

**2025 USDA EXPLANATORY NOTES – OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL**

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**PREFACE**

This publication summarizes the fiscal year (FY) 2025 Budget for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Throughout this publication any reference to the “Budget” is in regard to the 2025 Budget, unless otherwise noted. All references to years refer to fiscal year, except where specifically noted. The budgetary tables throughout this document show actual amounts for 2022 and 2023, annualized Continuing Resolution levels for 2024, and the President’s Budget request for 2025. Amounts for 2024 estimated levels include: non-enacted amounts such as Full-Time Equivalent levels, fleet levels, information technology investment levels, recovery levels, transfers in and out, balances available end of year, and obligation levels.

Throughout this publication, the “2018 Farm Bill” is used to refer to the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018. Most programs funded by the 2018 Farm Bill are funded through 2023. Amounts shown in 2024 and 2025 for most Farm Bill programs reflect those confirmed in the baseline.

Pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, sequestration is included in the numbers for mandatory programs in 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025.

In tables throughout this document, amounts equal to zero (0) are displayed as dashes (-). Amounts less than 0.5 and greater than zero are rounded and shown as a zero (0). This display treatment is used to prevent the masking of non-zero amounts that do not round up to one (1).

**AGENCY-WIDE****PURPOSE STATEMENT**

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) carries out its mission pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. app 3, as amended) (IG Act). OIG was established to conduct and supervise audits and investigations relating to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs and operations; to provide leadership and coordination and recommend policies for activities designed to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the administration of such programs and operations and the necessity for and progress of corrective action.

OIG carries out these activities through the successful execution of audits, investigations, reviews, and appropriate reporting, all as mandated by the IG Act, which are funded through the OIG appropriation. OIG operates independently from other agencies within the Department. OIG’s statutory mandated duties and responsibilities are:

- To provide policy direction for and to conduct, supervise, and coordinate audits and investigations relating to programs and operations of USDA.
- To review existing and proposed legislation and regulations relating to programs and operations of USDA and to make recommendations concerning the impacts of such legislation or regulations on the economy and efficiency in the administration of USDA’s programs and operations, or the prevention and detections of fraud waste and abuse in such programs and operations.
- To recommend policies for and to conduct, supervise, or coordinate other activities carried out or financed by USDA for the purpose of promoting economy and efficiency in the administration of, or preventing and detecting fraud, waste, and abuse in its programs and operations.
- To propose guidelines, and to assist, manage, or facilitate relationships between USDA and other Federal agencies, State and local government agencies, and nongovernmental entities with respect to all matters relating to the promotion of the economy and efficiency in the administration of, or the prevention and detection of fraud, waste, and abuse in, programs and operations administered or financed by USDA, or the identification and prosecution in such fraud, waste, and abuse; and
- To keep the Secretary and the Congress fully and currently informed, by means of required reports or otherwise, concerning fraud and other serious problems, abuse, deficiencies relating to the administration of programs and operations administered or financed by USDA, and to recommend corrective action concerning such problems, abuses, and deficiencies, and report on the progress made by implementing corrective action.

OIG is headquartered in Washington, D.C., with regional offices in the following cities: Beltsville, Maryland; Atlanta, Georgia; Chicago, Illinois; Temple, Texas; Kansas City, Missouri; and Oakland, California. As of September 30, 2023, OIG had 425 permanent full-time employees.

**OIG AND GAO REPORTS**

1OIG did not have any Government Accountability Office evaluation reports throughout the past year.

**AVAILABLE FUNDS AND FTEs**

**Table OIG-1. Available Funds and FTEs (thousands of dollars, FTEs)**

| Item                               | 2022      |      | 2023      |      | 2024      |      | 2025      |      |
|------------------------------------|-----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|
|                                    | Actual    | FTEs | Actual    | FTEs | Estimated | FTEs | Estimated | FTEs |
| Salaries and Expenses:             |           |      |           |      |           |      |           |      |
| Discretionary Appropriations.....  | \$106,309 | 411  | \$111,561 | 405  | \$111,561 | 400  | \$114,024 | 400  |
| Supplemental Appropriations .....  | 8,322     | -    | 4,716     | 20   | 4,716     | 30   | 4,716     | 30   |
| Total Discretionary Approps.....   | 106,309   | 411  | 111,561   | 405  | 111,561   | 400  | 114,024   | 400  |
| Total Supplemental Appropriations  | 8,322     | 0    | 4,716     | 20   | 4,716     | 30   | 4,716     | 30   |
| Total Adjusted Appropriation ..... | 114,631   | 411  | 116,277   | 425  | 116,277   | 430  | 118,740   | 430  |
| Balance Available, SOY .....       | 342       | -    | 7,895     | -    | 8,778     | -    | 7,476     | -    |
| Balances Interchanges.....         | -2,150    | -    | -         | -    | -         | -    | -         | -    |
| Recoveries, Other.....             | 31        | -    | -         | -    | -         | -    | -         | -    |
| Total Available.....               | 115,004   | 411  | 124,172   | 425  | 125,055   | 430  | 126,216   | 430  |
| Lapsing Balances .....             | -1,709    | -    | -2,013    | -    | -         | -    | -         | -    |
| Balance Available, EOY .....       | -7,895    | -    | -8,778    | -    | -7,476    | -    | -5,352    | -    |
| Total Obligations, OIG .....       | 105,400   | 411  | 113,381   | 425  | 117,579   | 430  | 120,864   | 430  |
| Other USDA:                        |           |      |           |      |           |      |           |      |
| Risk Management .....              | 500       | -    | 500       | -    | -         | -    | -         | -    |
| Food and Nutrition Service.....    | 286       | -    | 286       | -    | 286       | -    | 286       | -    |
| Forest Service.....                | 400       | -    | 400       | -    | 400       | -    | 400       | -    |
| Rural Development .....            | 1,000     | -    | 1,000     | -    | 1,000     | -    | 1,000     | -    |
| OCFO/WCF Audits .....              | 275       | -    | 275       | -    | 275       | -    | 275       | -    |
| OCFO NEF .....                     | -         | -    | 3,500     | -    | -         | -    | -         | -    |
| Total, Other USDA .....            | 2,461     | -    | 5,961     | -    | -         | -    | -         | -    |
| Total, Agriculture Available ..... | 117,465   | 411  | 130,133   | 425  | 127,016   | 430  | 128,177   | 430  |
| Other Federal Funds:               |           |      |           |      |           |      |           |      |
| CIGIE.....                         | 216       | -    | 667       | -    | -         | -    | -         | -    |
| OMB Detail.....                    | 114       | -    | 24        | -    | -         | -    | -         | -    |
| PRAC .....                         | 26        | -    | -         | -    | -         | -    | -         | -    |
| Total, Other Federal .....         | 356       | -    | 691       | -    | 486       | -    | 486       | -    |
| Total Available, OIG .....         | 117,821   | 411  | 130,824   | 425  | 127,502   | 430  | 128,663   | 430  |

