

## Modernize and Innovate the Delivery of Agricultural Systems (MIDAS)

### Overview

The United States Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides approximately \$15-25 billion annually in farm program benefits to America's farmers and ranchers. These benefits sustain 2.2 million producers who provide food and fiber to feed and clothe more than 300 million Americans and millions around the world.

In recent years when serving its customers, FSA has relied on aging technology and equipment to do its work. This outdated infrastructure created inefficiencies and threatened the delivery of farm program benefits. Currently, FSA is making great strides in modernizing the information technology (IT) platform and systems needed to support program delivery.

### FSA Modernization Initiative

MIDAS is FSA's initiative to "Modernize and Innovate the Delivery of Agricultural Systems." The MIDAS program is part of FSA's larger modernization initiative. FSA's modernization program is built upon the premise of delivering a core set of integrated IT services to USDA staff and customers. These IT services are fundamental components of maintaining FSA's accuracy and accountability in administering farm bill legislation. When full IT modernization is achieved, FSA will have a streamlined IT architecture built on re-engineered and "mature" business processes that are supported by newer, faster,

more secure and more reliable Web-based technologies.

### MIDAS

Many farm benefit programs are supported by web-based applications. With MIDAS, FSA is continuing its modernization goals of developing an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system that provides the ability to view and access all farm program data in a single IT platform. When this goal is reached, FSA's IT systems lifecycle costs will decrease, reporting capabilities will improve and a centralized system will exist.

MIDAS was chartered in 2007 to provide a sustainable long-term solution that will result in increased efficiencies and re-engineered business solutions. Listening sessions conducted in 2010 with FSA state and county office staff, farmers and ranchers further validated the need for improved systems and provided valuable input into the MIDAS project and requirements for system improvements. USDA and FSA leaders are ensuring that MIDAS and all other modernization efforts are integrated to better serve America's farmers, ranchers and producers.

### Strategic Goals

MIDAS will provide comprehensive and robust processes and tools that will enable simplified and convenient methods for farmers, ranchers and employees to access farm programs. The four underlying strategic goals for MIDAS are: modernize and innovate

the delivery of farm programs, improve customer service, achieve compliance, and support USDA and FSA strategic plans. Obtaining these goals will benefit farmers, ranchers, landowners, others in the industry and USDA stakeholders.

### Benefits

MIDAS provides the following benefits:

- Improved Customer Service: Increased online services to farmers and ranchers by providing 24/7 access to applications and the ability to view account and profile status online.
- Less Redundancy of Data Submission: Fewer forms; information will be taken once, not multiple times for multiple programs.
- Expedited Program Implementation: Reduced timeframes between legislation passage and program implementation, providing more timely aid to affected producers.
- Integrated Compliance: Greater controls through system integration resulting in improved performance and more accessible and reliable reporting capabilities.

### Participation

MIDAS impacts farmers and state and county employees in all 50 states. To facilitate the interaction with these stakeholders, MIDAS implemented a Change Agent Network (CAN). The purpose of the CAN is to generate awareness and

provide communications about the MIDAS project throughout FSA by using a group of Change Agents selected from the state and county offices, and representatives from headquarters. The Change Agents work directly with the MIDAS project team to receive first-hand information on project activities and then share that information at the local level.

### **Leadership**

MIDAS is managed by Farm Service Agency, Office of the Chief Information Officer. The MIDAS Leadership Team includes:

- Executive Sponsor: Carolyn Cooksie, Associate Administrator for Operations and Management, FSA.
- Modernization Executive: Jim Gwinn, Chief Information Officer, FSA.
- Business Owner: Juan Garcia, Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs, FSA.
- Program Executive: Taylor Chasteen, Associate Chief Information Officer, USDA.
- MIDAS Program Manager: Amy Allison, MIDAS Director, FSA.

### **For More Information**

For more information on MIDAS, please visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/midas](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/midas) or contact the MIDAS office at (202) 720-3833. Follow FSA on Twitter at @usdafsa to receive more updates on MIDAS.

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