



January 2013

Visual Standards Guide

This visual guide follows the delegated authority from Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack in the Federal Register, Vol. 76, No. 208, Thursday, October 27, 2011, under the authority of Title 7 of the Code of Federal Regulations; Part 2, Delegation of Authority by the Secretary of Agriculture and General Officers of the Department (April 2011). This guide also follows Departmental Regulation 1430-002, "Use of Logos/Marks at the United States Department of Agriculture," dated January 8, 2013.



When used appropriately, **the USDA symbol** will give consistent identity to the Department, increase public recognition of the value and wide range of USDA's products and services, and bring economy of scale to the production of visual information materials.

The United States Department of Agriculture's symbol was created and approved for use in 1995. It stands for all of USDA's activities in its mission areas and agencies.

The USDA symbol is the official and sole identifying mark for the Department and all agency programs. The USDA symbol is designated for display on all information products of the Department regardless of medium. Any use of the symbol for external purposes must be cleared by the Director of Brand, Events, Exhibits, and Editorial Review Division (BEEERD) within the Office of Communications.

The USDA symbol is the single, most visible asset of our organization. The simple design positions USDA as a modern organization rooted in tradition but focused on the future of agriculture. The USDA symbol is a key element of our brand identity. It immediately identifies USDA to the world, making it one of our most valuable organizational assets.

The USDA Elements

The USDA symbol is a graphic representation of the land – the foundation of all agriculture – and the Department's initials. The symbol colors – dark green and dark blue – represent the essential elements of earth, air, and water. Together, these elements comprise the symbol. The elements of the symbol are not to be broken apart and used as individual graphics.

The USDA Seal

The official seal of the United States Department of Agriculture has been relegated for use on legal materials in the Office of the Secretary, USDA agencies, and for other functions as may be determined by the Office of Communications.

Prohibited Uses of the USDA Symbol

The symbol is not to be used to constitute warranty of private-sector products, organizations, or their endeavors. It shall never be displayed or presented in a manner that suggests that the Department endorses one product or project

over another without written permission from the Office of Communications.

Guideline Changes

The direction provided in this document supersedes the guidance offered in *The USDA Symbol: Its Purpose and Use*, released in 1996. This updated guide provides more complete direction regarding the use and application of the symbol. The guide also provides detailed direction regarding USDA Signature Lockups. Agency logos are being phased out and replaced with a standardized signature model to be adopted by all USDA agencies and offices as of January 1, 2013.

Downloadable Files

A copy of this guide along with the USDA symbol and our official signatures can be downloaded from the USDA Connections Web site <https://connections.usda.gov/>. Files are provided in a variety of high- and low-resolution versions in a number of different formats (i.e., tiff, jpg, gif, eps, bmp) for personal computer and Macintosh.

USDA Symbol

Proportions



Symbol Reproduction and Distribution

The USDA symbol is to be reproduced only from art supplied by the USDA Office of Communications. Do not attempt to recreate the symbol in any manner. Do not provide copies of the symbol art to external parties without the approval of the Office of Communications.

Color

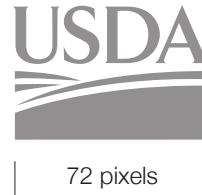
The symbol shall be reproduced in either one or two colors. The official colors for the USDA symbol are dark blue (PMS 288) and dark green (PMS 343). When reproduced in one color, the symbol shall be black or the dominant color used in the information product. When the symbol is placed on a color field, it should be reversed to white.

Minimum Size

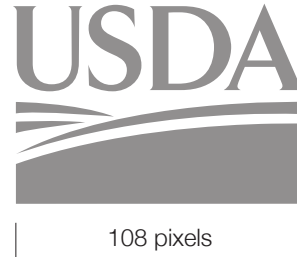
Print



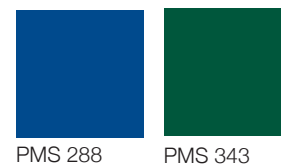
Internet



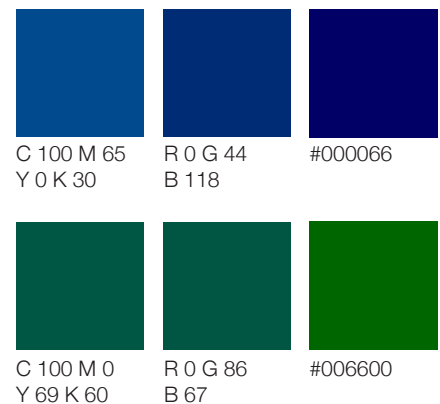
Video



Official Color



Alternate Color



Clear Space

As the primary symbol of our organization, the USDA symbol should stand out from other graphic elements. The symbol should always be surrounded with a minimum area of clear space equal to the width of the USDA's letter "A".