**PERMANENT POSITIONS BY GRADE AND FTEs**

**Table OIG-2. Permanent Positions by Grade and FTEs**

| Item               | 2022 |       |       | 2023 |       |       | 2024 |       |       | 2025 |       |       |
|--------------------|------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|
|                    | D.C. | Field | Total | D.C. | Field | Total | D.C. | Field | Total | D.C. | Field | Total |
| ES                 | 1    | -     | 1     | 1    | -     | 1     | 1    | -     | 1     | 1    | -     | 1     |
| SES                | 8    | -     | 8     | 5    | 2     | 7     | 5    | 2     | 7     | 5    | 2     | 7     |
| GS-15              | 16   | 17    | 33    | 12   | 21    | 33    | 12   | 21    | 33    | 12   | 21    | 33    |
| GS-14              | 24   | 69    | 93    | 27   | 66    | 93    | 27   | 51    | 78    | 27   | 49    | 76    |
| GS-13              | 30   | 183   | 213   | 46   | 170   | 216   | 41   | 184   | 225   | 46   | 184   | 230   |
| GS-12              | 9    | 38    | 47    | 10   | 25    | 35    | 10   | 25    | 35    | 10   | 25    | 35    |
| GS-11              | 4    | 7     | 11    | 11   | 6     | 17    | 11   | 9     | 20    | 11   | 6     | 17    |
| GS-9               | 4    | 6     | 10    | 8    | 9     | 17    | 8    | 9     | 17    | 8    | 12    | 20    |
| GS-8               | 1    | 4     | 5     | -    | 4     | 4     | 1    | 4     | 5     | -    | 4     | 4     |
| GS-7               | 3    | 5     | 8     | 1    | 5     | 6     | 3    | 5     | 8     | 1    | 5     | 6     |
| GS-5               | -    | 1     | 1     | -    | 1     | 1     | -    | 1     | 1     | -    | 1     | 1     |
| Total Permanent    | 100  | 330   | 430   | 121  | 309   | 430   | 119  | 311   | 430   | 121  | 309   | 430   |
| Unfilled, EOY      | 2    | 3     | 5     | 2    | 3     | 5     | -    | -     | -     | -    | -     | -     |
| Total Perm. FT EOY | 98   | 327   | 425   | 119  | 306   | 425   | 119  | 311   | 430   | 121  | 309   | 430   |
| FTE*               | 98   | 313   | 411   | 121  | 302   | 423   | 119  | 331   | 420   | 121  | 309   | 430   |

\*Total FTEs are all inclusive of workforce categories including temporary positions.

**VEHICLE FLEET**

**Motor Vehicle Fleet**

The Budget proposes replacing 15 currently leased. OIG’s motor vehicles that are used for law enforcement purposes. These vehicles, which are assigned to Criminal Investigators, are utilized in the investigation and prevention of criminal activities, such as: fraud in subsidy, price support, benefits, and insurance programs; significant thefts of Government property or funds; bribery; extortion; smuggling; and assaults on employees. In addition, the fleet vehicles are used for investigations involving criminal activity that affects the health and safety of the public, such as meat packers knowingly selling hazardous food products and individuals who tamper with food regulated by USDA. Also, OIG Criminal Investigators are poised to provide emergency law enforcement response to USDA declared emergencies and suspected incidents of terrorism affecting USDA regulated in industries as well as USDA programs, operations, personnel, and installations, in coordination with Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies, as appropriate.

**Replacement Criteria**

OIG replaces leased vehicles based on GSA protocols and reported mileage and age of the vehicle. For sedans, the criterion for replacement is 5 years and/or 60,000 miles. For SUVs, the replacement criteria are 7 years and/or 65,000 miles. OIG replaces vehicles with like vehicles, unless a need for a larger vehicle is justified by agency Management officials. Examples of such instances would be a Use of Force instructor needing a larger vehicle for equipment transportation, or an agent working investigations in a rural area with rough terrain.

**Reductions to Fleet**

There will be no reductions to the vehicle fleet in 2025.

**Table OIG-3. Size, Composition, and Annual Costs of Motor Vehicle Fleet**

| Item  | Sedans and Station Wagons | Vans      | SUVs      | Light Trucks 4X2 | Light Trucks 4X4 | Medium Duty Vehicles | Buses | Heavy Duty Vehicles | Total Vehicles | Annual Operating Costs |
|---|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------------|------------------|----------------------|-------|---------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| <b>2018 End of Year Operating Inventory</b> ..... | <b>66</b>                 | <b>17</b> | <b>59</b> | <b>3</b>         | <b>2</b>         | -                    | -     | -                   | <b>147</b>     | <b>\$754,000</b>       |
| <b>2022 End of Year Operating Inventory</b> ..... | <b>53</b>                 | <b>6</b>  | <b>72</b> | -                | <b>3</b>         | -                    | -     | -                   | <b>134</b>     | <b>910,000</b>         |
| 2023 Actual Acquisitions.....                     | -                         | -         | -         | -                | -                | -                    | -     | -                   | -              | -                      |
| 2023 Actual Disposals .....                       | 3                         | 1         | 5         | -                | 1                | -                    | -     | -                   | 10             | -                      |
| <b>2023 End of Year Operating Inventory</b> ..... | <b>50</b>                 | <b>5</b>  | <b>67</b> | -                | <b>2</b>         | -                    | -     | -                   | <b>124</b>     | <b>800,000</b>         |
| 2024 Planned Acquisitions .....                   | -                         | -         | -         | -                | -                | -                    | -     | -                   | -              | -                      |
| 2024 Planned Disposals .....                      | -                         | -         | 1         | -                | -                | -                    | -     | -                   | 1              | -                      |
| <b>2024 End of Year Operating Inventory</b> ..... | <b>50</b>                 | <b>5</b>  | <b>66</b> | -                | <b>2</b>         | -                    | -     | -                   | <b>123</b>     | <b>810,000</b>         |
| 2025 Planned Acquisitions .....                   | -                         | -         | -         | -                | -                | -                    | -     | -                   | -              | -                      |
| 2025 Planned Disposals .....                      | -                         | -         | -         | -                | -                | -                    | -     | -                   | -              | -                      |
| <b>2025 End of Year Operating Inventory</b> ..... | <b>50</b>                 | <b>5</b>  | <b>66</b> | -                | <b>2</b>         | -                    | -     | -                   | <b>123</b>     | <b>820,000</b>         |

Note: Number of vehicles by type include vehicles owned by the agency and leased from commercial sources or GSA. Annual Operating Costs excludes acquisition costs and gains from sale of vehicles as shown in FAST.

