

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250**

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| <b>DEPARTMENTAL REGULATION</b>                          |  | Number: 1410-001 |
| <b>SUBJECT:</b><br>Publications Review/Clearance Policy | Date: February 7, 2003                                       |                  |
|   | OPI:<br>Office of Communications, Information<br>Review Team |                  |

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**1 PURPOSE**

This regulation establishes the policies, procedures, and standards related to the planning, preparation, coordination, clearance, and control of nonadministrative documents that are developed and published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture--either as hard copy or electronically--for use by the Department's external audiences.

**2 SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS/CANCELLATIONS**

This regulation supersedes DR 1410-1, "Publishing Policies."

**3 ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS**

- CCRC - Communications Coordination and Review Center
- DR - Departmental Regulations
- GPO - Government Printing Office
- IRT - OC's Information Review Team
- JCP - Congressional Joint Committee on Printing

- OC - USDA's Office of Communications
- OMB - Office of Management and Budget
- USDA - U.S. Department of Agriculture

- a Publication. An external document or manuscript prepared in finished form and reproduced in multiple copies, including materials disseminated or made available electronically.
- b Periodical. Publications, including annual reports and newsletters, issued annually or more often and with a consistent format, content, and purpose.
- c Final Manuscript. An author's final, fully edited, thoroughly cleared, double-spaced copy that is provided to OC for final departmental review and clearance to publish.
- d Camera Copy. All materials, including disks, that are suitably prepared for photographic reproduction, including illustrations (line or half-tone), type matter, charts, graphs, and other materials prepared for printing. Also includes final information ready for dissemination/distribution electronically.
- e Administrative Document. A document for internal use only and not intended for the general public. Audience is limited to USDA personnel and official cooperators who need the information to carry out the agency's program responsibilities. These documents do not require OC review.
- f Public Distribution. Dissemination to any persons or groups specified in section 6, to the undefined citizens of the United States in general, or to any individuals who are not employees or official cooperators of the Federal Government.
- g Printing. All systems, processes, and equipment used to create an original reproducible image when they are capable of reproducing multiple copies of that image. This term includes all processes and equipment related to composition, platemaking, presswork, and binding as well as to automated distribution.

#### 4 FORMS

The following forms are used to assist in controlling and clearing written information that USDA's agencies intend to publish:

- a AD-159 Manuscript Clearance -- transmits draft manuscripts among USDA program agencies or Federal Departments for review/comment. AD-159 is used when an agency proposes to publish information that discusses the programs or policies of another agency or Department, or that could have an effect on another agency or Department.
- b AD-59 Request for Manuscript Review -- transmits final, fully edited,

thoroughly cleared, double-spaced publication manuscripts to the OC/CCRC/Information Review Team (IRT) for review/clearance. The AD-59 explains the need for a publication, the target audience, quantity desired, any special printing treatments planned (including justification for multicolor printing or special paper stock), etc., and is signed by the requesting agency's administrator and publications control officer.

- c AD-78 Request for Printing and Binding -- transmits publications camera copy and related print-ready materials through OC's Information Review Team (IRT) for clearance to print. See USDA Printing Center regulations or consult with the OC Printing Center.

## 5 RESPONSIBILITIES

- a In the execution of its publications program, OC has the following responsibilities:
  - (1) To administer statutes, policies, and regulations governing publishing activities within USDA.
  - (2) To review and consider for approval to publish those information materials and manuscripts prepared by USDA agencies.
  - (3) To advise agency information personnel on procedures for securing clearances; publications control; and efficient coordination of editorial, graphics, photography, and printing functions.
  - (4) To establish policies and procedures that enable agencies to publish quality information quickly and economically.
  - (5) To prepare essential publications on agricultural subjects when the agencies are unable to do so.
  - (6) When requested by the agencies, to suggest sources of training in editing and writing for USDA employees who produce material for publication by USDA.
  - (7) To plan and administer tests on the need for and effectiveness of USDA publications and to conduct surveys of the attitudes and opinions of the audiences to which they are directed.
- b In the scope of their publishing programs, USDA agencies are responsible for:
  - (1) Ascertaining supply and demand for new, revised, and existing information products.
  - (2) Fully clearing and ensuring quality editing of all information products

before submitting them to OC to obtain departmental review/clearance to publish.

- (3) Cooperating with OC and other USDA agencies to ensure an effective, efficient, and coordinated departmental publishing program.