(Continued)

USDA Symbol

Position and Placement

The USDA symbol is designated for display on all information products of the Department. To ensure maximum visibility, the preferred position of the symbol on most information products is the top left corner.

When used in conjunction with symbols of other public and/or private-sector partners, the symbol should be given equal placement and may be displayed without the Department name. If all of the symbols represent Federal organizations, the symbols should be placed in alphabetical order. If the organizations are a mix of Federal and non-Federal, the lead Federal agency symbol should appear first with the remaining symbols ordered as dictated by the situation.

If the White House is a participating organization, the White House symbol should be given the dominant position.

Position on Information Products



Position With Other Federal Organizations (Alphabetical)



Position With Federal and Non-Federal Organizations



USDA Symbol

Incorrect Use



Do not distort, stretch, or skew the symbol.



Do not alter the colors of the symbol.



Do not apply special effects (bevel, emboss, glow, shadow, etc.).



Do not introduce text or graphics into the symbol.



Do not use any part of the symbol as a graphic element.



Do not isolate the symbol in a box frame or box shape.

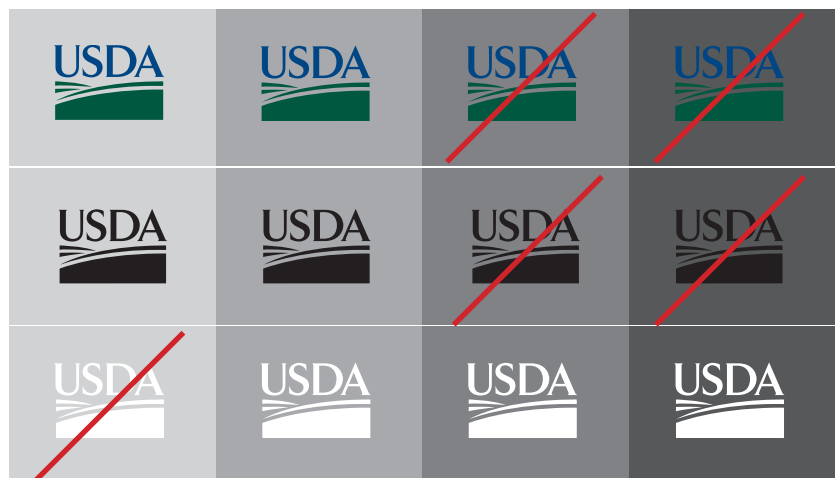


Do not distort in perspective.



Do not apply any 3-D or shadow effects.

Visibility



Do not place the symbol on low-contrast background colors. Background colors must provide enough contrast for the symbol to remain highly visible.

Signature Lockups

Official Signature



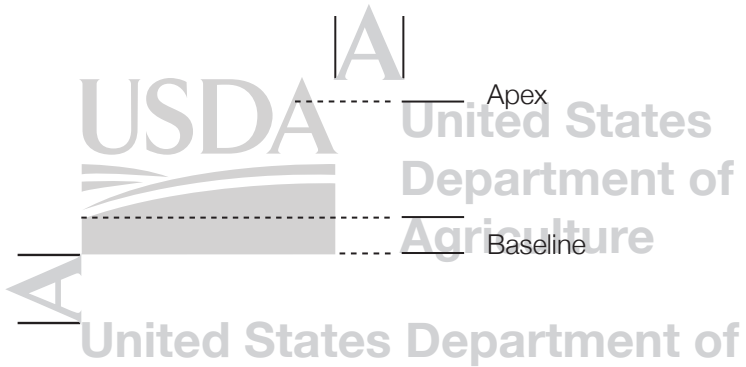
Font: Helvetica Bold for Department name; auto line-space; flush left or center depending on position of Department name.

Spacing: The distance between the symbol and Department name is equal to the width of the letter "A".