**Table OIG-4. Statement of Proposed Purchase of Passenger Motor Vehicles**

| Fiscal Year | Net Active Fleet, SOY | Disposals | Replacements | Additions | Total Acquisitions | Net Active Fleet, EOY |
|-------------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 2022        | 132                   | 4         | 6            | -         | 6                  | 134                   |
| 2023        | 134                   | 25        | 15           | -         | 15                 | 124                   |
| 2024        | 124                   | 16        | 15           | -         | 15                 | 123                   |
| 2025        | 123                   | 15        | 15           | -         | 15                 | 123                   |

**SHARED FUNDING PROJECTS**

**Table OIG-5. Shared Funding Projects (thousands of dollars)**

| Item  | 2022 Actual | 2023 Actual | 2024 Estimated | 2025 Estimated |
|---|-------------|-------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Working Capital Fund:</b>                                  |             |             |                |                |
| Administrative Services:                                      |             |             |                |                |
| AskUSDA Contact Center .....                                  | -           | \$14        | \$28           | \$30           |
| Material Management Service .....                             | \$35        | 32          | 34             | 32             |
| Mail and Reproduction Services .....                          | 126         | 136         | 143            | 142            |
| Integrated Procurement Systems.....                           | 73          | 57          | 64             | -              |
| Procurement Operations Services .....                         | 1           | 2           | 2              | 63             |
| Human Resources Enterprise Management Systems.....            | 7           | 5           | 5              | 5              |
| Subtotal .....  | 242         | 246         | 276            | 272            |
| Communications:   |             |             |                |                |
| Creative Media & Broadcast Center .....                       | 6           | 4           | 19             | 5              |
| Finance and Management:                                       |             |             |                |                |
| National Finance Center .....                                 | 123         | 130         | 126            | 118            |
| Financial Shared Services .....                               | 363         | 384         | 390            | 376            |
| Internal Control Support Services .....                       | -           | -           | 13             | 11             |
| Personnel and Document Security Program .....                 | -           | 22          | 26             | 26             |
| Subtotal .....  | 486         | 536         | 555            | 531            |
| Information Technology:                                       |             |             |                |                |
| Client Experience Center .....                                | 739         | 649         | 433            | 453            |
| Department Administration Information Technology Office ..... | 14          | 10          | 19             | 19             |
| Digital Infrastructure Services Center .....                  | 400         | 720         | 297            | 281            |
| Enterprise Cyber Security Services .....                      | -           | -           | 84             | 102            |
| Enterprise Data and Analytics Services .....                  | -           | 16          | 17             | 16             |
| Enterprise Network Services .....                             | 685         | 602         | 936            | 932            |
| Subtotal .....  | 1,838       | 1,997       | 1,786          | 1,803          |
| Correspondence Management Services:                           |             |             |                |                |
| Office of the Executive Secretariat .....                     | 19          | 30          | 32             | 29             |
| Total, Working Capital Fund .....                             | 2,591       | 2,813       | 2,668          | 2,640          |
| <b>Department-Wide Shared Cost Programs:</b>                  |             |             |                |                |
| Agency Partnership Outreach.....                              | 30          | 32          | 30             | 30             |
| Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility .....          | -           | 9           | 11             | 11             |
| Employee Experience .....                                     | -           | 15          | 15             | 15             |
| Medical Services .....  | 29          | 32          | 29             | 29             |
| National Capital Region Interpretating Services.....          | 6           | 10          | 12             | 12             |
| Office of Customer Experience .....                           | 41          | 14          | 13             | 13             |
| Personnel and Document Security Program.....                  | 74          | -           | -              | -              |
| Physical Security .....                                       | 20          | 19          | 19             | 19             |
| Security Detail .....   | 21          | 22          | 22             | 22             |
| Security Operations Program .....                             | 29          | 30          | 31             | 31             |
| Talent Group.....   | -           | 16          | 13             | 13             |
| TARGET Center .....   | 6           | 7           | 7              | 7              |
| USDA Enterprise Data Analytics Services .....                 | 21          | -           | -              | -              |
| Total, Department-Wide Reimbursable Programs.....             | 277         | 206         | 202            | 202            |
| <b>E-Gov:</b>   |             |             |                |                |
| Budget Formulation and Execution Line of Business .....       | 1           | -           | -              | -              |
| E-Rulemaking .....  | -           | -           | 2              | 3              |
| Hiring Assessment Tool .....                                  | 1           | -           | -              | -              |
| Human Resource Line of Business .....                         | 1           | 1           | 1              | 1              |
| Integrated Acquisition Environment .....                      | 1           | 1           | 1              | 1              |
| Total, E-Gov.....   | 4           | 2           | 4              | 5              |
| Agency Total .....  | 2,872       | 3,021       | 2,874          | 2,847          |

**ACCOUNT 1: SALARIES AND EXPENSES**

**APPROPRIATIONS LANGUAGE**

The appropriations language follows (new language underscored; deleted matter enclosed in brackets):

*Salaries and Expenses*

For necessary expenses of the Office of Inspector General, including employment pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-452; 5 U.S.C. 401 et seq.), [~~\$125,893,000~~]\$114,024,000, including such sums as may be necessary for contracting and other arrangements with public agencies and private persons pursuant to section 6(a)(9) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-452; 5 U.S.C. 406(a)(9), and including not to exceed \$125,000 for certain confidential operational expenses, including the payment of informants, to be expended under the direction of the Inspector General pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978 (Public Law 95-452; 5 U.S.C. 401 et seq.) and section 1337 of the Agriculture and Food Act of 1981 (Public Law 97-98).

**LEAD-OFF TABULAR STATEMENT**

**Table OIG-6. Lead-Off Tabular Statement (In dollars)**

| Item                    | Amount             |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Estimate, 2024          | \$111,561,000      |
| Change in Appropriation | + 2,463,000        |
| Budget Estimate, 2025   | <u>114,024,000</u> |

