

**For:** State and County Offices

**Best Practices in Geographic Information Systems (GIS)**

**Approved by:** Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



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**1 Overview**

**A Background**

Through GIS, State and County FSA Offices have developed automated processes to conduct day-to-day activities when working with digital data sets. These processes greatly increase productivity in many program areas, allowing FSA Offices to better manage and accomplish GIS program workloads.

While these automated processes provide efficiencies, duplicate efforts by FSA Offices need to be organized and streamlined. In addition, not all FSA Offices are benefiting as distribution of the automated processes sometimes stay within administrative boundaries.

Common Computing Environment (CCE) is the governing body allowing automated processes to run on all FSA Office computer equipment. In some cases, the automated processes created outside of the FSA National Office may compromise guidelines set by CCE.

**B Purpose**

This notice informs State and County Offices of the following:

- Best Practices in GIS
- reasons for submitting Best Practices in GIS to the National Office
- procedure for State Office GIS Coordinators/Specialists to submit Best Practices in GIS to the National Office.

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<b>Disposal Date</b>	<b>Distribution</b>
April 1, 2006	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

## 2 Procedure for Submitting Best Practices in GIS

### A What Are Best Practices in GIS

Best Practices in GIS are automated processes created to streamline day-to-day program-related GIS activities in both State and County FSA Offices. These practices can be developed using GIS software such as ESRI products, Word documents, spread sheets, and legacy System 36/AS400. These automated processes are made up of, but not limited to:

- queries
- scripts
- tools
- buttons
- applications
- user guides/documentation.

### B Why Submit Best Practices to the National Office

Best Practices in GIS shall be sent to the FSA National Office to:

- streamline any duplicate Best Practices
- incorporate Best Practices functionality in the proper application
- ensure that all Best Practices are approved by CCE
- distribute Best Practices to all FSA Offices.

## 3 State and County Office Action

### A County Office Action

County Offices shall submit suggestions for Best Practices in GIS through their FSA State Office as advised by each State GIS Coordinator/Specialist.

### B State Office Action

FSA State Office GIS Coordinator/Specialist shall submit all Best Practices in GIS by email to [todd.anderson@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:todd.anderson@wdc.usda.gov)

The following information shall be included in the email:

- date of submission
- author of the Best Practice
- description of functionality of the Best Practice
- reason why automation of the Best Practice is needed.

Attach all Best Practices files and folders, such as queries and scripts, properly to the email.