

**For:** State and County Offices

**National Disaster Programs Training**

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



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**1 Overview**

**A Background**

A training session has been scheduled in Houston, Texas, for September 24 through September 28, 2007. The training agenda includes payment and policy for the following programs:

- Crop Disaster Program
- Livestock Incentive Program
- Livestock Compensation Program.

**B Purpose**

This notice provides information for the following:

- scheduled dates and times of the training session
- number of authorized attendees for each State Office (Exhibit 1)
- hotel accommodations
- travel authorization for attendees from each State Office
- airport transportation
- training materials
- required action
- documenting training
- contact for additional information.

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**Disposal Date**

October 1, 2007

8-13-07

**Distribution**

State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

## 2 Training Information

### A Training Dates

The training session will:

- begin on Monday, September 24, 2007, at 8:30 a.m.
- end on Friday, September 28, 2007, at noon.

### B Authorized Number of Attendees

This is a train-the-trainer session. Attendees will be responsible for training the appropriate employees in each State. See Exhibit 1 for the authorized number of attendees for each State.

**Note:** The authorized number of attendees for each State shall include one DD and at least one Service Center employee with applicable experience, except as noted in Exhibit 1. **SED's are authorized to attend the training and shall be included in the number of attendees listed in Exhibit 1 if they choose to attend.**

### C Hotel Information

Attendees shall make their own hotel reservations with the Westin Oaks Houston Hotel. The preferred method for making hotel reservations is through the customized web site <http://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/usi20> for the USDA FSA Disaster Meeting.

Attendees can access the web site to:

- learn more about the event
- book, modify, or cancel a reservation from August 14, 2007, to September 30, 2007.

Attendees may also make hotel reservations with the Westin Oaks Houston Hotel by calling the hotel directly at 713-960-8100 or through Central Reservation at 1-800-228-3000; Alaska and Hawaii at 1-800-228-1212. Reservations may be made starting August 14, 2007. The reservation cut-off date is **September 5, 2007**. Any reservation made after September 5, 2007, will be accepted on a space-available basis only.

**Note:** **Attendees must identify themselves as an attendee of the "USDA Crop Disaster Programs Training Session" to guarantee the negotiated government rate.**

Attendees must have the following:

- their government credit card
- a copy of their travel authorization to receive the government rate.

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### 2 Training Information (Continued)

#### C Hotel Information (Continued)

The hotel address is:

Westin Oaks Houston Hotel  
5011 Westheimer  
Houston, TX 77056

The government rate is \$95 per night plus tax for a single room suite.

Check-in time is 3 p.m. If rooms are available, early check-in will be accommodated. If not, Guest Services will provide luggage storage. Check-out time is noon. For additional hotel information and amenities, the hotel's web site is [www.westin.com/oaks](http://www.westin.com/oaks).

The Westin Oaks Houston Hotel is a smoke-free hotel in all areas of the hotel. To protect the smoke-free environment, the hotel will post a \$200 cleaning fee to the account of any guest who smokes in their hotel room.

To avoid an early departure fee, attendees should notify the hotel at or before check-in of any change in the scheduled length of stay. If an attendee who has reserved a room checks out before the reserved check-out date, an early departure fee of \$75 will be charged to that attendee's individual account.

#### D Travel Authorization

Each employee must have an approved AD-202, as applicable, before incurring travel expenses. This notice does **not** constitute an approved travel authorization. The per diem rate for Houston, Texas, is \$154 a day (\$95 for lodging and \$59 for M&IE).

County Office employees' travel expenses are paid out of County Office administrative funds. Federal employees' travel expenses are paid out of the State's GS travel allocation. State Offices should submit both travel expenses in their monthly submission of requests for reimbursement to their travel allotment to BUD with a copy to DAFO, Attention: Arleen Moncalieri by FAX at 202-720-1096.

Attendees shall make their own travel arrangements as soon as possible using the most efficient means of transportation.

AD-202, block 25 should be filled in with either of the following:

- code 3, "Training Attendance", for those attending
- code 4, "Speech or Presentation", for those attending as trainers.