**PROJECT STATEMENTS**

**Table OIG-7. Project Statement on Basis of Appropriations (thousands of dollars, FTEs)**

| Item                             | 2022      |      | 2023      |      | 2024      |      | 2025      |      | FTE Inc. or Dec. | FTE Inc. or Dec. | Chg. Key |
|----------------------------------|-----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|------------------|------------------|----------|
|                                  | Actual    | FTEs | Actual    | FTEs | Estimated | FTEs | Estimated | FTEs |                  |                  |          |
| Discretionary Appropriations:    |           |      |           |      |           |      |           |      |                  |                  |          |
| OIG.....                         | \$106,309 | 411  | \$111,561 | 405  | \$111,561 | 400  | \$114,024 | 400  | +\$2,463         | -                | (1)      |
| Supplemental Appropriations:     |           |      |           |      |           |      |           |      |                  |                  |          |
| Bipartisan Infrastructure .....  | 8,322     | -    | 4,716     | 20   | 4,716     | 30   | 4,716     | 30   | -                | -                |          |
| Total Adjusted Approp .....      | 114,631   | 411  | 116,277   | 425  | 116,277   | 430  | 118,740   | 430  | +2,463           | -                |          |
| Add back:                        |           |      |           |      |           |      |           |      |                  |                  |          |
| Transfers In and Out, .....      | -8,322    | -    | -4,716    | 20   | -4,716    | 30   | -4,716    | 30   | -                | -                |          |
| Total Appropriation .....        | 106,309   | 411  | 111,561   | 425  | 111,561   | 430  | 114,024   | 430  | +2,463           | -                |          |
| Transfers In: .....              |           |      |           |      |           |      |           |      |                  |                  |          |
| Bipartisan Infrastructure Law .. | 8,322     | -    | 4,716     | -    | 4,716     | -    | 4,716     | -    | -                | -                |          |
| Total Transfers In .....         | 8,322     | -    | 4,716     | -    | 4,716     | -    | 4,716     | -    | -                | -                |          |
| Recoveries, Other .....          | 31        | -    | -         | -    | -         | -    | -         | -    | -                | -                |          |
| Bal. Available, SOY .....        | 342       | -    | 7,895     | -    | 8,778     | -    | 7,476     | -    | -1,302           | -                |          |
| Total Available.....             | 115,004   | 411  | 124,172   | 425  | 125,055   | 430  | 126,216   | 430  | -1,161           | -                |          |
| Lapsing Balances .....           | -1,709    | -    | -2,013    | -    | -         | -    | -         | -    | -                | -                |          |
| Bal. Available, EOY .....        | -7,895    | -    | -8,778    | -    | -7,476    | -    | -5,352    | -    | +2,124           | -                |          |
| Total Obligations .....          | 105,400   | 411  | 113,381   | 425  | 117,579   | 430  | 120,864   | 430  | +3,285           | -                |          |

**Table OIG-8. Project Statement on Basis of Obligations (thousands of dollars, FTEs)**

| Item                           | 2022<br>Actual | FTEs | 2023<br>Actual | FTEs | 2024<br>Estimated | FTEs | 2025<br>Estimated | FTEs | Inc. or<br>Dec. | FTE<br>Inc. or<br>Dec. |
|--------------------------------|----------------|------|----------------|------|-------------------|------|-------------------|------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Discretionary Obligations:     |                |      |                |      |                   |      |                   |      |                 |                        |
| OIG.....                       | \$104,600      | 411  | \$111,561      | 405  | \$111,561         | 400  | \$114,024         | 400  | +\$2,463        | -                      |
| Mandatory Obligations:         |                |      |                |      |                   |      |                   |      |                 |                        |
| American Rescue Plan.....      | 236            | -    | -              | -    | -                 | -    | -                 | -    | -               | -                      |
| Supplemental Obligations:      |                |      |                |      |                   |      |                   |      |                 |                        |
| Bipartisan Infra Law.....      | 489            | -    | 3,833          | 20   | 5,898             | 30   | 5,280             | 30   | -618            | -                      |
| Disaster and Emergency.....    | 75             | -    | -              | -    | -                 | -    | -                 | -    | -               | -                      |
| Subtotal Supp Obligations..... | 564            | -    | 3,833          | 20   | 5,898             | 30   | 5,280             | 30   | -618            | -                      |
| Total Obligations.....         | 105,400        | 411  | 115,394        | 425  | 117,459           | 430  | 119,304           | 430  | +1,845          | -                      |
| Lapsing Balances.....          | 1,709          | -    | 2,013          | -    | -                 | -    | -                 | -    | -               | -                      |
| Balances Available, EOY:       |                |      |                |      |                   |      |                   |      |                 |                        |
| Bipartisan Infra Law.....      | 7,833          | -    | 6,765          | -    | 7,596             | -    | 6,912             | -    | -684            | -                      |
| Disaster and Emergency.....    | 62             | -    | -              | -    | -                 | -    | -                 | -    | -               | -                      |
| Total Bal. Available, EOY..... | 7,895          | -    | 6,765          | -    | 7,596             | -    | 6,912             | -    | -684            | -                      |
| Total Available.....           | 115,004        | 411  | 124,172        | 425  | 125,055           | 430  | 126,216           | 430  | +1,161          | -                      |
| Total Transfers In.....        | -8,322         | -    | -4,716         | -    | -4,716            | -    | -4,716            | -    | -               | -                      |
| Recoveries, Other.....         | -31            | -    | -              | -    | -                 | -    | -                 | -    | -               | -                      |
| Bal. Available, SOY.....       | -342           | -    | -7,895         | -    | -8,778            | -    | -7,476            | -    | +1,302          | -                      |
| Total Appropriation.....       | 106,309        | 411  | 111,561        | 425  | 111,561           | 430  | 114,024           | 430  | +2,463          | -                      |

**JUSTIFICATION OF CHANGES**

**Office of the Inspector General**

The Office of Inspector General conducts various audits and investigations under the Inspector General Act of 1978 to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness within USDA and to detect and prevent fraud, waste, and abuse in programs and operations. Continuation of these programs are critical to ensure that financial information is represented fairly, accurately, and in accordance with government accounting standards.

A fully funded OIG is vitally important to ensure results are achieved through audits and investigations. These objectives include but are not limited to the assessment of program effectiveness and efficiency, Internal Control, compliance, and prospective analysis. OIG’s ability to conduct oversight and accomplish its mission is directly tied to the number of employees available to conduct the oversight work, with approximately one OIG employee for every 211 USDA employees.

The requested Budget of \$114,024,000, while allocating sufficient funding for the proposed 2 percent pay cost increase, falls short of adequately supporting the essential function of the OIG, which is conducting oversight of USDA’s operations and extensive portfolio of programs. At this proposed funding level, OIG would focus our resources on statutorily mandated work and selected critical risk areas and defer additional engagements. Within the Office of Audit, for example, its 2024 annual plan included a total of 82 engagements, which only 54 percent focused on discretionary work, the remaining 46 percent of engagements are mandatory work we perform or tied to oversight of legislation such as IIJA and IRA. With reduced budgetary resources, the Office of Audit will not be able to conduct work in critical and high-risk areas including food safety, USDA research activities, trade, and security of agricultural resources. In addition, we will not have adequate funding to review areas including facility safety, deferred maintenance, and high-risk purchase transactions and contracts. This leaves critical areas of USDA’s portfolio at risk due to the lack of independent oversight.

