species, and other microbes important in food intoxication, food infection, and sanitary microbiology. Basic qualifications: a 4-year college degree in microbiology, biology, chemistry, or other basic medical science.



Auditors systematically examine and appraise production, sales, inventory, and financial records of individual companies. Basic qualifications: a 4-year college degree in accounting or related fields like business administration or finance.

Agricultural marketing specialists administer marketing and inspection services and regulatory and marketing agreements for agricultural commodities. Basic qualifications: a 4-year college degree in marketing, economics, business administration, agriculture, statistics, commerce, or related fields

Market news reporters check the quality and quantity of products sold, prices paid, demand, movement, and trends and provide the information to producers, shippers, processors, handlers, and merchandisers of agricultural products. The need for accurate and timely reports on market prices and conditions means that these reporters are always on the go. Basic qualifications: a 4-year college degree in marketing, economics, business administration, agriculture, accounting, statistics, commerce, or related fields.

General engineers plan and conduct studies to determine the adequacy of current testing methods for evaluating agricultural commodities. They also recommend changes in methods, techniques, and systems used for evaluating the quality of such commodities. Basic qualifications: a 4-year college degree in professional engineering.



Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service



APHIS protects America's animal and plant resources by:

1. Safeguarding them from exotic invasive pests and diseases
2. Monitoring and managing agricultural pests and diseases already existing here
3. resolving and managing trade issues related to animal or plant health
4. protecting American agricultural resources from wildlife, and
5. ensuring the humane care and treatment of animals used in research, entertainment, and the wholesale pet trade.



Veterinary Medical Officers protect the health of America's domestic animal population from foreign and/or contagious diseases and from abuse and neglect. Basic qualifications for positions at General Schedule grade 11: completion of a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.) degree obtained at a school accredited by the American Veterinary Medical Association's Council on Education.





Animal Health Technicians work with APHIS veterinarians to perform inspections and vaccinations, set up and manage quarantines, collect tissue specimens, appraise the economic value of animals, dispose of diseased animals, and disinfect livestock premises for the control and eradication of animal diseases. Basic qualifications: a 4-year college degree in animal or biological sciences or related fields.

Plant Health Safeguarding Specialists collect and identify insects, pathogens, plants, and weeds; issue permits for the movement of regulated articles across State lines and to foreign countries; inspect and clear high-risk plant propagative material; conduct treatments like fumigation and irradiation on regulated articles to control plant and animal pests and diseases; and review permits under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species for sufficiency, seizing shipments that lack proper documentation. Basic qualifications: a 4-year college degree in biological or agricultural sciences or other closely related sciences.

Wildlife Biologists reduce or eliminate livestock damage, crop damage, aviation hazards, and public-health problems caused by mammals, rodents, and birds. Basic qualifications: a 4-year college degree in the biological sciences.



Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

GIPSA personnel are active behind the scenes in American agriculture, inspecting and measuring U.S. grain crops and commodities and regulating stockyards and meatpacking facilities to make sure consumers always get what they pay for. This work also facilitates the marketing of U.S. livestock, poultry, meat, cereals, oilseeds, and regulated agricultural products and promotes fair, competitive trading practices for the overall benefit of American consumers and producers.

Agricultural or Grain Marketing Specialists conduct studies to formulate and develop regulatory standards and procedural changes concerning the inspection and grading of grain and commodities. Basic qualifications: a 4-year college degree in marketing, economics, business administration, agriculture, accounting, statistics, commerce, or related fields.

Agricultural Commodity Graders are responsible for the inspection and weighing services for grain, rice, and related commodities. Basic qualifications: a 4-year college degree in any field that included at least 9 semester hours in agriculture, botany, crop production, agronomy, food chemistry, technology, quality control, or other related subjects.



Auditors enforce the jurisdictional, financial, and trade-practice provisions of the Packers and Stockyards Act of 1921 by collaborating in the formulation of policy and ensuring that these policies and activities are properly carried out nationwide. Basic qualifications: a 4-year college degree in accounting or related fields like business administration and finance.

Economists initiate, formulate, plan, and execute programs to develop and maintain a database for the Packers and Stockyards Programs. Basic qualifications: a 4-year college degree in economics.

Legal Specialists plan, design, organize, and conduct investigations of anticompetitive, unfair, unjust, discriminatory, or deceptive practices or devices in livestock, meat, and poultry industries and markets to identify potential violations of the Packers and Stockyards Act. Basic qualifications: a 4-year college degree in business administration, industrial management, agriculture, marketing, economics, or related fields.

Industrial Specialists (1) develop policy, standards, and procedures for the inspection and weighing program; and (2) develop and design techniques, procedures, and methods for testing scales to verify their accuracy, sensitivity, and constancy. Basic qualifications: a 4-year college degree in business administration, industrial management, engineering, applied sciences, or other related fields of study.

Physical Scientists oversee complex research or technological programs, such as the agency's mycotoxin quality-control program, and develop and recommend new or revised policies and procedures. Basic qualifications: a 4-year college degree in physical science and/or related engineering science, such as mechanics, dynamics, properties of materials, and electronics.



To Find Out More About Working for the Federal Government

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) maintains an excellent Web site that explains the benefits of working for the U.S. civil service. All these benefits apply Governmentwide. To learn more, visit <http://www.opm.gov> on the Web.

OPM also lists every Federal job opening, worldwide, at <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>. The built-in search engine there is fast and flexible. You can use it to search for jobs under AMS, APHIS, or GIPSA; jobs in a specific geographic area; and jobs in just the field you're interested in, regardless of agency or location.



How We Make It Easy To Apply for Jobs in the MRP Agencies

AMS, APHIS, and GIPSA publish their job openings on the USAJOBS Web site (<http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>) described above. All three agencies require the submission of basic applicant information, responses to vacancy-specific questions or KSA (knowledge, skills, and abilities) questions, and supporting documentation. AMS, APHIS, and GIPSA strongly encourage you to apply online, but individual vacancy announcements also contain a link to information about conventional (paper-based) application procedures. For many positions, you can apply online with a résumé instead of using cumbersome application forms.

Every job in USDA's MRP agencies is open to applicants on their own merits. We do not tolerate discrimination against applicants or employees on any nonmerit factors, such as race, age, or gender. USDA's equal opportunity disclaimer statement, printed in full on the last panel of this leaflet, stipulates our personnel practices, and MRP is proud to enforce these rules in every aspect of our work—from the processing of candidates' applications through the interview process to the actual employment environment on the job.

For exciting and challenging career opportunities in agriculture, check out all of USDA's currently available positions at <http://jobsearch.usajobs.opm.gov/a9ag.asp>. For detailed information and immediate assistance, please call or write to the person listed on the vacancy announcement under the "Questions?" heading.



United States Department of Agriculture

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