

**ARS □ CSREES □ ERS □ NASS**  
***Policies and Procedures***

**Title:** Display and Handling of the Flags of the United States,  
the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Secretary  
of Agriculture

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**Originating Office:** Real Property Management Branch, Facilities Division,  
Administrative Financial Management  
Agricultural Research Service

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**Distribution:** All REE Headquarters, Areas, and Field Locations

This issuance provides instructions pertaining to the display and use of the flag of the United States of America, the flag of the USDA, and the flag of the Secretary of Agriculture.

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Exhibit 1 Display of the U.S. Flag

Exhibit 2 Pictorial Flag Display Exhibit

# 1. Authorities

- Title 36 United States Code (USC) 173-178
- Title 7 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 2 B 2.7a
- Departmental Regulation 5160-4
- Executive Order (EO) 10824
- Public Law 93-344

# 2. Policy

The official United States (U.S.) flag must be displayed in accordance with 36 U.S.C. 173-178 at Research, Education, and Economics (REE) facilities. REE will not design or use a distinctive flag or pennant as a means of identification of its activities without approval of such flag or pennant from the Director, Office of Procurement and Property Management (OPPM).

The official flag of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) may be used at indoor functions attended by the Under Secretary.

# 3. Display of Flags

## The U.S. Flag

On all working days and on such other days as are specifically provided by law or proclamation, weather permitting, the flag will be displayed on or near all buildings controlled or occupied solely by REE or co-located with other agencies of the USDA.

Where REE occupies two or more buildings on a single site or a military reservation, the display of one flag on or near the main administration building is sufficient.

## The Flag of the USDA

**Indoor Display:** The official flag of the USDA may be used at functions attended by the Deputy Secretary, the Under Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries, or at other locations with the approval of the Chief, Property Management Division (PMD), OPPM.

**Outdoor Display:** The official flag of the USDA will be displayed at the Department headquarters in Washington, D.C. and at such other locations as may be approved by the Chief, PMD, OPPM.

## **The Flag of the Secretary of Agriculture**

The official flag of the Secretary of Agriculture will be displayed only during the presence of the Secretary.

### **4. Procedures for Displaying the Flag of the USDA**

**Center Director (CD)/Research Leader (RL)/Location Coordinator (LC):** If appropriate, submit request for approval to display the official flag of the USDA to Area Director (AD).

**AD:** Review and approve request to display the official flag of the USDA at locations within his/her Area and forward request to RPMB, Facilities Division (FD).

**RPMB:** Forward request for approval to display the official flag of the USDA at ARS locations to the Chief, PMD, OPPM.

### **5. Half-Staffing the U.S. Flag**

The official flag of the United States is to be flown at half-staff at REE locations on the following occasions:

- Upon the death of certain persons as identified in Exhibit 1
- At the direction of the Secretary of Agriculture
- On special occasions such as the death of an ARS Hall of Fame Scientist as directed by the Administrator, ARS

#### **Computation of Periods for Half-Staffing:**

##### **When the number of days is specified:**

- The day of death counts as the first day, even if the flags were not placed at half-staff that day because death occurred after the normal time to lower the flags for the day or notification was received too late to half-staff on that day.
- The flags must be flown each day for the specified number of calendar days, even if they would not normally be flown on some of the days. This policy is applicable only if operating personnel normally scheduled to work are available to perform this function.

### **On the day of death and on the following day:**

If notification of death is received before the normal time to lower the flags for the day, the flags will be lowered to half-staff on that day and flown at half-staff on the following day.

- If notification is received too late to half-staff the flags on the day of death, the flags are flown at half-staff only on the day following death.
- If notification of death is received on a day that the flags are normally not flown, the flags must be flown at half-staff on that day and on the following day. However, if notification is received too late to half-staff the flags on the day of death, the flags are flown at half-staff only on the following day.