Given OIG’s track record of remarkable productivity and a historical return on investment of \$7.73 for every dollar invested, any additional funding allocated to the USDA OIG would significantly enhance capacity to conduct effective oversight. Recent successes, exemplified by the \$100 million judgement awarded as a direct outcome of OIG’s investigative work. Specifically, a USDA OIG investigation revealed that officials with a financial institution conspired with importers and exporters to defraud the Supplier Credit Guarantee Program by fraudulently obtaining numerous guarantees that resulted in over \$100 million in false claims to the Foreign Agricultural Service. This investigation underscores the tangible impact that increased resources can have in uncovering and addressing fraud, mismanagement, and other critical issues within USDA programs. Securing additional funding would not only



fortify our ability to uphold integrity and accountability but also contribute to safeguarding taxpayer dollars and ensuring the proper utilization of government funds.

The numbers and letters of the following listing relates to values in the Change (Chg.) Key column of the Project Statement:

1. An increase of \$2,463,000 in salaries and expenses for the Office of Inspector General programs (\$111,561,000 and 430 FTEs available in 2024).

The funding change is requested for the following items:

- A) An increase of \$2,463,000 for pay and employee costs in Office of Inspector General Programs.

This increase consists of \$2,463,000 in 2025 pay and employee costs, for continuation of the 2024 pay cost increase of 5.2 percent and the 2025 pay cost increase of 2 percent. If this funding is not provided, Office of Inspector General would need to make significant cuts to our non-labor spending which we anticipate will affect critical training that is required for professional certifications, operational travel to perform our mission, and contracts to ensure the safety and integrity of our IT systems.

**GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN OF OBLIGATIONS AND FTEs**

*Table OIG-9. Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and FTEs (thousands of dollars, FTEs)*

| State/Territory/Country   | 2022   |      | 2023   |      | 2024      |      | 2025      |      |
|---------------------------|--------|------|--------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|
|                           | Actual | FTEs | Actual | FTEs | Estimated | FTEs | Estimated | FTEs |
| Alabama.....              | 1,026  | 4    | 1,086  | 4    | 1,093     | 4    | 1,110     | 4    |
| Arizona.....              | 769    | 3    | 815    | 3    | 819       | 3    | 832       | 3    |
| Arkansas.....             | 1,026  | 4    | 1,086  | 4    | 1,093     | 4    | 1,110     | 4    |
| California.....           | 9,745  | 38   | 10,318 | 38   | 10,380    | 38   | 10,543    | 38   |
| Colorado.....             | 1,539  | 6    | 1,629  | 6    | 1,639     | 6    | 1,665     | 6    |
| District of Columbia..... | 7,437  | 29   | 11,675 | 43   | 13,112    | 48   | 13,318    | 48   |
| Florida.....              | 5,642  | 22   | 5,973  | 22   | 6,010     | 22   | 6,104     | 22   |
| Georgia.....              | 7,693  | 30   | 8,145  | 30   | 8,195     | 30   | 8,324     | 30   |
| Idaho.....                | 513    | 2    | 543    | 2    | 546       | 2    | 555       | 2    |
| Illinois.....             | 5,129  | 20   | 5,430  | 20   | 5,463     | 20   | 5,549     | 20   |
| Indiana.....              | 769    | 3    | 815    | 3    | 819       | 3    | 832       | 3    |
| Iowa.....                 | 256    | 1    | 272    | 1    | 273       | 1    | 277       | 1    |
| Kansas.....               | 4,873  | 19   | 5,159  | 19   | 5,190     | 19   | 5,272     | 19   |
| Kentucky.....             | 769    | 3    | 815    | 3    | 819       | 3    | 832       | 3    |
| Louisiana.....            | 769    | 3    | 815    | 3    | 819       | 3    | 832       | 3    |
| Maine.....                | 256    | 1    | 272    | 1    | 273       | 1    | 277       | 1    |
| Maryland.....             | 12,566 | 49   | 13,304 | 49   | 13,385    | 49   | 13,595    | 49   |
| Michigan.....             | 1,795  | 7    | 1,901  | 7    | 1,912     | 7    | 1,942     | 7    |
| Minnesota.....            | 513    | 2    | 543    | 2    | 546       | 2    | 555       | 2    |
| Mississippi.....          | 1,026  | 4    | 1,086  | 4    | 1,093     | 4    | 1,110     | 4    |
| Missouri.....             | 11,027 | 43   | 11,675 | 43   | 11,746    | 43   | 11,930    | 43   |
| Montana.....              | 256    | 1    | 272    | 1    | 273       | 1    | 277       | 1    |
| Nebraska.....             | 769    | 3    | 815    | 3    | 819       | 3    | 832       | 3    |
| Nevada.....               | 256    | 1    | 272    | 1    | 273       | 1    | 277       | 1    |
| New Hampshire.....        | 769    | 3    | 815    | 3    | 819       | 3    | 832       | 3    |
| New York.....             | 2,821  | 11   | 2,987  | 11   | 3,005     | 11   | 3,052     | 11   |
| North Carolina.....       | 3,077  | 12   | 3,258  | 12   | 3,278     | 12   | 3,329     | 12   |
| North Dakota.....         | 256    | 1    | 272    | 1    | 273       | 1    | 277       | 1    |
| Ohio.....                 | 1,795  | 7    | 1,901  | 7    | 1,912     | 7    | 1,942     | 7    |
| Oklahoma.....             | 1,026  | 4    | 1,086  | 4    | 1,093     | 4    | 1,110     | 4    |
| Oregon.....               | 1,539  | 6    | 1,629  | 6    | 1,639     | 6    | 1,665     | 6    |
| Pennsylvania.....         | 2,308  | 9    | 2,444  | 9    | 2,458     | 9    | 2,497     | 9    |
| South Carolina.....       | 513    | 2    | 543    | 2    | 546       | 2    | 555       | 2    |
| Tennessee.....            | 513    | 2    | 543    | 2    | 546       | 2    | 555       | 2    |
| Texas.....                | 8,206  | 32   | 8,688  | 32   | 8,741     | 32   | 8,878     | 32   |
| Utah.....                 | 513    | 2    | 543    | 2    | 546       | 2    | 555       | 2    |
| Virginia.....             | 4,873  | 19   | 5,159  | 19   | 5,190     | 19   | 5,272     | 19   |
| Washington.....           | 513    | 2    | 543    | 2    | 546       | 2    | 555       | 2    |

| State/Territory/Country   | 2022    |      | 2023    |      | 2024      |      | 2025      |      |
|---------------------------|---------|------|---------|------|-----------|------|-----------|------|
|                           | Actual  | FTEs | Actual  | FTEs | Estimated | FTEs | Estimated | FTEs |
| Wisconsin .....           | 256     | 1    | 272     | 1    | 273       | 1    | 277       | 1    |
| Obligations .....         | 105,400 | 411  | 115,394 | 425  | 117,459   | 430  | 119,304   | 430  |
| Lapsing Balances .....    | 1,709   | -    | 2,013   | -    | -         | -    | -         | -    |
| Bal. Available, EOY ..... | 7,895   | -    | 6,765   | -    | -         | -    | -         | -    |
| Total, Available .....    | 115,004 | 411  | 124,172 | 425  | 117,459   | 430  | 119,304   | 430  |

