

**Mark Barnhart**

**Special Agent  
United States Department of Agriculture  
Office of Inspector General - Investigations**

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Mark is a Special Agent with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Office of Inspector General- Investigations (OIG-I). Mark graduated Cum Laude from Eastern Kentucky University with a Bachelor of Science in Police Administration. Additionally, Mark completed an internship at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), Glynco, Georgia, where he was assigned to the Behavioral Science Division.

Mark's law enforcement career includes more than 19 years as a Special Agent with USDA OIG-I in the Southeast and Midwest Regions. For 17 years, Mark has been a member of the National Technical Investigators Association (NATIA) and has been assigned the collateral duty as a Technical Equipment Instructor specializing in the acquisition and proper installation and deployment of covert technical equipment (audio/video transmitters, repeaters, audio/video recorders, microwave signaling, covert GPS systems, etc).

Since 1996, Mark has been assigned to the Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission (OOCIC) Task Force, Dayton, Ohio. The OOCIC Dayton Task Force members include full time detectives/agents from local police departments, the State of Ohio, and Federal law enforcement. The mission of the task force is to conduct long-term covert investigations of organized criminal enterprises that affect Southwest Ohio and operate throughout the United States. As a result of this assignment, Mark has completed numerous investigations as the case agent and undercover agent. In 2002, Mark became the Assistant Task Force Director for the OOCIC Dayton Task Force, responsible for case management; liaison with law enforcement personnel and prosecutors; and administrative funding duties.

In 2007, Mark completed a first of its kind long-term undercover assignment known as Operation Bite Back. Mark and an additional OOCIC Task Force agent deeply infiltrated a highly organized dog fighting enterprise that had operated with impunity throughout the United States for many years. The 18-month undercover investigation conclusively linked other crimes (drug trafficking, interstate gambling, food stamp trafficking, firearms violations, etc.) with dog fighting. The resulting Federal and state indictments, 56 defendants, seizure of 64 fighting dogs, and seizure of property impacted dog fighting throughout the United States and other countries. Operation Bite Back was recognized with the Excellence in Investigations Award from the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency (PCIE); the 2007 Distinguished Law Enforcement Award from the Ohio Attorney General's Office; Humane Law Enforcement Award from the Humane Society of the United States; and Excellence in Investigations Award from the National District Attorney's Association. Operation Bite Back is presently being featured on the cable network Animal Planet.

Mark continues to act in an undercover capacity throughout the United States.