

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Office of the Secretary  
Washington, D.C. 20250

July 29, 2004

SECRETARY'S MEMORANDUM 5600-001

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM POLICY

**1 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this memorandum is to affirm the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) support for environmental stewardship and to establish a USDA environmental management system policy.

**2 BACKGROUND**

USDA takes pride in its environmental stewardship and is committed to providing leadership in addressing environmental aspects of food, agriculture, natural resources, and related issues based on sound public policy, the best available scientific research, and principles of efficient management.

By adopting an environmental management system, an organization provides for an ongoing cycle of planning, implementing, evaluating, and improving its efforts to identify and reduce environmental risks. Such an approach will provide USDA with a systematic framework for use in identifying the environmental impacts of its work and in incorporating environmental responsiveness and resource conservation into its missions, activities, and functions as an integral part of business management.

Adoption of a USDA environmental management system will be helpful in reducing hazardous waste, ensuring compliance with all environmental laws, and improving pollution prevention activities. It also will support USDA's program effectiveness in establishing and meeting environmental goals, objectives and targets through a continuous management improvement process.

**3 EFFECTIVE DATE**

The provisions of this Memorandum are effective immediately.

**4 POLICY**

As part of USDA's environmental leadership and to meet the requirements of Executive Order 13148, "Greening the Government Through Leadership in Environmental Management," USDA will implement, document, and maintains environmental management systems at all appropriate facilities. Environmental management will be an integral part of day-to-day decision-making and long-term planning across all USDA mission areas and in all USDA missions, activities, and functions.

**5 ACTIONS ORDERED**

USDA is committed to providing national leadership in its environmental activities through adoption of an environmental management system policy. Agency heads with jurisdiction, custody or control over facilities determined to be appropriate based on facility size, complexity, and environmental aspects of facility operations shall implement an environmental management system at such facilities and shall communicate this policy to all USDA employees and the public.

**6 TERMINATION**

This memorandum shall remain in effect for one year.

/s/

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Ann M. Veneman  
Secretary