**CLASSIFICATION BY OBJECTS**

*Table OIG-10. Classification by Objects (thousands of dollars)*

| Item No. | Item  | 2022 Actual  | 2023 Actual  | 2024 Estimated | 2025 Estimated |
|----------|---|--------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
|          | Personnel Compensation:                                 |              |              |                |                |
|          | Washington D.C. ....                                    | \$13,493     | \$16,124     | \$17,596       | \$17,839       |
|          | Personnel Compensation, Field .....                     | 40,479       | 42,204       | 41,961         | 42,888         |
| 11       | Total personnel compensation .....                      | 53,972       | 58,328       | 59,557         | 60,727         |
| 12       | Personal benefits .....                                 | 23,212       | 25,607       | 27,524         | 27,794         |
| 13.0     | Benefits for former personnel .....                     | 21           | 7            | 7              | 7              |
|          | Total, personnel comp. and benefits .....               | 77,205       | 83,942       | 87,088         | 88,528         |
|          | Other Objects:  |              |              |                |                |
| 21.0     | Travel and transportation of persons .....              | 671          | 2,854        | 2,606          | 2,681          |
| 22.0     | Transportation of things .....                          | 83           | 114          | 116            | 119            |
| 23.1     | Rental payments to GSA .....                            | 5,125        | 4,557        | 4,367          | 4,401          |
| 23.2     | Rental payments to others .....                         | 1            | -            | -              | -              |
| 23.3     | Communications, utilities, and misc. charges .....      | 2,470        | 2,659        | 2,682          | 2,708          |
| 24.0     | Printing and reproduction .....                         | 308          | 317          | 323            | 330            |
| 25.1     | Advisory and assistance services .....                  | 12,808       | 14,838       | 14,183         | 14,286         |
| 25.2     | Other services from non-Federal sources .....           | -            | -            | -              | -              |
| 25.3     | Other goods and services from Federal sources .....     | 1,634        | 1,846        | 1,750          | 1,810          |
| 25.4     | Operation and maintenance of facilities .....           | 126          | 22           | 22             | 23             |
| 25.5     | Research and development contracts .....                | -            | -            | -              | -              |
| 25.7     | Operation and maintenance of equipment .....            | 2,472        | 2,192        | 2,232          | 2,282          |
| 26.0     | Supplies and materials .....                            | 170          | 621          | 632            | 646            |
| 31.0     | Equipment .....   | 2,316        | 1,331        | 1,355          | 1,385          |
| 33.0     | Investments and loans .....                             | -            | -            | -              | -              |
| 41.0     | Grants, subsidies, and contributions .....              | 0            | 0            | 0              | 0              |
| 42.0     | Insurance Claims and Indemnities .....                  | 11           | 100          | 102            | 104            |
| 43.0     | Interest and Dividends .....                            | -            | 1            | 1              | 1              |
|          | Total, Other Objects .....                              | 28,195       | 31,452       | 30,371         | 30,776         |
| 99.9     | Total, new obligations .....                            | 105,400      | 115,394      | 117,459        | 119,304        |
|          | DHS Building Security Payments (included in 25.3) ..... | \$875        | \$866        | \$883          | \$901          |
|          | Information Technology Investments:                     |              |              |                |                |
| 11       | Internal Labor .....                                    | \$2,690      | \$3,120      | \$3,182        | \$3,246        |
|          | External Labor (Contractors) .....                      | 3,565        | 3,636        | 3,708          | 3,782          |
|          | Total Major Investment 1 .....                          | 6,255        | 6,756        | 6,890          | 7,028          |
|          | Internal Shared Services Type Investment                |              |              |                |                |
|          | External Labor (Contractors) .....                      | 1,894        | 1,932        | 1,971          | 2,010          |
|          | Total Major Investment 2 .....                          | 1,894        | 1,932        | 1,971          | 2,010          |
|          | <b>Total IT Investments .....</b>                       | <b>8,149</b> | <b>8,688</b> | <b>8,861</b>   | <b>9,038</b>   |
|          | Cybersecurity   |              |              |                |                |
|          | Identify .....  | 216          | \$211        | \$236          | \$368          |
|          | Protect .....   | 501          | 505          | 557            | 471            |
|          | Detect .....  | 60           | 30           | 36             | 36             |
|          | Respond .....   | 70           | 75           | 80             | 80             |
|          | Recover .....   | 100          | 105          | 125            | 125            |
|          | <b>Total Cybersecurity .....</b>                        | <b>947</b>   | <b>926</b>   | <b>1,034</b>   | <b>1,080</b>   |
|          | Position Data:  |              |              |                |                |
|          | Average Salary (dollars), ES Position .....             | \$178,826    | \$187,231    | \$196,967      | \$200,906      |
|          | Average Salary (dollars), GS Position .....             | \$120,387    | \$126,046    | \$132,600      | \$135,252      |
|          | Average Grade, GS Position .....                        | 12.9         | 13.6         | 13.7           | 13.8           |



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**STATUS OF PROGRAMS**

OIG’s audit, investigative, and data analytics work for 2023 is summarized under OIG’s three mission strategic goals:

- Safety and security measures to protect public health and resources.
- Integrity of benefits and entitlements programs and
- USDA’s management improvement initiatives.

**SAFETY AND SECURITY – Strengthen USDA’s Ability to Protect Public Health and Safety and to Secure Agricultural and Department Resources**

OIG’s independent audits, investigations, inspections, data analytics, and other reviews focus on issues such as the ongoing challenges of agricultural inspection activities, the safety of the food supply, homeland security, animal welfare, and information technology security and management.

***Selected Examples of Recent Progress-Audit Work:***

USDA has worked diligently to improve its information technology (IT) security posture, but some weaknesses remain. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) establishes standards for an effective level of IT security and considers Level 4, “Managed and Measurable,” to be sufficient. However, we found the Department’s maturity level to be at a Level 3, “Consistently Implemented,” which is considered ineffective according to OMB’s criteria. The Department and its agencies must develop and implement an effective plan to mitigate security weaknesses identified in the prior fiscal year recommendations.