### **From the day of death until interment:**

- If notification of death is received before the time the flags are normally lowered for the day, the flags must be lowered to half-staff on that day. The flags will also be flown at half-staff on each succeeding day, including the day of interment.
- If notification is received too late to half-staff the flags on the day of death, the flags must be flown at half-staff beginning the following day and on each succeeding day through the day of interment.
- If notification of death is received on a day that the flags are normally not flown, the flags must be flown at half-staff on that day and on each succeeding day, including the day of interment. If notification is received too late to half-staff the flags on the day of death, above instructions for the “day of death and the following day,” under “Computation of periods for half-staffing,” apply.

### **Coincident occasions to half-staff:**

If during a period when the flags are already at half-staff, notification of another death is received, half-staff period will run concurrently, not consecutively.

## **6. Procedures for Obtaining Approval to Half-Staff the U.S. Flag**

**CD/RL/LC** If appropriate, submit request to the AD for approval to display the flags of the United States at half-staff to address local observances.

**AD** Order the flags of the United States to be flown at half-staff at all locations within his/her Area to address local observances.

**RPMB** Notify ADs and Area Administrative Officers when the Secretary of Agriculture orders the flags of the United States and the USDA to be flown at half-staff.

## **7. Summary of Responsibilities**

### **Agency Administrators or Designees**

- Responsible for compliance with the provisions of this P&P
- Disseminate the information contained in this P&P to all locations
- Establish internal notification procedures for ensuring compliance with half-staffing requirements

### **Area/CDs, LCs, and RLs (ARS Only)**

- Responsible for compliance with the provisions of this P&P
- Establish internal notification procedures for ensuring compliance with half-staffing requirements

### **RPMB**

- Disseminate the information contained in this P&P to all Areas
- Establish internal notification procedures for ensuring compliance with half-staffing requirements
- Establish procedures to verify news received requiring half-staffing notification

## **8. Glossary**

ARS Facility – Federally-owned buildings under the custody and control of ARS, and leased space in buildings under the custody and control of ARS, including General Services Administration (GSA)-Leased Space, in which ARS is the sole occupant.

GSA-Leased Space – GSA-owned or leased buildings which are occupied by ARS

Half-Staff – The position of the flag when it is one-half the distance between the top and bottom of the staff.

## **9. Acronyms**

AD – Area Director

CD – Center Director

FD – Facilities Division

LC – Location Coordinator

OPPM – Office of Procurement and Property Management

PMD – Property Management Division

RL – Research Leader

RPMB – Real Property Management Branch

U.S.C. – United States Code

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**Administrative and Financial Management**

EXHIBIT 1: DISPLAY OF THE UNITED STATES FLAG

EXHIBIT 2: PICTORIAL FLAG DISPLAY EXHIBIT

## EXHIBIT 1 - Page 1

### DISPLAY OF THE UNITED STATES FLAG

Laws pertaining to the display of the flag of the United States of America are published in the United States Code (36 U.S.C. 173-178). Only excerpts pertinent to REE have been quoted.

#### **1. Display and Use of Flag by Civilians; Codification of Rules and Customs; Definition (36 U.S.C. 173)**

The following codification of existing rules and customs pertaining to the display and use of the flag of the United States of America is established for use by such civilians or civilian groups or organizations as may not be required to conform to regulations promulgated by one or more executive departments of the United States. The flag of the United States of America, for the purpose of this chapter, shall be defined according to sections 1 and 2 of Title 4, United States Code, and Executive Order 10824, issued pursuant thereto.