## 6 SCOPE OF USDA PUBLISHING

In accordance with public laws, executive orders, policies, and congressional directives authorizing USDA to publish information on agriculture and related subjects, USDA publications span a broad range of topics. For example, they report on research, statistics and economics, consumer information, food and nutrition, improved farming practices, natural resources management, agricultural marketing, conservation and environmental protection, homeland security, regulatory activities, and credit and rural development programs.

USDA publications are issued:

- a To aid the application of technical information resulting from research in agriculture and related areas.
- b To inform the public of national and regional issues concerning agriculture and the use of the Nation's natural resources.
- c To inform the public of USDA programs to improve agricultural production; food processing and marketing; the quality of rural life; the environment; homeland security; and the nutrition, health, and welfare of the general public.
- d To secure compliance with regulatory programs provided by legislation for the national interest.
- e To provide economic and statistical data and information for use in public decisionmaking concerning agriculture and the use of natural resources.
- f To encourage cooperation in regional, national, and international programs related to agriculture.
- g To advance scientific research in agriculture through communication with the scientific community, both nationally and internationally.

In addition to the general public, audiences to which information is addressed include farmers, ranchers, and other land managers; educators and students; scientists; individuals in industries related to agriculture and rural development; and persons, organizations, and firms eligible to participate in USDA programs or subject to USDA-administered laws and regulations. Other important audiences include the Congress; other Federal agencies and cooperators, e.g., associations, community groups, and organizations; State, county, and municipal government units; foreign embassies and consulate offices in the United States; concerned public interest organizations; and the

mass media.

## 7 TYPES OF PUBLICATIONS ISSUED BY USDA

- a Department Series Publications. Many publications--ranging from popular to technical--are placed in a USDA series to ensure better recognition and to facilitate a more orderly distribution and storage. Agency information personnel may contact OC's Information Review Team to ascertain if a proposed publication is appropriate to be included in a departmental publication series.
- b Agency Series Publications. Many agencies of the USDA often need special publications of limited, short-term use which do not fully meet the criteria for inclusion in any USDA series. With the approval of the Leader, OC Information Review Team, an agency may establish its own series for such publications.
- c Periodicals. Periodicals may be established after justifying the need to do so and obtaining OC approval. Agencies should contact OC to discuss the criteria that they need to formally address in proposing to establish a new periodical.

Periodicals exclude information materials published as administrative letters, circular letters, memorandums, press and radio releases, intermittent notices, regulations, opinions, decisions, and various management bulletins on safety, incentive awards, and similar subjects.

- d Annual Reports. Annual reports generally are prepared each year, although the time period covered may sometimes reflect more or less than 12 months. There are two types of annual report: (1) those required by law and (2) those not required by law but that an agency or Under/Assistant Secretary has determined to be necessary primarily for internal use or for reporting the results of an agency activity that may be in the public interest.

Before submitting a final annual report manuscript to OC for departmental review/clearance, agencies must first have their Under/Assistant Secretary review and clear the report for publication.

- (1) Annual Reports Required by Law. The purpose of legally required annual reports varies widely. Several are necessary for compliance by specific agencies; several are required by specific programs about which the Secretary of Agriculture or the USDA as a whole must report. Also, the Secretary of Agriculture must make an annual written report to the President that contains purely business and executive matter necessary for the Secretary to submit to the President and Congress.

Up to 5,000 copies of the Secretary's Annual Report may be printed. Only 2,500 copies of agencies' annual reports may be printed.

- (2) Annual Reports Not Required by Law

- (a) Internal Reports. An annual report of an agency, an Under or Assistant Secretary, or a group director that is intended primarily for internal use may not be reproduced in excess of 2,500 copies.
  - (b) Reports to the Public. These reports are considered reports of research progress or of special program results that are in the public interest, rather than of an agency's complete activities throughout a given year. 2,500 copies maximum.
  
- e Directories. A USDA agency may publish and issue a directory of its personnel for administrative purposes. Agencies must avoid including information of a personal nature about employees or their families in such documents. They must also avoid the appearance of self-aggrandizement in such directories, as in all USDA publications.
  
- f Administrative Documents. In addition to miscellaneous periodicals and directories, agencies may publish documents that are administrative if:
  - (1) The audience is limited to USDA personnel and official cooperators who need the information to carry out their program responsibilities, and there is no planned distribution to an outside group.
  - (2) The document falls into the category of one of the following: Instruction manuals, directories, regulations or directives governing USDA employees, preliminary reports and drafts distributed for internal review purposes.

