USDA SCIENTIFIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Instilling Public Confidence in USDA Research and Science-Based Decisions

APPLICABILITY

All USDA employees, *political and career*, who conduct or supervise scientific activities, and/or analyze, publicly communicate, or utilize information derived from scientific activities.

KEY POINTS

Scientific findings and products must not be suppressed or altered for political purposes and must not be subjected to inappropriate influence.

Ensure the quality, accuracy, and transparency of scientific information used in decision-making.

- Use scientific information derived from well-established scientific processes.
- Ensure that scientific data and research undergo independent peer review by qualified experts.
- Reflect scientific information appropriately and accurately.
- Make scientific findings that are relied upon publicly available online and in open formats.

USDA scientists may communicate their scientific findings objectively without political interference or inappropriate influence.

- When publicly communicating findings in their official capacities, USDA scientists should *refrain from making judgments or recommendations on Federal policy.*

USDA scientists are encouraged to participate in communications with the media regarding their scientific findings.

- Scientists should *coordinate media opportunities* with their supervisors & public affairs offices.

USDA scientists are encouraged to interact with the broader scientific community.

- Such interactions must be consistent with Federal rules of ethics, job responsibilities, and existing agency policies.

USDA employees who uncover and report allegations of compromised scientific integrity in good faith must not be subjected to retaliation for reporting such allegations.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions or to report a scientific integrity concern, USDA employees should contact their Agency Scientific Integrity Officer or the Department Scientific Integrity Officer (DSIO).

Contact information and other resources may be found on the Office of the Chief Scientist Website.

The DSIO may be reached directly by email at researchintegrity@usda.gov

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