

USDA

United States Department of Agriculture  
Research, Education and Economy  
Agricultural Research Service

December 16, 2004

SUBJECT: Environmental Management System Policy

TO: Research Leaders  
Midwest Area

FROM: Adrianna D. Hewings  
Director

In accordance with Executive Order 13148, *Greening the Government through Leadership in Environmental Management*, and per USDA, REE, ARS, Environmental Management System Policy Statement Letter dated June 28, 2004 (enclosed) all Federal agencies and the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), are required to implement an Environmental Management System (EMS) at Locations by December 31, 2005.

The Midwest Area (MWA) integrated Safety, Health and Environmental Management (SHEM) Program is in place to ensure the incorporation of SHEM considerations into management and work practices so that research and administrative missions are accomplished while protecting the workers, public and the environment.

Within this program, there exists an established framework upon which to build an Environmental Management System. Most of the Locations within the MWA have conducted environmental management activities, programs and research that contain elements designed to conserve resources and protect the environment. USDA-wide and Agency policies have long been in place to protect the public and environment through such programs as pollution prevention, solid waste reduction, monitoring activities, hazardous waste minimization, compliance inspections and corrective actions, etc. We now need to unify our environmental efforts, establish definitive goals and objectives, document our achievements and close the loop into a comprehensive Environmental Management System.

In order to comply with the ARS Environmental Management System reporting requirements the MWA Goals, Objectives and Action Plan for FY-05 are as follows:

- Locations prepare and distribute an Environmental Management System Policy Letter relating to the Location's research mission. The Policy Letter must include Location goals and objectives, must be signed by the Location Coordinator or highest management official, and must be submitted to the Area Director by January 31, 2005.



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- Locations complete the MWA Environmental Management Assessment which identifies Environmental Aspects and Impacts by February 15, 2005 (will come under separate cover).
- Locations determine Legal Regulatory Requirements, Objectives And Targets, and Management Actions to support objectives and targets by February 28, 2005
- Locations designate and train at least one Environmental Officer by April 30, 2005.
- Based upon identified Environmental Aspects and Impacts, implement EMS structure and responsibility, training, awareness and competence, communication, EMS documentation, document control, operational control, emergency preparedness and response. Implementation must be documented by September 30, 2005.

A complete Environmental Management System must be implemented including Checking, Corrective Action and Management Review by December 31, 2005. I challenge each of you to work together to develop and utilize strong environmental policies and programs as a means for establishing your Location's Environmental Management System to ultimately achieve efficient, all-inclusive environmental management administration. Ralph Jesse, MWA Environmental Protection Specialist and Caryl Romine, Area Safety and Occupational Health Manager will be providing additional information to assist you in accomplishing these requirements.

If you have questions or comments, please contact Ralph Jesse by email at [Ralph.jesse@mwa.ars.usda.gov](mailto:Ralph.jesse@mwa.ars.usda.gov) or call 309-681-6644.

2 Enclosures

cc:

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LAOs

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