

**REQUEST FOR RECORDS DISPOSITION AUTHORITY**  
 (See Instructions on page 2.)

TO NATIONAL ARCHIVES and RECORDS ADMINISTRATION (NIR)  
 WASHINGTON, DC 20408

1 FROM (Agency or establishment)  
 Department of Agriculture

2 MAJOR SUBDIVISION  
 Economic Research Service

3 MINOR SUBDIVISION

4 NAME OF PERSON WITH WHOM TO CONFER  
 Leslee Lowstuter

5 TELEPHONE  
 202-694-5111

LEAVE BLANK (NARA use only)

JOB NUMBER  
 NI-354-09-1

DATE RECEIVED  
 7/27/09

NOTIFICATION TO AGENCY

In accordance with the provisions of 44 U.S.C. 3303a the disposition request, including amendments, is approved except for items that may be marked "disposition not approved" or "withdrawn" in column 10

DATE ARCHIVIST OF THE UNITED STATES

13 July 10 [Signature]

6 AGENCY CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that I am authorized to act for this agency in matters pertaining to the disposition of its records and that the records proposed for disposal on the attached \_\_\_\_\_ page(s) are not now needed for the business of this agency or will not be needed after the retention periods specified, and that written concurrence from the General Accounting Office, under the provisions of Title 8 of the GAO Manual for Guidance of Federal Agencies,

is not required,  is attached, or  has been requested.

DATE 07.16.09	SIGNATURE OF AGENCY REPRESENTATIVE <i>James S. Neal</i>	TITLE James Neal, USDA REE Records Officer
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7 ITEM NO.	8 DESCRIPTION OF ITEM AND PROPOSED DISPOSITION	9 GRS OR SUPERSEDED JOB CITATION	10 ACTION TAKEN (NARA USE ONLY)
	Please see attached		

**Economics Research Service**  
**Records Control Schedule**  
May 14, 2009

## **Economics Research Service**

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# Economic Research Service (ERS)

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No.	Description of items and Proposed Disposition	GRS or Superseded Job Citation	Action Taken NARA Use (Only)
	<p>Overview</p> <p>The Economic Research Service is the primary source of economic information and research in the U.S. Department of Agriculture. ERS conducts a research program to inform public and private decision-making on economic and policy issues involving food, farming, natural resources, and rural development.</p> <p>ERS's economists and social scientists conduct research, analyze food and commodity markets, produce policy studies, and develop economic and statistical indicators. The agency's research program is aimed at the information needs of USDA, other public policy officials, and the research community. ERS information and analysis is also used by the media, trade associations, public interest groups, and the general public.</p> <p><i>ALL ITEMS ARE CONSIDERED MEDIA-NEUTRAL.</i></p> <p>1. <u>Administrative Management Files</u> <i>CONCURRENCE OF AGENCY R.O. ASK 4/7/10</i></p> <p>Administrative management files are those records that document the functions and activities of ERS. Files include material pertaining to program planning and other activities of a precedent-setting, policy-forming nature that apply specifically to ERS in connection with Federal, State, and industrial institutions; trade associations; universities; public and private laboratories; private companies; other non-research groups, and foreign countries.</p> <p>a. Significant correspondence files.</p> <p>Records, such as letters, memorandums, forms, reports, agendas, minutes, and other data, documenting the development, implementation, and administration of plans and policies pertaining to the mission or functions of ERS; organization charts; structure and reorganization studies; and opinions and decisions of an important policy or those that set precedent, or that contain other substantive information.</p>	<p>NC1-354-79-1</p> <p>Item 1</p>	

