

For: FSA Offices

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

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



1 Overview

A Background

Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs has initiated a project to modernize farm program delivery systems. The goal is to provide better service to customers in today's Internet Age through use of web-based technologies. Farm Programs (FP) has recently code-named its modernization project **MIDAS**, short for Modernize and Innovate the Delivery of Agricultural Systems.

B Purpose

This notice provides information about the:

- **MIDAS** project in FP
- need for FSA computer modernization
- first program areas for modernization
- plan for achieving initial modernization objectives
- database management.

Disposal Date	Distribution
August 1, 2005	All FSA Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

2 Computer Limitations and Solutions

A Current Computer Limitations

Systems currently in place limit the ability of all users to efficiently access available programs resulting in inefficient farm program delivery. Some examples of these inefficiencies are:

- data being stored in multiple places that are difficult to access or use effectively for program processing, planning, or reporting purposes
- inaccessibility for users from outside of FSA
- high maintenance costs.

B FSA Computing Initiatives

With the implementation of USDA's Common Computing Environment (CCE), FSA has the opportunity to use new technology to define automated program processes. This will enable "real time" connectivity between national, State, and County Offices. Currently, only a few FSA-initiated operations are web-based, such as SCIMS and E-funds control.

Several other processes currently are being developed for web-based deployment. Some of these are:

- acreage reporting
- CCR
- CRP offer software
- DCP contract
- e-DIPP
- e-LDP's
- e-MILC
- e-TAA
- electronic warehouse receipts for peanuts
- eligibility files
- national soils database
- Power of Attorney.

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2 Computer Limitations and Solutions (Continued)

C MIDAS Solution

To address the problem, FSA has launched an Agencywide business process modernization program. This strategy focuses on 2 primary goals:

- providing better service to all FSA customers
- simplifying work processes for all FSA employees.

Achieving these goals will involve:

- eliminating current redundancies
- designing consistent automated processes
- providing 24/7 access to users through multiple channels
- providing hardware for uninterrupted, high-volume operations.

3 First Programs for Modernization

A Selected Programs

MIDAS is currently focusing on the following programs:

- Conservation Reserve Program
- Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program
- Marketing Assistance Loans
- Burley Tobacco.

The remaining program areas will subsequently be addressed.

4 Achieving Initial Modernization Objectives

A Teamwork Approach

Teams of FSA personnel have been formed throughout the Agency. These team activities are intended to ensure that the needs of a new system are properly defined. Initially, these teams will:

- review the procedure governing existing FSA programs and automated processes
- propose revisions to procedures to meet customers' needs
- determine what specific processes can be simplified or need to be added
- re-design processes based on revised procedure.

5 Migration

A Database Management

Database management will be especially important to the success of FSA modernization. Data currently residing on County Office systems will be migrated to the new computing environment. The success of the migration will largely depend on the accuracy of data currently residing on the system. Tools and procedures will be developed to assist County Offices in preparation for the migration process.