**Note:** The training should be called "National Disaster Prog. Trng."

**2 Training Information (Continued)**

**E Airport Transportation**

The hotel is approximately 35 minutes from the George Bush Airport. Ground transportation from the airport to the Westin Oaks Houston Hotel can be obtained from 1-800-Bluevan. Reservations for the Super Shuttle must be made 24 hours in advance.

Taxi fare will be approximately \$55 one-way from the George Bush Airport.

**Note:** Rental cars are **not** an authorized expenditure during this training session.

**F Training Materials**

Training materials will be provided to each attendee at the training session.

Attendees need to bring a hand-held calculator.

**Note:** Attendees that intend to ship training materials to their offices should bring all shipping supplies, including boxes, tape, Federal Express labels, and account information to the training session. The training manual will be a 3-ring binder approximately 2 to 3 inches thick.

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### 3 Action

#### A State Office Action

State Offices and attendees shall take the following action:

- **not** approve any attendee to schedule a return flight within 2 hours of the scheduled dismissal time
- by noon e.s.t., Wednesday, August 29, 2007, FAX a list of attendees, including SED's, to PECD at 202-720-0051, Attention: Mike Sienkiewicz

**Note:** List the names as attendees want them to appear on their name badge.

- notify airlines and hotel of any accommodations that are necessary
- persons with disabilities requiring accommodations to attend or participate in this training session should contact Mike Sienkiewicz by September 5, 2007, at either of the following:
  - e-mail at [mike.sienkiewicz@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:mike.sienkiewicz@wdc.usda.gov)
  - telephone at 202-720-8959.

#### B Documenting Training

Participants shall register for this training **no later than September 5, 2007**, through AgLearn. Direct questions about AgLearn processing to State Training Officer.

Step	Action
1	Access AgLearn at <a href="http://www.aglearn.usda.gov">http://www.aglearn.usda.gov</a> .
2	Under the "Student" tab, CLICK "Login" and "Continue".
3	On the eAuthentication Login Screen: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• enter the user ID and password</li><li>• CLICK "Login".</li></ul>
4	CLICK "AgLearn Original Courseware Structure".
5	CLICK "Catalog" located at the top of the screen.
6	CLICK "Farm Service Agency" located on the left side of the screen.
7	Find "Crop Disaster Programs Policy and Software Training".
8	Click the designated training date and CLICK "Register".
9	Enter the user's State name and the user's title in the "Comments" box. CLICK "Confirm" under the "Registration Comment" section.
10	An e-mail confirmation will be received in the next hour.

#### C Additional Information or Assistance

For additional information about this training, contact Mike Sienkiewicz, Program Specialist, PECD at 202-720-8959.

Number of State Office Attendees

State Office	Number of Authorized Attendees	State Office	Number of Authorized Attendees
Alabama	5	Nebraska	6
Alaska	4	Nevada	4
Arizona	5	New Hampshire	4
Arkansas	5	New Jersey	4
California	6	New Mexico	5
Colorado	5	New York	5
Connecticut	4	North Carolina	5
Delaware	4	North Dakota	5
Florida	5	Ohio	5
Georgia	5	Oklahoma	5
Hawaii	4	Oregon	5
Idaho	5	Pennsylvania	5
Illinois	5	Puerto Rico	4
Indiana	5	Rhode Island	4
Iowa	6	South Carolina	5
Kansas	6	South Dakota	5
Kentucky	5	Tennessee	5
Louisiana	5	Texas	8
Maine	4	Utah	4
Maryland	4	Vermont	4
Massachusetts	4	Virginia	5
Michigan	5	Washington	5
Minnesota	5	West Virginia	4
Mississippi	5	Wisconsin	5
Missouri	5	Wyoming	4
Montana	5	<b>Total</b>	<b>246</b>

**Note:** The authorized number of attendees for each State Office must include both of the following:

- DD
- at least 1 Service Center employee.

**Exception:** The following States **must** send a Service Center employee plus **either** a State Office employee **or** DD, but **not** both:

- |                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| • Connecticut   | • New Hampshire |
| • Delaware      | • New Jersey    |
| • Maine         | • Rhode Island  |
| • Massachusetts | • Vermont.      |