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2.	<p>Disposition: <b>PERMANENT</b>. Cut off at end of calendar year. Transfer to inactive storage 5 years after cutoff. Transfer to NARA 10 years after cutoff. In accordance with NARA <del>POF</del> transfer instructions, or other applicable transfer instructions in place at the time of transfer.</p> <p>b. Routine correspondence files.</p> <p>Records, such as letters, memorandums, forms, reports and other data, documenting day-to-day operations and routine administrative matters.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Cut off at end of calendar year. Destroy/delete 10 years after cutoff, or when no longer needed for reference, whichever is later.</p> <p><u>Official Speeches and Lectures</u></p> <p>a. Single record copies of prepared scripts.</p> <p>Official speeches and lectures presented to a public audience by the ERS Administrator, the Associate Administrator, or the Deputy Administrators concerning agency policies and programs. Includes videotapes, DVDs, speech scripts, radio scripts, indexes, clean copies of charts, graphs, and other visual aids that ERS or USDA has not published.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>PERMANENT</b>. Cut off at end of calendar year. Transfer to inactive storage 5 years after cutoff. Transfer to NARA 10 years after cutoff in accordance with NARA <del>POF</del> transfer instructions, or other applicable transfer instructions in place at the time of transfer.</p>	<p>NC1-354-79-1</p> <p>Item 15</p>	

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3.	<p>b. Background files.</p> <p>Includes background material used to develop the videotapes, DVDs, speech scripts, lectures, radio scripts, indexes, charts, graphs, and other visual aids.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Cut off at end of calendar year. Destroy/delete 5 years after cutoff.</p> <p><u>Authority Delegations</u></p> <p>Departmental documents delegating authority to the agency</p> <p>Documents that delegate authority to the agency and/or specific positions to perform assigned functions and/or specific actions. Includes original or TEMPORARY authority delegations issued by agency officials to identified positions.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Cut off at end of calendar year in which authority expires. Destroy/delete 3 years after cutoff.</p>		
4.	<p><u>Management Improvement Programs</u></p> <p>Records generated as part of management improvement programs. The focus is on streamlining operations, providing cost effectiveness, improving customer satisfaction, and continuing improvement of work processes or products. Included are proactive preventive program records that may provide internal information, advice or recommendations, and corrective action plans in response to management improvement recommendations.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Cut off at end of calendar year. Destroy/delete 5 years after cutoff.</p>	NC1-354-79-1 Item 5	

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5.	<p><u>Management Controls</u></p> <p>Management controls include records such as: external investigations, audits, and surveys of ERS operations; and internal and/or limited audits, inspections, or reviews of agency operations.</p> <p>a. Records of comprehensive externally performed investigations, audits, comprehensive inspections, and surveys.</p> <p>Records documenting externally performed investigations, audits, inspections, and surveys of ERS operations by the General Accountability Office (GAO), Office of Inspector General (OIG), or other Federal agencies. Includes initial reports, agency final reports of corrective actions taken and related pertinent non-routine correspondence and supporting papers.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Cut off at end of calendar year in which final necessary action is completed. Destroy/delete 10 years after cutoff, or when no longer needed for reference, whichever is later.</p> <p>b. Records of internal and/or limited audits, inspections, surveys, studies and special reviews.</p> <p>Records that document internal and/or limited audits, inspections, surveys, studies and special reviews of agency operations by ERS or other USDA agencies. Includes initial report, final report of corrective action taken, and related pertinent non-routine correspondence.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Cut off at end of calendar year in which final corrective action is taken. Destroy/delete 5 years after cutoff, or when no longer needed for reference, whichever is later.</p> <p>c. Routine correspondence.</p> <p>Internal feeder reports and interim action reports relating to</p>		



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6.	<p>external and internal audits, inspections, surveys, or special reviews of ERS. Also, other materials of a related but routine nature such as background and/or working papers.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Cut off at end of calendar year. Destroy/delete 2 years after cutoff.</p> <p><u>Agreements</u></p> <p>Includes record copies of ERS interagency agreements; extramural agreements; research agreements; Memoranda of Understanding with local, State, and foreign governments, other Federal agencies, educational institutions, professional organizations, private business organizations, and individuals; contracts; and reimbursement - funds agreements, and formal approval of extensions/amendments that affect the agency program functions.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Cut off at end of year in which agreement or understanding is superseded or becomes obsolete. Destroy/delete 7 years after cutoff.</p>		
7.	<p><u>Responses to Congress and Executive Office of the President Concerns</u></p> <p>Records of agency response to Congress and Executive Office of the President concerning legislation, programs, policies, and requests for information. Records of routine interaction and cooperation with other Federal, State, and local government agencies; educational institutions; and private organizations. Also includes agency requests for Federal Register publication of regulatory, functional, or policy information. Includes correspondence and reports.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>PERMANENT</b>. Cut off at end of calendar year.</p>		