The number of copies is normally low, generally under 1,000. Justification will be required for additional copies.
  
- g Other Information Materials. USDA also issues information materials not considered publications. These include materials intended exclusively as (1) press, radio, photographic, and television releases when reproduced in finished form; (2) background statements for use by the media; (3) speeches and proclamations that receive limited distribution at time of presentation; (4) forms; (5) individual letters and memorandums used as correspondence; (6) administrative letters, circulars, records, and memorandums intended solely for internal use; (7) Department directives; (8) maps, posters, and charts without accompanying text matter; (9) visual instructions and lecture notes for filmstrips and slides; (10) letterheads; and (11) signs, symbols, tags, blotters, and similar items.

## 8 PUBLICATIONS PLANNING AND COORDINATION

To ensure efficiency, effectiveness, and thrift in USDA's publishing endeavors, USDA agencies and OC shall cooperate in planning and coordinating the development of all information materials.

- a Agency Publications Planning. OC recommends that each USDA agency and field information unit establish and maintain a publications committee to plan and review its proposals for publications and its publications program. Members of each agency's publications committee should be appointed by the agency head. The committee should consider the need for new and existing publications, the need for interagency review/coordination, the existence of other information materials that could eliminate the need for USDA to develop a publication, and other factors related to the decision to proceed with publishing.
- b Publications Coordination
  - (1) Organization of Publications Offices. Agency information divisions shall maintain responsibility for and authority within their agencies over all publishing functions--including planning, writing, editing, reviewing, preliminary designing, and preliminary decisions on printing and distribution or electronic dissemination.
  - (2) Consultation. Agency information specialists should plan together, and with counterparts in OC, the various aspects of publications projects--goals, audience, budget, sequence, deadlines, liaison, production, and printing (or electronic distribution)--so that each individual will understand the responsibilities of others involved.
  - (3) Cooperative Projects and Contracts Cooperative agreements and contracts that will result in the development of a publication manuscript must allocate responsibilities in conformance to USDA publishing policies and regulations, and to laws applicable to Federal publishing and printing. Agencies shall submit to OC's Information Review Team for review/clearance final manuscripts for publication that result from such projects.
  - (4) Planning in Field Offices. All final manuscripts prepared in field offices but intended for national issuance must be cleared through OC, as if they were developed in an agency's Washington Office. In such cases, agency information heads shall provide OC with final, fully edited, thoroughly cleared, doubled-spaced manuscripts conforming to USDA policies and request final review/clearance to publish.

## 9 PUBLICATIONS CONTROL AND CLEARANCE

The publications control and clearance function supports three goals: (1) To ensure that USDA's publishing endeavors result from a coordinated team approach; (2) to ensure that USDA publications are necessary, clear and readable, of appropriate quality, and cost-effective; and (3) to support the unique communications objectives of USDA's agencies as well as the needs of their diverse audiences.

- a Procedures of USDA Agencies

- (1) Designation of a Publications Control Officer. Each agency and staff office shall designate its information director or the equivalent as the publications control officer for its Washington Office, as well as a publications control officer for each field office that develops publications for regional distribution.

Publications control officers shall screen all final manuscripts to ensure that they are necessary and not a duplicate of existing materials, that they have been thoroughly edited, and that they have been thoroughly cleared, including applicable interagency reviews, **before** submitting them to the CCRC Information Review Team for departmental review and clearance to proceed with design/formatting. Publications control officers shall ensure that:

- (a) Only those publications filling a definite need and necessary to the official business of the agency and the USDA are prepared and issued.
- (b) Unnecessary duplication and repetition among USDA publications are avoided.
- (c) Information presented is consistent with USDA policy, and that each publication has been prepared to meet exacting standards of economy and effectiveness. Only those publications filling a definite need and necessary to the official business of the agency and the USDA are prepared and issued.
- (d) Work on publications, except of the most preliminary nature, does not begin until approved by an agency's publications committee and/or the appropriate Under or Assistant Secretary or his or her designee.

- (2) Interagency Clearance. Each USDA agency is responsible for proactively cooperating with other USDA agencies to ensure that the Department speaks coherently, as a Team. Responsibility for obtaining review and clearance of publication manuscripts rests with the originating agency. Interagency reviews of publication manuscripts are especially important for sensitive information that presents a danger of misunderstanding and for information that is related closely to the work, programs, or policies of another agency.