#### **2. Time and Occasions for Display; Hoisting and Lowering (36 U.S.C. 173)**

- a. It is the universal custom to display the flag from sunrise to sunset on buildings and on stationary flagstaffs in the open. However, when a patriotic effect is desired, the flag may be displayed 24 hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness.
- b. The flag should be hoisted briskly and lowered ceremoniously.
- c. The flag should not be displayed on days when weather is inclement, except when an all-weather flag is displayed.
- d. The flag should be displayed on all days, especially on: New Year's Day, January 1; Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday, third Monday in January; Inauguration Day, January 20; Lincoln's Birthday, February 12; Washington's Birthday, third Monday in February; Easter Sunday (variable); Mother's Day, second Sunday in May; Armed Forces Day, third Saturday in May; Memorial Day (half-staff until noon), the last Monday in May; Flag Day, June 14; Independence Day, July 4; Labor Day, first Monday in September; Constitution Day, September 17; Columbus Day, second Monday in October; Navy Day, October 27; Veteran's Day, November 11; Thanksgiving Day, fourth Thursday in November; Christmas Day, December 25; and such other days as may be proclaimed by the President of the United States; the birthdays of States (date of admission); and on State holidays.
- e. The flag should be displayed daily on or near the main administration building of every public institution.



## Exhibit 1 – Page 2

### 3. POSITION AND MANNER OF DISPLAY (36 U.S.C. 175)

The flag, when carried in a procession with another flag, or flags should be either on the marching right; that is, the flag's own right, or if there is a line of other flags, in front of the center of that line.

- a. The flag of the United States of America, when it is displayed with another flag against a wall from crossed staffs, should be on the right, the others flags right, and its staff should be in front of the staff of the other flag.
- b. The flag of the United States of America should be at the center and at the highest point of the group when a number of flags of States or localities or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from staff.
- c. When the flags of States, cities or localities, or pennants of societies are flown on the same halyard with the flag of the United States of America, the latter should always be at the peak. When the flags are flown from adjacent staffs, the flag of the United States of America should be hoisted first and lowered last. No such flag or pennant may be placed above the flag of the United States of America or to the right of the flag of the United States of America.
- d. When flags of two or more nations are displayed, they are to be flown from separate staffs of the same height. The flags should be of approximately equal size. International usage forbids the display of the flag of one nation above that of another nation in time of peace.
- e. When the flag of the United States of America is displayed from a staff projecting horizontally or at an angle from the window sill, balcony, or front of a building, the union of the flag should be placed at the peak of the staff unless the flag is at half-staff. When displaying either horizontally or vertically against a wall, the union should be uppermost and to the flag's own right, that is, to the observer's left.
- f. When displaying other horizontally or vertically flags against a wall, the union should be uppermost and to the flag's own right, that is, to the observer's left.
- g. When used on a speaker's platform, the flag, if displayed flat, should be displayed above and behind the speaker. When displayed from a staff in a church or public auditorium, the flag of the United States of America should hold the position of superior prominence, in advance of the audience, and in the position of honor at the clergyman's or speaker's right as he/she faces the audience. Any other flag or display should be placed on the left of the clergyman or speaker or at the right of the audience.

## Exhibit 1 - Page 3

- h. The flag should form a distinctive feature of the ceremony of unveiling a statue or monument, but it should never be used as the covering for the statue or monument.
- i. The flag, when directed by an Agency Head to fly at half-staff, must meet the following provisions:
- (1) The flag will fly at half-staff for a period not to exceed one day.
  - (2) Flying the flag at half-staff symbolizes respect to the memory of a USDA individual(s) who died in the line of duty or the loss of life of a local individual(s) through an act of heroism.
  - (3) The lowering of the flag to half-staff can only be done in USDA controlled buildings or facilities.
  - (4) In a multi-tenant building complex or facility, the lead agency must agree to fly the flag at half-staff.
- j. The flag, when flown at half-staff, should be first hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position. The flag should be again raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day. On Memorial Day the flag should be displayed at half-staff until noon only. At noon it should then be raised to the top of the staff. By order of the President, the flag shall be flown at half-staff upon the death of principal figures of the United States Government and the Governor of a State, territory, or possession, as a mark of respect to their memory. In the event of the death of other officials or foreign dignitaries, the flag is to be displayed at half-staff according to Presidential instructions or orders, or in accordance with recognized customs or practices not inconsistent with law. In the event of the death of a present or former official of the Government of any State, territory, or possession of the United States, the Governor of that State, territory, or possession may proclaim that the flag of the United States of America shall be flown at half-staff. The flag shall be flown at half-staff 30 days from the death of the President; 10 days from the death of the Vice President, the Chief Justice or retired Chief Justice of the United States, or the Speaker of the House of Representatives; from the day of death until interment of an associate Justice of the Supreme Court, a Secretary of an executive department, a former Vice President, or the Governor of a State, territory, or possession; and on the day of death and the following day for a Member of Congress.

