

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency
Washington, DC 20250

Notice CP-715

For: State and County Offices

National Training for Acreage Reporting and GIS

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



1 Overview

A Background

The acreage reporting and GIS training will include instructor-led training and information sessions for all State compliance and GIS specialists and/or backups, who are responsible for compliance, GIS, and Global Positioning System (GPS) activities.

FSA specialists will have a forum from which to ask specific questions, receive hands-on experience and training (such as acreage reporting policy, CARS software, GIS related policy, GIS data management procedure and tools, GIS software, GPS software and/or hardware), and receive skills and job aids to help with completing applicable end user training within their respective States.

B Purpose

This notice informs State and County Offices about the 2016 acreage reporting and GIS training, and provides detailed information on:

- dates and locations
- hotel accommodations
- transportation travel authorizations.

C Contacts

If there are questions about this notice, contact either of the following:

- Clay Lagasse by e-mail at clay.lagasse@wdc.usda.gov
- Todd Anderson by e-mail at todd.anderson@wdc.usda.gov.

Disposal Date	Distribution
July 1, 2016	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

2 2016 Acreage Reporting and GIS Training

A Train-the-Trainer Approach

The 2016 acreage report and some of the GIS training content (such as procedure for imagery review, importance of accurate data, GPS software and hardware), were designed using the train-the-trainer model. Training attendees will be responsible for delivering training to applicable FSA employees in their respective States.

Other GIS training is specifically geared toward technical roles and responsibilities of GIS specialists. Skills learned will allow the State GIS specialist to become more effective in their State.

The training sessions will include lectures, panels, interactive discussions and hands-on activities. Presenters will provide training and communication materials to all training participants to support the training of others in their respective States. The training materials will be available electronically.

Training participants who have a Government laptop are required to bring their laptop to the training to view materials, which will be available on or before March 10, 2016, at the following web sites:

- GIS - https://sharepoint.fsa.usda.net/mgr/FSA_GIS/FSA-GIS/2016_Face-to-Face_GIS_Training/default.aspx
- acreage reporting - <https://connections.usda.gov/communities/service/html/communitystart?communityUuid=b62d1189-c8c5-431e-ba7d-65b89718a3d2>.

Training participants are instructed to download the training materials on their laptop **before** attending the national training. Participants who need paper copies of materials are encouraged to print and bring them as needed.

B GIS Hardware and Software Preparation Requirements for Training

The training sessions will include lectures, interactive discussions and hands-on learning exercises along with communication materials. The training materials will be available electronically.

2 2016 Acreage Reporting and GIS Training (Continued)

B GIS Hardware and Software Preparation Requirements for Training (Continued)

The GIS training participants with Government laptops are also required to bring (in addition to their laptops), Trimble Juno 5B Enhanced GPS handheld receivers with the following preloaded software:

- ArcGIS 10.x
- Windows Mobile Device Center
- Trimble TerraSync – Juno5B
- Trimble Pathfinder Office.

Participants shall be prepared for outdoor GPS activity during the GPS session, and shall download the training materials on their laptop before attending the national training.

C Training Dates and Location

The training sessions will begin on Monday, March 14, 2016, at 8 a.m. and end Friday, March 18, 2016, at 1 p.m. Attendees are **not** authorized to make airline reservations that would require them to leave the training session **before** the scheduled end time.

The training will be held at the Le Meridien Charlotte. See subparagraph 3 C for detailed hotel information.

D State Training Attendee Slots

SED's were provided by e-mail, a specific number of training attendee slots based on several factors, including the number of employees in a State to be trained, expected acreage reporting, and GIS workload and/or participation, and the timeframe to complete end user training in the applicable State.

The final list of training participants is posted on the DAFP SharePoint web site at <https://sharepoint.fsa.usda.net/mgr/dafp/ARGIS/Lists/ARGISAttendees/AllItems.aspx>.

3 Travel and Hotel Authorizations

A Travel Authorization

Participants are responsible for making their own travel arrangements, as soon as possible, using the most efficient means of transportation. This notice does not constitute an approved travel authorization.