8	<p>Transfer to the National Archives 5 years after cutoff, or when no longer needed for reference, whichever is later</p> <p><u>Legal Decisions and Opinions</u></p> <p>USDA Office of the General Counsel (OGC) opinions and comments of General Accounting Office (GAO) and Comptroller General decisions or instructions, legislation, and court decisions affecting ERS</p> <p>Disposition <b>PERMANENT</b>. Cut off at the end of the calendar year Transfer to the National Archives 5 years after cutoff, or when no longer needed for reference, whichever is later</p>		
9	<p><u>Emergency Preparedness</u></p> <p>Documents ERS's participation in the Departmental program Includes Departmental instructions, correspondence, and reports involving compliance and related actions</p> <p>Disposition <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Cut off at the end of the calendar year Destroy/delete 3 years after cutoff or when no longer needed for reference, whichever is later</p>		
10	<p><u>Associations, Boards, Committees, Councils, and Conferences</u></p> <p>a Intra-agency boards, committees, councils, and conference records received, processed, and created by intra-agency activities and maintained by the sponsors or Secretariat Records may include but are not limited to Committee establishment, organization policy, membership and sponsorship of International, National and regional organizations, agendas, minutes, research project/activity proposals, progress, interim and final project reports, committee decisions and related records documenting accomplishments</p>	NC1-354-79-1/1	

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	<p>Disposition: <b>PERMANENT</b>. Cut off at end of calendar year. Transfer to inactive storage 5 years after sponsorship is transferred or discontinued, or 5 years after final action or decision is completed. Transfer to NARA 10 years after cutoff in accordance with NARA <del>DF</del> transfer instructions, or other applicable transfer instructions in place at the time of transfer.</p> <p>b. Records of official conferences</p> <p>Conferences sponsored by ERS. Includes agendas, minutes, final reports, and related records documenting accomplishments.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>PERMANENT</b>. Cut off at end of calendar year. Transfer to inactive storage 5 years after sponsorship is transferred or discontinued, or 5 years after final action or decision is completed. Transfer to NARA 10 years after cutoff, in accordance with NARA <del>DF</del> transfer instructions, or other applicable transfer instructions in place at the time of transfer.</p> <p>c. Records of internal committees or councils. Includes documentation relating to establishment, organization, membership, and charge for the committees or councils, as well as agenda, minutes, final reports, and related records documenting the accomplishments of the internal committees or councils.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Destroy/delete when 5 years old or when no longer needed for reference, whichever is later.</p> <p>d. ERS Staff Meetings</p> <p>(1) Agenda, minutes, and supporting papers of meetings held at the Administrator level relating to ERS policy, procedure, significant or substantive program operations, organization structure, overall performance, and similar internal operating matters. Also, includes significant briefings presented to high echelon officials of the agency,</p>		

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11.	<p>USDA, and other federal government officials.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>PERMANENT</b>. Break files annually. Transfer to FRC 5 years after file break. Offer to the National Archives in 10-year blocks when the most recent records are 15 years old (e.g., offer 1980-1990 block in 2005).</p> <p>(2) All records of staff meetings held below the Administrator level, or relating to routine matters of non-substantive operations held at the Administrator level. Includes agendas, minutes, supporting papers, and routine reports and other materials resulting from or contributing to such meetings, such as materials relating to continuing project work assignments.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Break files annually. <u>Destroy</u> 2 years after file break.</p> <p>(3) All other copies of records filed under either paragraph 2a or 2b above, meeting schedules, and records of informal or routine content of limited reference value not covered above.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Break files annually. <u>Destroy</u> 1 year after file break, or when no longer needed for reference, whichever is sooner.</p> <p><u>ERS Directives</u></p> <p>a. ERS directives are distributed to employees on the ERS Intranet (InsidERS), which can be accessed only by ERS employees. No paper copies are distributed. ERS directives include: ERS numbered policy memoranda, Administrative and Financial Services Standard Operating Procedures, and other specific agency directives. Authors provide the ERS Intranet manager with copies of directives in electronic formats.</p>	<p>NC1-354-79-1</p> <p>Item 3</p>	