Height: The height of the stacked Department name is equal to the distance from the baseline of the symbol to the apex of the negative space inside the letter "A". The height of the Department name in a single line configuration is equal to the distance from the baseline of the symbol to the lowest point of the slope on the solid part of the land graphic.

Only use Signature Lockups supplied by USDA's Office of Communications. Any substitution of fonts on Signature Lockups is unacceptable. Do not attempt to create Signature Lockups in any manner.

Type Size and Placement



Acceptable Variations



Signature Lockups

Do not use office or staff-level names within Signature Lockups.

Unacceptable Variations



United States Department of Agriculture
Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration



United States Department of Agriculture
Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration



United States Department of Agriculture
Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

The use of agency and staff logos in Signature Lockups is being phased out and replaced with a signature model that features only the USDA symbol.

Unacceptable Variations



United States Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

Preferred Typefonts

Here is a list of preferred typefonts.

Primary

Helvetica Light
ABCDefgh1234

Helvetica Light Italic
ABCDefgh1234

Helvetica Regular
ABCDefgh1234

Helvetica Regular Italic
ABCDefgh1234

Helvetica Bold
ABCDefgh1234

Helvetica Bold Italic
ABCDefgh1234

Optional Primary

Arial Regular
ABCDefgh1234

Arial Regular Italic
ABCDefgh1234

Arial Bold
ABCDefgh1234

Arial Bold Italic
ABCDefgh1234

Secondary

Times Roman Regular
ABCDefgh1234

Times Roman Regular Italic
ABCDefgh1234

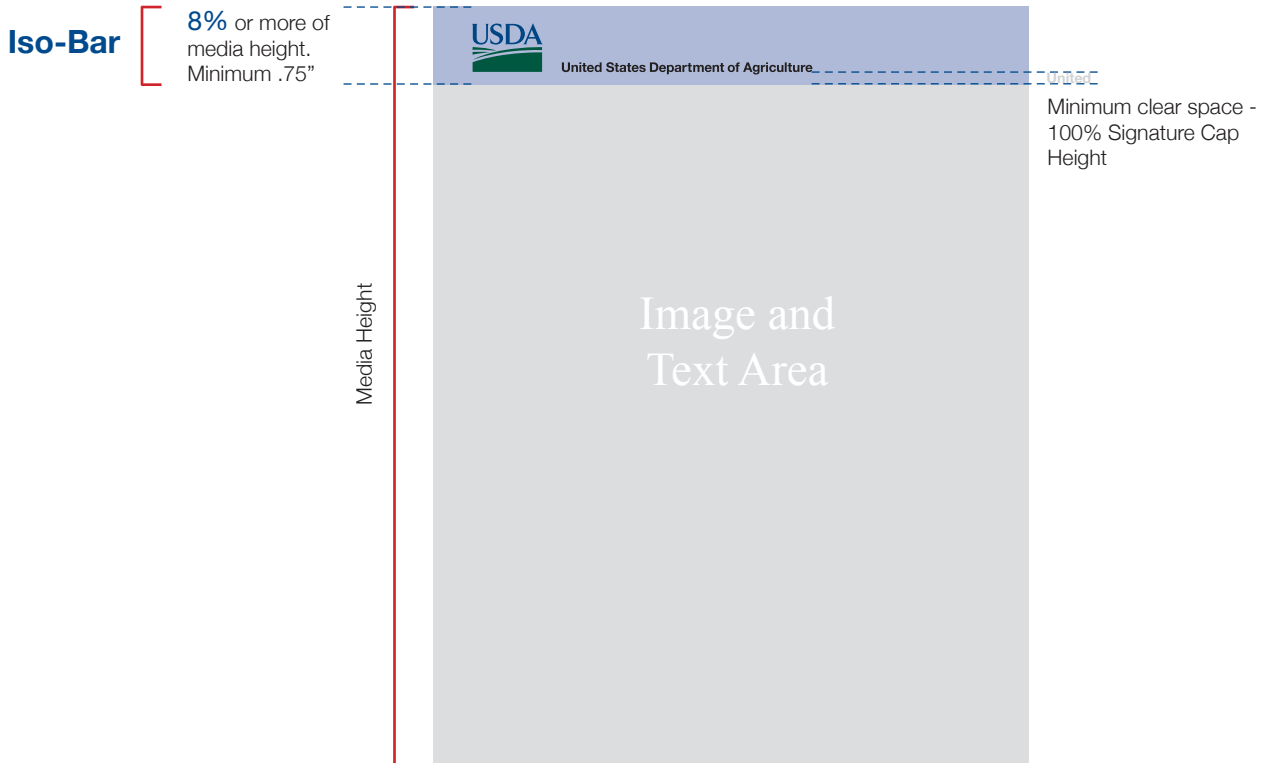
Times Roman Bold
ABCDefgh1234

Times Roman Bold Italic
ABCDefgh1234

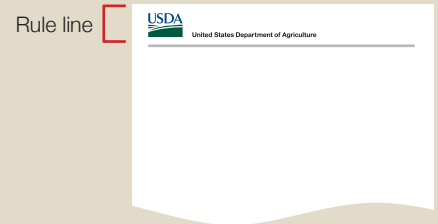
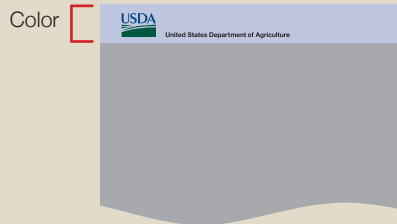
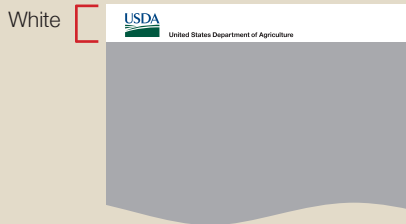
Signature Iso-Bar