## Exhibit 1 – Page 4

As used in this subsection,

- (1) The term "half-staff" means the position of the flag when it is one-half the distance between the top and bottom of the staff;
- (2) The term 'executive or military department' means any agency listed under sections 101 and 102 of Title 5, United States Code; and
- (3) The term "Member of Congress" means a Senator, a Representative, a Delegate, or a Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico.

### **4. RESPECT FOR THE FLAG (36 U.S.C. 176)**

No disrespect should be shown to the flag of the United States of America; the flag should not be dipped to any person or thing. Regimental colors, State flags, and organization or institutional flags are to be dipped as a mark of honor.

- a. The flag shall never touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, the floor, water, or merchandise.
- b. The flag should never be fastened, displayed, used, or stored in such a manner as to permit it to be easily torn, soiled, or damaged in any way.
- c. The flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.

### **5. CONDUCT DURING HOISTING, LOWERING OR PASSING OF THE FLAG (36 U.S.C. 177)**

During the ceremony of hoisting of or lowering the flag or when the flag is passing in a parade or in a review, all persons present except those in uniform should face the flag and stand at attention with the right hand over the heart. Those present in uniform should render the military salute. When not in uniform, men should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Aliens should stand at attention. The salute to the flag in a moving column should be rendered at the moment the flag passes.

## **Exhibit 1 – Page 5**

### **6. MODIFICATION OF RULES AND CUSTOMS BY PRESIDENT (36 U.S.C. 178)**

Any rule or custom pertaining to the display of the flag of the United States of America, set forth in sections 171 to 178 or Title 36, United States Code, may be altered, modified, or repealed, or additional rules with respect thereto may be prescribed, by the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States, whenever he deems it to be appropriate or desirable and any such alteration or additional rule shall be set forth in a proclamation.

**Exhibit 2 – Page 1**

**PICTORIAL FLAG DISPLAY EXHIBIT**



**Carried in a Procession**



**Cross Staffs**



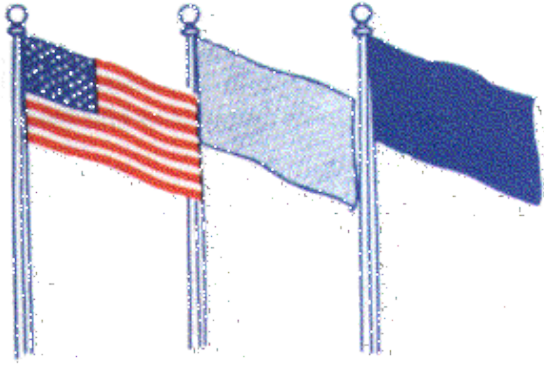
**Displayed with Other Flags**



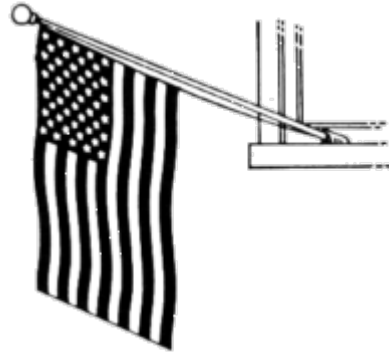
**Flown on Same Halyard**

## Exhibit 2 – Page 2

### Pictorial Flag Display



**Two or More Nations**



**Window Sill Display**



**Against a Wall Horizontally  
Vertically**



**On Speakers Platform**



**Clergy/Speakers Right**