	<p>(1) Input records Copies of directives used as input for posting to ERS Intranet.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Destroy after the information has been converted to an electronic medium and verified</p> <p>(2) Record copy.</p> <p>The Special Assistant, Office of the Administrator, is responsible for the record copy of each directive.</p> <p>Disposition <b>PERMANENT</b>. Cutoff at the end of each calendar year. Transfer to inactive storage 5 years after cutoff Transfer to NARA 10 years after cutoff</p> <p>b Directive records maintained on the ERS Intranet.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>PERMANENT</b>. Copy offline every 10 years and transfer to the National Archives according to the NARA transfer requirements in place at the time of transfer.</p>	GRS 20, 2a(4)	
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12.	<p>Related case files that document aspects of the document development.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Destroy/delete 1 year after directive is canceled, superseded, or becomes obsolete.</p> <p><u>IT Operations, Planning, and Development</u></p> <p>a. Records of reports and recommendations made concerning conversion from manual to automated systems and revising or expanding existing automated systems for ERS. Includes documents on system scopes, projected costs, equipment needs and recommendations, and methods of collecting, processing, issuing, storing, and retrieving data. Also includes records relating to system design, evaluation, implementation, and agency approval of new or revised systems.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Cut off at end of calendar year in which system is replaced or discontinued. Destroy/delete 3 years after cutoff.</p> <p>b. Routine reports, correspondence, background material, and miscellaneous documents relating to recommendations on new or revised automated systems. Includes routine record materials relating to implementation and day-to-day system operations.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Cut off at end of calendar year. Destroy/delete 3 years after cutoff.</p>		
13.	<p><u>Publications and Periodical Releases</u></p> <p>ERS-prepared, released, and issued periodicals (magazines, newsletters, reports, etc.); published socioeconomic research, study/survey reports; brochures, circulars, announcements, bulletins, booklets, and handbooks. Excludes: Departmental publications and</p>		

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14.	<p>issuances printed by GPO.</p> <p>a. Single Record copies of ERS issued prepared and issued of original publications, periodicals, published research studies surveys and other documents.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>PERMANENT</b>. Cut off at end of calendar year of issue. Transfer to inactive storage 5 years after cutoff. Transfer to NARA 10 years after cutoff, in accordance with NARA <del>POF</del> transfer instructions, or other applicable transfer instructions in place at the time of transfer.</p> <p>b. Camera, scanned or final draft copies of articles, reports, and other manuscript documents written by ERS officials and officially approved for publication.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Cut off at end of calendar year in which publication containing the document is issued. Destroy/delete when published text is verified, when no longer needed for reference, or when 3 years old, whichever is sooner.</p> <p><u>Historical Collections</u></p> <p>a. Single copies of narrative historical accounts describing the ERS organization, its structure, policies and/or programs, its purpose, accomplishments or other aspects such as services provided to the public. May describe the effect of certain historical events on the agricultural economy or certain agricultural historical events on the national economy.</p> <p>Uniquely correlated case file collections of non-record copies of materials given record Status because material documents the history of a subject from beginning to end. Case file subjects may include the ERS organization or a specific functional assignment, program, or project. Files may include correspondence, reports, publications, published articles, charts, maps, photos, etc.</p>		

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14.	<p>Disposition: <b>PERMANENT</b>. Terminate or close case files when material documenting the final decision, action, or event is filed. For example, the ERS organization ceases to exist in any form; the program or project is not only completed or discontinued but has no further significance. Offer closed case files to NARA when material has no further reference value to ERS, in accordance with NARA <del>PAF</del> transfer instructions, or other applicable transfer instructions in place at the time of transfer.</p> <p>All other copies.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Destroy when no longer needed for reference.</p>		
15.	<p><u>Program Operations and Information</u></p> <p>ERS program operations are designed to perform the following assigned functions:</p> <p>Identify measure and explain inter-relationships among economic forces, institutions, and alternative sources of agricultural products necessary to the United States. Includes food and fiber production and consumption, marketing and trade, availability and use of natural resources, welfare of rural people and communities, and similar matters.</p> <p>Conduct research related to production, marketing, distribution, consumption, costs, income, and foreign trade of food and fiber products.</p> <p>Evaluate the use, conservation, development, and control of water, land, and other natural resources as they affect economic growth, income, distribution, and environmental quality.</p> <p>Conduct research related to rural people and communities, and their present and prospective economic adjustment problems.</p> <p>Make research and analytical findings available on a timely basis for</p>		