A Signature Iso-Bar shall be used on all visual communications media and products to provide a clean, consistent background area and position for the Signature Lockup. All acceptable versions of the Signature Lockup can be used within the Iso-Bar. No images, gradations, or other graphics can appear within the Iso-Bar. All other types of visual elements, images, and content can fall below the Iso-Bar.

Iso-Bar Proportions and Signature Placement



Acceptable Variations



Use of Signature Iso-Bar

Print

Print media includes electronic as well as traditional hard-copy products.

All Print, Publication, and PDF Covers



Use the Signature Iso-Bar on all communication print materials and publications and pdf covers.

Public Service Announcements



Exception: On public service announcements, the Signature Lockup can be placed near the closing statement or the bottom of the page.

Exhibits

Use the Signature Iso-Bar on all communication exhibits and banners up to 8' x10'.



Exception: On exhibits or banners wider than 10', the Signature Iso-Bar no longer applies. Place the Signature Lockup near the top right side of the display.

Multimedia

Use the Signature Iso-Bar on all multimedia content, interfaces, applications (apps), labeling, and packaging.



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Use of Signature Iso-Bar

Video

To request USDA Symbol intro and closing video bumper animations, contact OC Creative Media and Broadcast Center within the Office of Communications at 202 720 3628.



Intro Video Bumper

- Animation with sound effect
- Generic title slide

Closing Video Bumper

- Animation with sound effect
- USDA Nondiscrimination Statement



Use the Signature Iso-Bar on all video packaging and labeling.

Event Name Badge



Tent Card

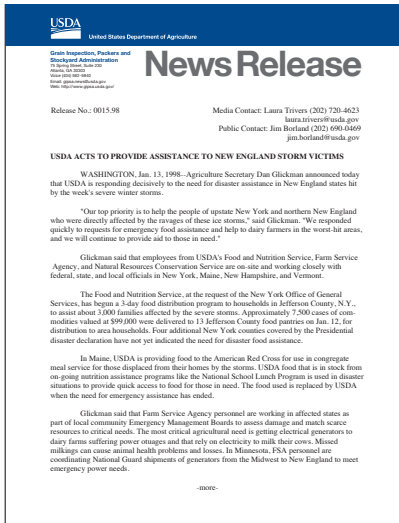


Use the Signature Iso-Bar on all event name badges and tent cards.

Use of Signature Iso-Bar

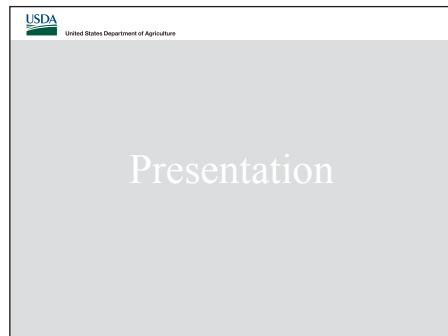
News Release

Agencies should contact their Public Affairs Director to obtain the News Release Template.