Review comments/criticisms by other agencies should relate primarily to policy or subject matter rather than to editorial treatment. All differences shall be resolved between agencies **before** a final manuscript is submitted to OC for final review. Along with final manuscripts for review/clearance, agencies shall provide OC with all documentation evidencing interagency reviews obtained.

- (a) Clearance Officers. Each agency head or staff office director shall designate a publications clearance officer to review/clear manuscripts sent from other agencies. Information directors often serve in this role.
- (b) Procedure. Form AD-159, "Manuscript Clearance," may be used for obtaining interagency clearances. Interagency clearance documentation shall accompany final, fully edited manuscripts submitted to OC/CCRC/IRT for departmental review/clearance.

(3) Clearing Publications Materials Through USDA-OC

- (a) Final Manuscripts. Agencies shall submit only final, fully edited and cleared double-spaced nonadministrative manuscripts for review and clearance by OC. Each manuscript shall be accompanied by Form AD-59, "Request for Manuscript Review," which shall include the signature of the submitting agency's publications control officer and Administrator; these signatures certify that the information presented is accurate and consistent with USDA policy and that the publication is necessary. (AD-59 signing authority for manuscripts other than annual reports may be delegated by the agency head.)

Final manuscript copy shall have been thoroughly edited in a consistent editorial style and shall conform to USDA standards and publishing practices. Further, submitting agencies shall have obtained all appropriate interagency clearances before providing final manuscripts to IRT for review/clearance to publish, and they shall attach documentation of those clearances to the AD-59 that they submit to CCRC's Information Review Team for review/clearance.

As applicable, agencies shall include on the AD-59 a justification for the need to use two or more colors in a printed publication, use a separate cover on a publication of 32 or fewer pages, use a hard cover or coated stock, etc. Because of the extra cost involved, in no cases should an agency obligate funds for designing or printing in multicolor until CCRC's Information Review Team has approved the request to do so. (Agencies should consult the Congressional Joint Committee on Printing's regulations to determine if there is truly a need for multicolor printing.) In addition, agencies shall attach to the AD-59 a memo of clearance from the OC Photography Center, signifying acceptability of all photography that is to be included.

- (b) Print-Ready Material(s). For all publications (nonadministrative),

agencies shall submit camera copy and related print-ready materials for printing through OC. These submissions shall include IRT's earlier marked review manuscript and all clearances required as a result of that review. When an agency submits final, formatted copy on a disk, it shall attach a fully formatted dummy reflecting the actual content and layout. Agencies are responsible for proofreading all camera copy before they submit it to OC for clearance to print or post electronically. OC is not responsible for ensuring the accuracy of agencies' camera copy, but will return camera copy packages to agencies for rework whenever errors are spotted.

For a listing of printing- and distribution-related forms that agencies need to attach to camera copy packages that they submit to OC for printing, see USDA Printing Regulations, or consult with the OC Printing Center.

- (c) **Obtaining Clearances from non-USDA Federal Agencies.** For manuscripts requiring formal clearance from a non-USDA Federal agency, the originating agency shall submit a copy to the OC/CCRC Information Review Team for transmittal. USDA agencies should provide the names of cooperators or reviewing officers in the outside agency when requesting formal clearance. The IRT will prepare a memo requesting interdepartmental review, for transmittal by the OC Director or Deputy Director.
  - (d) **Clearing Material Intended for Nongovernment Publication.** Section 11 discusses procedures to be followed in clearing materials for publication by nongovernment organizations.
- (4) **Approval of Agency Field Publishing.** Each agency information head shall establish appropriate procedures and policies for the management of field publishing activities.
- (a) **Requirements of Field Offices.** USDA field offices, subject to their agency regulations, are authorized to issue publications of local or regional interest about programs and services for which they have responsibility. While such publications do not require OC approval unless they contain information on USDA policy or of national interest, the Under or Assistant Secretary or designee must approve the development and issuance of all such publications. Publications intended for regional distribution must receive approval in advance from the agency's headquarters information office in Washington for the following: multicolor printing; printing/reprinting exceeding 500,000 sheets (see USDA Printing Regulations for specifics); separate covers on publications of 32 or fewer pages; coated paper; or special binding/hard covers.

(b) Review for Field Publishing. Determining what should be published nationally or regionally is a matter of judgment. Agency information heads should coordinate periodically with counterparts in their regional offices to ascertain the appropriate level of review and clearance for agency publications.