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	<p>use by public and private decision-makers, including consumers and others concerned with nutrition, food, agriculture, natural resources, and rural people and communities.</p> <p>a RESEARCH AND DATA</p> <p>Program Information Management System (PIMS)</p> <p>PIMS provides managers and researchers access to the information they need to effectively plan programs and portfolios of products and services, convey these products and services to key customers, and systematically evaluate and track output by agency, topic, division, branch, and individual. Numerous outputs are tracked and maintained by PIMS although our research projects are of key interest.</p> <p>PIMS forwards copies of input on ERS research projects to the Cooperative State Research Service (CSRS), for inclusion in the USDA Current Research Information System (CRIS). The CRIS maintained by CSRS is a computer-based documentation and reporting system for agricultural and forestry research. CRIS includes resumes for projects conducted by USDA research agencies, including State Agricultural Experiment Stations, Forestry Schools, and other cooperating institutions. ERS CRIS files reflect research projects currently in progress, or completed within the current calendar year. These files include copies of project resumes, classification of research, staff and fund estimates, and annual progress reports. Most projects are planned for completion within 5 years of initiation.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Cut off at end of calendar year in which project is completed or discontinued. Destroy/delete 10 years after cutoff.</p> <p>b. Correspondence</p> <p>Memoranda and reports relating to a specific project proposed, in progress, or recently completed. Includes copies of requests for OMB clearance, peer review of research reports, correlation or coordination of research being conducted elsewhere, and similar</p>		

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	<p>matters. Also includes requests for information relative to the project and source data accumulations, tabulations, analyses, and similar materials of no further retrieval value when the project is satisfactorily complete.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Cut off annually or at end of calendar year in which project is satisfactorily completed, cancelled, or discontinued. Destroy/delete 5 years after cutoff.</p> <p>c. Studies/Surveys</p> <p>Correspondence, memoranda, and reports relating to a specific study or survey proposed, in progress, or recently completed that were not reported in PIMS. Includes copies of requests for OMB clearance, peer review of research reports, correlation or coordination of similar research being conducted elsewhere, and similar matters. Also includes requests for information relative to the study or survey and source data accumulations, tabulations, analyses, and similar materials of no further retrieval value when the study or survey is satisfactorily complete.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Cut off annually or at end of calendar year in which study/survey is satisfactorily completed, is cancelled or otherwise discontinued. Destroy/delete 5 years after cutoff.</p> <p>d. PIMS Entry for Aborted Projects</p> <p>Project, study, and survey case files and reports disapproved due to lack of: appropriate focus; erroneous analysis or evaluation of data; too narrow, ineffective, or unrealistic and misleading results or findings. EXCLUDES: case files and reports which become the basis for, or part of, subsequent research for which the final report is approved and issued.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Cut off at end of calendar year in which report is finally disapproved or other final action is taken. Destroy/delete 5 years after cutoff or when no longer needed for reference, whichever is sooner.</p> <p>e. <del>Economic Research Service Data Files</del></p>	<p>Withdrawn</p>	

No.	Description of items and Proposed Disposition	GRS or Superseded Job Citation	Action Taken NARA Use (Only)
	<p>Paper or electronic collections of statistics, economic data, and socioeconomic data. These data are obtained for or by ERS, are compiled from aggregates of one or more ERS data files, or are compiled from outside sources for regular use by ERS in the course of performing research and analysis and preparing periodic and one-time reports.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Cut off annually. Destroy 5 years after cutoff.</p> <p>f. Final Data Summaries</p> <p>Paper or electronic summary files of data of extensive retrieval value for recurring program or research operations including statistical or other analyses, ERS databases, and which are not covered elsewhere in this schedule.</p> <p>Disposition: <b>TEMPORARY</b>. Retain indefinitely for day-to-day use. Review on an annual basis; delete outdated data as appropriate. Destroy/delete 5 years after cutoff or when no longer needed, whichever is sooner.</p>		