Presentations

Presentation templates with Signature Iso-Bar can be downloaded from the USDA Connections Web site <https://connections.usda.gov/>.



Certificates

Agencies should order certificates through the General Supply Specialist in USDA Departmental Management (DM) Service Center located in Beltsville, MD. Certificates must follow DR 4040-451-1, USDA Employee Awards and Recognition Program. Contact DM for information about the ordering process.



Initiative Theme Art

Initiative Theme Art can consist of typographic design and simple graphics and must contain the USDA Symbol as a leading element. Final approval for publishing will be authorized by the BEEERD Director, Office of Communications.

Acceptable Variations



Unacceptable Variations



Do not use
USDA as an acronym.



Do not use
an overall defined
confining shape.



Do not use
an overall defined
confining shape.



Do not use
an overall defined
confining shape.

Web Standards

All public-facing USDA Web sites must conform to the common look and feel established by the Office of Communications by January 1, 2013. Web sites should follow the guidelines outlined in the USDA Web Standards and Style Guide document.

Prior to redesigning a Web site, initiative, or program Web page or creating a new one, obtain clearance on initial designs from the Office of Communications, Web Communications Division, and once again prior to launch. This approval process allows for the assurance that the extra complexities of agency branding and identity adhere to the common look and feel. The Web Communications Division will work with the appropriate Mission Area Communications Coordinator within the Office of Communications to ensure that the content and scope are appropriate, given broader communication objectives.

To view the USDA Web Standards and Style Guide document, visit the Web page at:

(<http://usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=DigitalStyleGuide.html>)

Social Media Standards

New Media Roles, Responsibilities and Authorities (DR 1495-001) establishes the requirements for the implementation of new media technologies within the United States Department of Agriculture. Unless otherwise specified, this directive applies to all USDA agencies, employees, contractors, interns, and partners utilizing new media technologies for official USDA purposes.

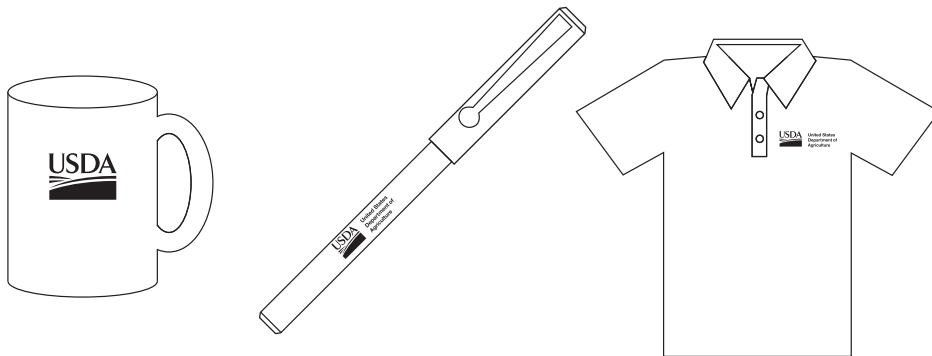
Agencies must complete the New Media Request Form (AD-3022) and submit it to the Office of Communications for review and approval prior to use.

To view Social Media Tools and Resources, as well as existing accounts, visit the Web page at:

(http://usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=USDA_STR)

Premiums

Premiums and speciality items come in a variety of sizes and shapes. To achieve proper and preferred branding of these items, and for guidance, contact Carolyn O'Connor, Director of Brand, Events, Exhibits, and Editorial Review Division, at Carolyn.OConnor@oc.usda.gov.



Exception: On premiums where the Signature Lockup will not fit, the Department name may be abbreviated to read "U.S. Department of Agriculture."

Signage

Facility Signage is established by USDA DR 5160-003, Identification Signs. For guidance or to make changes, contact Carolyn O'Connor, OC Director of Brand, Events, Exhibits, and Editorial Review Division, at Carolyn.OConnor@oc.usda.gov.



Vehicles

Vehicle markings will use only USDA Signature Lockups. For guidance, contact Carolyn O'Connor, OC Director of Brand, Events, Exhibits, and Editorial Review Division, at Carolyn.OConnor@oc.usda.gov.