OIG performed an inspection of USDA-developed, publicly accessible, mobile applications (apps) available solely on public app stores. These USDA developed apps were used to determine if the agencies and staff offices were identifying and mitigating vulnerabilities on these mobile apps. This was verified by selecting USDA-developed mobile apps and performing vulnerability scans using a commercial mobile app vulnerability scanner. The inspection specifically focused on publicly accessible USDA-developed mobile apps from the Internet that could be independently tested using an internal vulnerability scanner. As part of the inspection, a sample of agencies and staff offices were identified and reviewed for processes of scanning mobile apps and mitigating vulnerabilities, and applicable National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) publications and Departmental Regulations (DR) were also reviewed to determine whether the sampled agencies and staff offices complied. OCIO, the agency, and staff offices agreed with all six of our recommendations, and an agreement was reached on the planned corrective actions to address them.

OIG evaluated the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service’s (APHIS) oversight of response activities related to cattle disease incidents for the tuberculosis, brucellosis, and bovine spongiform encephalopathy programs. In the report, it was determined that APHIS did not adequately manage identified risks to its animal disease tracing capabilities. This occurred because APHIS did not sufficiently analyze the risks’ significance to determine what mitigating actions APHIS or its cooperators should take. It was also found that, since FY 2017, APHIS did not properly track and account for its Animal Health program umbrella cooperative agreement funding. As a result, APHIS lacks assurance that the recipients used funds awarded – totaling more than \$18 million in FY2020 – for authorized purposes. APHIS agreed with the recommendations, and an agreement was reached on the planned corrective actions.

***Selected Examples of Recent Progress–Investigative Work:***

In Georgia, a resident was involved in two separate drug-trafficking organizations and a multi-State dogfighting operation and was sentenced to more than 15 years in prison. This individual was the final defendant of 21 co-conspirators identified from two Organized Crime and Drug Enforcement Task Force investigations.

A Missouri man was sentenced to 32 years in Federal prison without parole for a \$215,000 cattle fraud scheme he attempted to conceal by murdering two Wisconsin brothers. The court also ordered him to pay \$260,925 in restitution to his victims. Additionally, he is serving two life sentences without parole on the State murder charges.

Civil actions in Federal court rescued more than 100 dogs from animal fighting operations in multiple Georgia locations. Three civil forfeiture complaints were filed between September and December 2022 that sought possession of 110 dogs allegedly involved in illegal dog fighting ventures.

**INTEGRITY OF BENEFITS—Strengthen USDA’s Ability to Deliver Program Assistance with Integrity and Effectiveness.**

Our focus includes assessing internal controls and identifying risk indicators that should increase both OIG’s and USDA’s ability to detect and prevent program abuse and criminal activity. Integrity in the various benefit and entitlement programs of USDA, including programs that provide payments directly or indirectly to individuals and/or entities, is a primary investigative focus.

***Selected Examples of Recent Progress – Audit Work:***

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018 (the Act) established the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) Rural eConnectivity Pilot Program (ReConnect Program). The purpose of the ReConnect Program is to encourage the expansion of broadband services to rural areas that lack sufficient broadband access by awarding grants and low-interest loans to eligible broadband service providers. The Act initially provided the program \$600 million for grants, loans, and grant/loan combinations. Subsequent annual appropriations in 2019 provided an additional \$1.1 billion in ReConnect Program funding. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) provided an additional \$100 million for ReConnect Program grants. During our review of submitted ReConnect Program applications, we did not identify any issues with RUS’ scoring of program applications. Furthermore, RUS did not utilize the scoring and ranking attribute when awarding program funds as sufficient appropriations to fund all approved applications were available. However, it was discovered that the RUS’ mapping tool had a systemic programming error that caused the number of households without sufficient access to broadband to be overstated for some applications. Specifically, when an applicant adjusted or redrew their Proposed Funded Service Area (PFSA), the programming error allowed multiple underserved areas to be drawn on top of each other and allowed the system to count households without sufficient access to broadband more than once. As a result, two approved applications, valued at more than \$17.8 million, were challenged in which the number of households without sufficient access to broadband in a PFSA was larger than the total number of households in the PFSA. RUS officials agreed with the findings and recommendations, OIG accepted management decision on both recommendations.

The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) works to improve foreign market access for U.S. products, build new markets, improve the competitive position of U.S. agriculture in the global marketplace, and provide food aid and technical assistance to foreign countries. FAS programs help U.S. exporters develop and maintain markets for food and agricultural products. FAS administers the Market Access Program (MAP), through which it partners with U.S. agricultural trade associations, cooperatives, State regional trade groups, and small businesses to share the costs of overseas marketing and promotional activities to help build commercial export markets for U.S. agricultural products and commodities. FAS did not develop and document in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) its criteria to make funding determinations and recommend funding levels. Further, FAS did not consistently apply its funding processes to all applicants. Additionally, FAS did not ensure that MAP application reviewers were free from the appearance of a conflict of interest. As a result, FAS cannot support how it consistently, transparently, and fairly recommended and allocated more than \$194 million in 2021 MAP funding. FAS officials generally agreed with the findings and recommendations, OIG accepted management decision on all seven recommendations.

OIG reviewed how the Risk Management Agency (RMA) administered and oversaw the Federal Crop Insurance Program’s requirements for prevented planting. RMA updated its internal controls to administer and oversee prevented planting, including a new rule to ensure that consistently wet acreage would not be eligible for prevented planting claims. Eligible acreage needs to have been planted to a crop at least once in the previous 4 years. However, RMA did not ensure that the specific acreage in a producer’s land was eligible for an insurance payment. To make this determination, the producers’ insurance adjusters used a mathematical approach to determine the total acres eligible for a prevented planting claim. Without documentation that demonstrated which acres were eligible, prevented planting payments totaling more than \$1,087 billion were made in crop year 2020 that were not fully supported. During the review, OIG was unable to use the information in the adjusters’ claim files to confirm that producers were eligible for the insurance payments received. RMA agreed with the recommendations, and an agreement was reached on planned corrective actions to address them.

***Selected Examples of Recent Progress-Investigative Work:***

A Texas man was sentenced to more than 1 year in Federal prison for defrauding USDA’s Summer Food Service Program out of more than \$2.3 million. He was later ordered to pay restitution to USDA totaling over \$2.3 million.

Seven defendants were sentenced to Federal prison for their involvement in a scheme to defraud USDA out of more than \$11.5 million intended to benefit farmers who had suffered discrimination. Four of the defendants are sisters and were each sentenced to serve 24 months in Federal prison. In addition, an attorney who acted as the claimants’ legal representative and accepted legal fees from them, as well as a tax preparer used by the defendants to file claimants’ tax returns, were each sentenced to 1 year and 1 day in prison. They also were ordered to pay a total of

more than \$9 million in restitution with the other defendants. Each pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit mail fraud and to defraud the Internal Revenue Service.