(5) Designation of Administrative Documents Control Officer. Each agency or staff office shall designate its information director or administrative equivalent as administrative documents control officer. This officer will be responsible for assuring OC of the accurate designation of "administrative" on such materials when they are submitted for printing, since administrative documents do not undergo OC's review/clearance process. For criteria to use in determining what constitutes an administrative document, see sections 3 and 7f.

b Procedures of the USDA Office of Communications

(1) Review and Clearance of Publication Manuscripts and Related Information Materials To Be Issued by USDA. The OC/CCRC Information Review Team reviews all final publication manuscripts (nonadministrative) prepared by USDA's agencies, as well as requests for multicolor printing, special binding, and other special treatments. It determines if the information has been prepared in conformance with applicable editorial, design, photography, and printing policies, and with input from all interested USDA offices. If OC does not consider a manuscript's editorial quality or clearance to be thorough, it may return a manuscript to the originating agency, uncleared, for further work, or it may forward the manuscript to another non-USDA Federal agency for review and clearance. OC final-manuscript reviews normally occur within 10 workdays. This review will also ensure that the Press Secretary and the Director of Communications will have the opportunity to review information of a critical nature prior to design and production.

(2) Review of Materials Submitted for Printing or Electronic Posting. OC shall review nonadministrative publications-related camera copy for acceptability to print or disseminate electronically. It will forward to OC's Printing Center those packages that it finds acceptable for printing. When an agency submits printer-ready copy on disk instead of camera copy boards, it shall attach for review by the OC/CCRC Information Review Team a "dummy" reflecting the actual final content and layout of the item. OC normally reviews and clears camera copy within 1 workday.

## 10 STANDARD PUBLISHING PRACTICES

USDA has established certain standard practices to expedite handling of publications material, as well as to identify the organization and acknowledge deserving units or individuals in publications. Contact the OC/CCRC Information Review Team regarding treatment of issue dates, assignment of USDA series and series numbers, disclaimer

statements, nondiscrimination statements, credits and acknowledgments, etc., to be used in USDA publications. Specific treatments sometimes differ from one publication type to the next: (1) original issue, (2) superseder, (3) major revision, (4) slight revision, (5) reprint, or (6) periodical.

The following statements apply to all materials to be published by USDA agencies:

- a Diversity in Text and Graphics. USDA publications, both formal and administrative, shall be inclusive and mirror America's diverse society. All information specialists shall be mindful of the need to detect and eliminate intentional and unintentional bias in their products, both text and graphics.
- b Nondiscrimination Statement. All USDA publications shall include a current nondiscrimination statement. Agencies shall include the statement as it appears in DR 4300-3, "USDA Equal Opportunity Public Notification Policy," or in updates to that document. In addition to explaining USDA's policy regarding nondiscrimination, the statement explains how persons with disabilities may request the published information in alternative formats.
- c Foreign Language Publications and Alternative-Format Documents. As necessary to fulfill agency objectives, USDA agencies will prepare publications in languages other than English to meet the needs of segments of the population eligible to be served who have limited English proficiency. Publications will also be prepared in braille, large print, audio/video, etc., to meet the needs of persons with disabilities, when requested to do so under terms of the Americans With Disabilities Act. Agencies shall cooperate with USDA's Target Center in developing these alternative-format documents.
- d Distribution Plan for the General Public. For each publication, agencies will prepare and comply with a distribution plan that describes the manner in which that publication will be disseminated to the general public, which will also include minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and low-income populations.
- e Age of Data in Research Reports With Statistical Information. Research reports with statistical information shall be published within 3 years of the date or period the information was gathered. Justify on the AD-59 the need to issue data gathered more than 3 years earlier, explaining the reasons for the delay and current need for the information.
- f Statements To Influence Legislation or Campaigns. No USDA publication with an intended audience outside the Federal Government shall contain any article or editorial which can be construed as advocating the audience to lobby Congress concerning increased appropriations or specific legislation or to influence any political campaign.
- g Credit Statements
  - (1) Publication Bylines. The printing of Government employees' bylines in

Government publications shall be confined to authors and to photographers. These bylines shall be carried with the text or pictures.