Each employee must have a CONCUR electronic travel authorization before incurring travel expenses. Once in the authorization, enter the following fields at the “General” tab:

- type code - single trip
- purpose - training
- document detail - acreage reporting/GIS national training.

Travelers who **do not** have a valid Government-issued travel credit card may use the centrally billed account (CBA) option in CONCUR for purchasing **airfare**. To reserve **hotel accommodations**, travelers shall contact the hotel and secure reservations using their personal credit card. Only airfare can be paid on behalf of travelers using CBA. Hotel accommodations are paid using the traveler’s personal credit card, and subsequently reimbursed to the traveler as part of per diem during the post-travel expense vouchering process.

M&IE may also be charged to the traveler’s personal credit card for reimbursement through the post-travel vouchering process.

Travelers whose circumstances may require using a **cash advance** may notify a member of the travel staff before initiating a travel authorization. A traveler may request an advance of up to 80 percent of estimated travel expenses (excluding airfare).

For questions about using CBA or a cash advance, contact either of the following in the Debt Management and Travel Policy Office:

- Arthur Holmes by e-mail to **arthur.holmes@wdc.usda.gov**
- Cynthia Chesley by e-mail to **cynthia.chesley@wdc.usda.gov**.

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3 Travel and Hotel Authorizations (Continued)

B Travel Codes

- For National Office (GS) employees, all travel expenses associated with this trip shall be coded to the Washington-directed travel accounting codes. In Concur, employees must select travel/accounting code 161616-HQ-WDC-TRAVEL.
- For State Office (GS) employees, all travel expenses associated with this trip shall be coded to the Washington-directed travel accounting codes. In Concur, employees must select travel/accounting code 161616-STO-WDC-TRAVEL.
- For County Office (CO) employees, all travel expenses associated with this trip shall be coded to the Washington-directed travel accounting codes. In Concur, employees must select travel/accounting code 16XX16-COF-WDC-TRAVEL.

C Hotel Accommodations

Rooms have been reserved at the:

Le Meridien Charlotte
555 South McDowell Street
North Tower
Charlotte, NC 28204
704-372-9610.

The per diem rate for lodging is \$117 and M&IE is \$59. To receive the Government per diem rate, rooms must be reserved using the following information:

Group Name -	National Acreage Reporting and GIS Training
Per Diem Rate	\$117 per night
Check-In	March 13, 2016
Check-Out	March 18, 2016.

Rooms shall be reserved using the hotel's online group reservations system at **<https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/events/start.action?id=1602040309&key=66D1DDB>**. Confirm room reservations with a Government credit card or a deposit equal to the first night room charge as soon as possible, but no later than COB Wednesday, March 9, 2016. After this date any rooms not confirmed will be released to hotel inventory.

Check in time is 3 p.m. and checkout time is noon. Any cancellations within 72 hours are subject to one night's room and tax. Guests are allowed to change their stay dates until the time of arrival. Should guests depart sooner than confirmed, guests will be subject to an early departure fee of \$75.

3 Travel and Hotel Authorizations (Continued)

D Hotel Transportation Options

The cost from the airport to the hotel by taxi will be approximately \$25. The cost from the airport to the hotel using a third party shuttle service will vary. Shuttle service may be reserved by calling 704-231-9313. Reservations are required.

4 Additional Training Information

A Reasonable Accommodations

Participants may notify the airline and hotel directly if special accommodations are necessary.

If special accommodations are necessary to attend this training, notify Kimberly Pritchett by March 4, 2016, by either of the following:

- e-mail to **kimberly.pritchett@wdc.usda.gov**
- telephone at 202-720-3110.

B Documenting Training Attendance in WebTA

Report activity in the Activity Reporting System section of WebTA using the following:

- acreage reporting – program code common with activity code training
- GIS – program code common with activity code training
- travel - program code common with activity code travel.

C Subsequent In-State Training Sessions

It is recommended that State training be conducted for acreage reporting by May 1, 2016.

When developing training delivery options, States may consider past training practices that have been effective, as well as innovative training methods that are cost-effective.