On May 23, 2023, in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, a store owner was sentenced to 10 months in prison, followed by 3 years of supervised release, and ordered to pay joint and several restitutions totaling more than \$1.4 million. Specifically, the OIG investigation determined that the store owner and a second store owner, sentenced previously, exchanged Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits with store customers for cash and ineligible items. This was a joint investigation with Department of Homeland Security, Homeland Security Investigations; a county sheriff's office; Internal Revenue Service—Criminal Investigation; and the Michigan State Police Bridge Card Enforcement Team.

***Selected Examples of Recent Progress-Office of Analytics and Innovation Work:***

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Office of Inspector General (OIG) has launched a series of data products called data stories. The purpose of these data stories is to enhance transparency of significant USDA programs using data analytics and visualizations while integrating data storytelling methods. The second product in the data story series focuses on the USDA Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP). This product utilized data analytics, visualizations, and data storytelling methods to enhance transparency of how the CFAP 1 and CFAP 2 programs evolved over time. The data utilized for this data story were unaudited. CFAP 1 and CFAP 2 provided payments to agricultural producers to help address the economic hardships created when COVID-19 disrupted the agricultural supply chain. This CFAP data story invites the reader to explore both programs and how they evolved from inception to the end of February 2022 in response to changing pandemic conditions.

**MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES—Strengthen USDA's Ability to Achieve Results-Oriented Performance**

OIG's audits, investigations, and other reviews focus on areas such as improved financial management and accountability, research, real property management, and employee integrity. As part of this goal, we work with USDA to make program operations more efficient and improve customer service.

***Selected Examples of Recent Progress-Audit Work:***

USDA has more than 11,000 cardholders who use commercial credit cards (purchase cards) to procure and purchase needed supplies and services. Within USDA, the Office of Contracting and Procurement (OCP) administers these purchase cards and provides policy and oversight to USDA agencies regarding their use. Between April 2020 and March 2021, USDA cardholders made 758,668 transactions of more than \$404.1 million in purchases and procurements. OIG selected a universe of transactions with a value greater than or equal to \$100 and less than or equal to \$10,000. From this universe of 428,645 transactions, a sample of 200 found the following:

- 71 were missing required documentation needed for properly approving purchases.
- 72 were made using open market vendors/nonmandatory sources and not a Federal mandatory source.
- 4 were part of a split-purchase pattern engaged in by four independent cardholders.
- 4 erroneously paid sales taxes, and the cardholders did not attempt to recover the sales tax paid.

OCP generally agreed with the findings and recommendations, OIG accepted management decision on all four recommendations.

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), a Federal agency within USDA, was established by the 2008 Farm Bill to find innovative solutions to issues related to agriculture, food, and the environment. NIFA carries out its mission by providing financial assistance to partner institutions through three primary funding mechanisms: competitive grants, capacity grants, and non-competitive grants. NIFA is responsible for administering the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), which is the Nation's flagship competitive grants program for research, education, and extension projects in the food and agricultural sciences. It was determined that NIFA designed adequate controls over the peer and merit review system when selecting AFRI grant recipients. No issues were identified during fieldwork to indicate that controls were not adequately implemented to properly select applicants based on merit. It was however discovered that NIFA did not effectively monitor any of the 51 started AFRI grants we sampled, as the agency did not adequately review grantees' progress and financial reports, timely close out grants, or timely deobligate unused grant funding. In addition, NIFA did not complete required grantee compliance reviews in a timely manner. This occurred because NIFA did not have the processes in place to complete and document monitoring activities. As a result, NIFA cannot provide reasonable assurance that the more than \$80 million in active and closed AFRI grants sampled fulfilled their stated objectives and complied with

Federal regulations, agency policies, and the terms and conditions of the grants. NIFA concurred with all five recommendations, and OIG accepted management decision for all recommendations.

***Selected Examples of Recent Progress-Investigative Work:***

A former USDA animal inspector was sentenced to 57 months in prison and \$40,000 in fines for accepting bribes from foreign cattle brokers. Special agents determined the employee violated public trust by allowing uninspected cattle into the United States. As part of the employee's responsibilities, the employee was one of two individuals assigned to a Texas border city and authorized to inspect and quarantine or exclude tick-infested or diseased cattle. By failing to apply these safeguards, this employee increased the risk that dangerous organisms or disease could enter the U.S. food supply or livestock.

On October 4, 2022, a Defense Contracting Activity (DCA) Force Protection Specialist security guard was terminated in connection with his unauthorized use of a body worn camera while on duty at the USDA National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility in Manhattan, Kansas. The investigation determined that the subject continued to wear the body worn camera against the facility regulations and despite being advised by both his colleagues and immediate supervisors to remove the device on at least two occasions. The immediate supervisor failed to notify the DCA Program Manager of the incidents which led to corrective action being taken on him as well. The United States Attorney's Office in the District of Kansas declined prosecution.

***Selected Examples of Recent Progress-Office of Analytics and Innovation Work:***

**Public IIJA Spending Dashboard**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA) Funding Dashboard allows stakeholders to explore USDA programs that received IIJA funding, as well as IIJA monies awarded through USDA. This interactive dashboard displays the amounts of ALL USDA IIJA funding enacted, budgeted, obligated, and spent, by appropriations act, agency, program area, and use of funds, providing the general public transparency on how USDA is leveraging IIJA funds.

**Broadband Data Stroll – Phase I**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Office of Inspector General's (OIG) Office of Analytics and Innovation has developed a public data stroll on the broadband program in partnership with the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) OIG called Broadband: A Data Stroll. The objective of this product is to: a) raise awareness of the broadband program as part of our oversight mission, b) provide context that can supplement related work, and c) provide transparency on funding as it relates to broadband. This product utilizes public data from USDA, DOC, and the Federal Communications Commission, and data visualizations to enhance the transparency of the broadband program, including the use of Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act funding. Phase II will include additional public broadband data sources as they are made available.

**OIG Procurement Resource Tool**

The USDA OIG Procurement Resource Tool brings disparate data sources around USDA procurements into one location. The interactive tool, developed by the Office of Analytics and Innovation in partnership with subject matter experts from across OIG, promotes transparency and supports data-driven decision-making by OIG staff as they carry out their oversight of USDA procurements and contract recipients.

**OIG Audit Analytic Toolbox**

This tool provides self-service analytics for Audit to validate data and assess data quality as it relates to Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA) data sets. This tool utilizes robotic process automation (RPA) to create efficiency and effectiveness within OIG Office of Audit by automating predefined tasks within the audit process. This in-turn frees up the auditors to conduct more in-depth program analysis.