Nondiscrimination Statement

The current nondiscrimination statement is posted on the USDA homepage. It is to be included on all communication products. For very short materials, such as a bookmark or a very small brochure, the short version is acceptable.

Full Nondiscrimination Statement:

Non-Discrimination Policy

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

To File an Employment Complaint

If you wish to file an employment complaint, you must contact your agency's EEO Counselor (click the hyperlink for list of EEO Counselors) within 45 days of the date of the alleged discriminatory act, event, or in the case of a personnel action. Additional information can be found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_file.html.

To File a Program Complaint

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Persons with Disabilities

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities and you wish to file either an EEO or program complaint please contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish).

Persons with disabilities who wish to file a program complaint, please see information above on how to contact us by mail directly or by email. If you require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) please contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

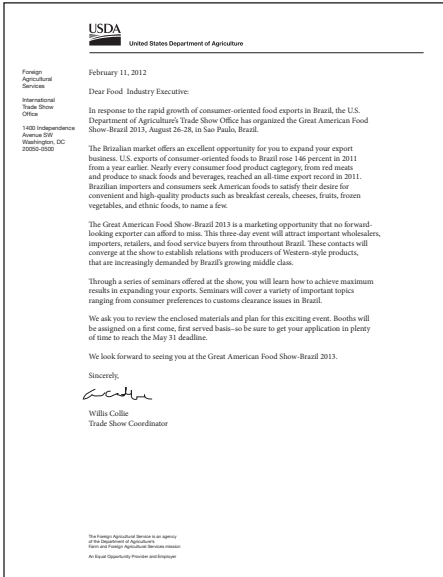
Short Nondiscrimination Statement:

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Stationery

Letterhead

Agencies should order letterhead through OC Printing Services. Contact Cynthia McNeill, Director, Printing Services Division, at Cynthia.McNeill@oc.usda.gov.



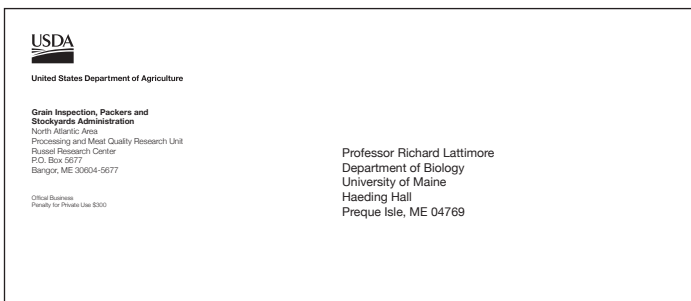
Business Card

Agencies should order business cards through OC Printing Services. Contact Cynthia McNeill, Director, Printing Services Division, at Cynthia.McNeill@oc.usda.gov.



Envelope

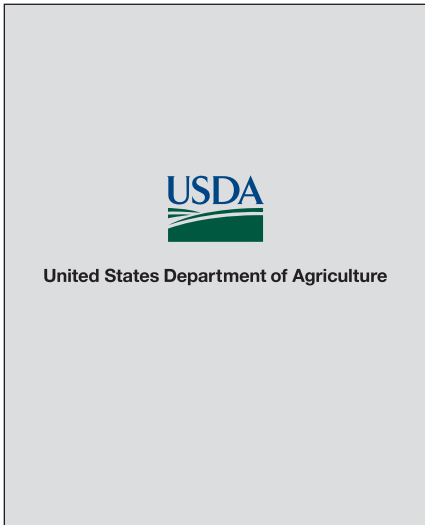
Agencies should order envelopes through OC Printing Services. Contact Cynthia McNeill, Director, Printing Services Division, at Cynthia.McNeill@oc.usda.gov.



Stationery

Pocket Folder

Agencies should order pocket folders through the General Supply Specialist in USDA Departmental Management (DM) Service Center located in Beltsville, MD. Contact DM for information about the ordering process.



Email Signature

Contact your Agency Public Affairs Office.

Your Name
Title
Division
Agency
United States Department of Agriculture
Phone Number
Phone Number

Stay Connected with USDA:



Exceptions to These Rules

For guidance, contact Carolyn O'Connor, OC Director of Brand, Events, Exhibits, and Editorial Review Division, at Carolyn.OConnor@oc.usda.gov.