- (2) **Publication Mastheads.** The mastheads of Government publications shall include the name of the publishing department or agency and its issuing bureau, branch, or office, together with the names of the department or agency head and the head of the issuing bureau, branch, or office. Additional names shall include only the names of the executive or managing editor, sports editor, feature editor, photo editor, and art editor, or their editorial equivalent officers by whatever title they are identified.
- (3) **Acknowledgments.** Acknowledgments may be given to persons who have made a substantial contribution in the preparation of a publication. Such acknowledgments for design, outstanding editing, or compiling data may be mentioned in an acknowledgment section. It is preferable to mention the specific work performed that merits acknowledgment rather than to use such titles as compiler, coordinator, chair, etc., since titles are not always descriptive of the contribution. Determination of who receives acknowledgment shall be the responsibility of the originating agency, although the form of acknowledgment must be approved by OC.
- (4) **Courtesy Credits and Copyright Notices.** Courtesy lines are permitted for uncopyrighted material contributed or loaned from private sources for use in USDA publications. Courtesy lines and copyright notices are required for contributed or loaned materials that are copyrighted so that the public will not be misled. Courtesy and copyright lines shall be in type smaller than that used for text. If several items have come from the same private source, appropriate credit shall be given in a preliminary paragraph rather than repeated wherever the items appear. Similarly, if the items have come from several sources, the courtesy lines may be grouped in a preliminary paragraph rather than displayed with each item.
- (5) **Credit Restrictions**
  - (1) **Illustrations.** Signatures are not permitted on freehand art or illustrations. To recognize unusual excellence, credit lines may be given in an acknowledgments section or in a paragraph in type smaller than the type used otherwise throughout the publication.
  - (2) **Design and Typography.** Acknowledgment may be given for outstanding photographic, design, typographic, or layout work in an acknowledgments section in a reduced or subordinate size of type to that of both text and legends.
  - (3) **Photographs.** For every photograph reproduced in any USDA publication for national distribution, a negative or reproducible positive must be placed on file in the OC Photography Center, with the publication in which the photograph appears. If photographs

are to be secured from sources outside USDA, agencies shall make these arrangements for their procurement prior to publishing so that the requests may be handled promptly.

## 11 ARTICLES, BOOKS, AND OTHER MATERIALS PUBLISHED OUTSIDE THE GOVERNMENT

- a Standards. USDA employees may, during duty hours, prepare books, articles, and other materials for publication by nongovernmental organizations if such preparation is within the scope of their official duties and in accordance with applicable statutes and regulations. If the material treats a subject that interprets the policies of the USDA or deals with sensitive areas of any USDA program, the originating agency's information head must first submit the material to OC for review and clearance. Such materials should be submitted to OC at least 10 working days before they are offered to nongovernmental organizations for publication.

Articles prepared as part of an employee's official duties or while on Government time are the property of the Government. Authors must not accept payment for official articles published in nongovernmental journals, magazines, or newspapers.

- b Copyright Exemption for Government Material. Articles, papers, books, and other material prepared by USDA employees as part of their official duties and published in private publications are not copyrightable and may be reproduced at will. The fact that the private publication in which a USDA-produced article is to appear is itself copyrighted does not affect the non-copyrightability of a Government article. To avoid misunderstanding, agencies shall advise the private publisher of this restriction in advance.

If manuscripts developed under USDA contracts with private individuals or organizations are subject to copyright, the copyright cannot restrict USDA from full use of those materials.

- c Limitations on Cooperative Agreements To Be Called to Contractor's/Cooperator's Attention. Contracts or cooperative agreements that may result in a Government publication or administrative document, or directive, shall stipulate that the Government shall enjoy a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, the materials in performing work for Government purposes.

## 12 ENDORSEMENTS, COMMERCIAL REFERENCES, AND USE OF BRAND NAMES BY EMPLOYEES OR IN USDA INFORMATION

It is USDA's policy to avoid endorsing commercial products and services. In general, this policy prohibits reference to specific commercial enterprises or to proprietary or

brand names of commercial products in interviews and addresses, in printed or duplicated material issued by USDA or its agencies, in information to be used for publication, or in visual, audio, or other electronically disseminated materials. To carry out its broad responsibilities, USDA often works with commercial products and cooperates with commercial enterprises. At times, referring to specific commercial enterprises or commercial products by proprietary or brand names may be either impractical to avoid or in the public interest. Agencies shall flag all references to commercial enterprises or commercial products and services in final manuscripts that they provide to OC for review/clearance.

- a Employee Endorsement Prohibited. Employees shall not allow the use of their names or images as endorsers of commercial enterprises or products.
- b Commercial References in Materials for Publication. No such reference shall be made unless approved by the OC/CCRC Information Review Team as being in the public interest. When commercial references are used, agencies shall include a disclaimer statement in the publication.

-END-