

Chairman Jack Kingston
Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and
Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
USDA FY 2013 Budget Proposal – Marketing and Regulatory Programs
March 6, 2012
Chairman’s Opening Statement- AS PREPARED

The Subcommittee will come to order.

I want to welcome everyone to our sixth of eleven budget hearings for fiscal year 2013. As many of us learned last year, these oversight hearings become even more important as we appropriate fewer dollars against a growing list of needs in agriculture and in every other sector of the federal government. Today we gather to review the budgets of USDA's Marketing and Regulatory Programs mission area - a critically important function at USDA that covers such a vast area of responsibility ranging from animal and plant disease prevention activities to livestock and commodity price reporting to grain inspection.

I want to welcome Mr. Ed Avalos, USDA’s Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs; Dr. Greg Parham, Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service; Mr. Alan Christian, Acting Administrator, Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration; Mr. Robert Keeney, Acting Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service; and, Mr. Mike Young, USDA’s Budget Director.

The FY 2013 President’s Budget for the Marketing and Regulatory Programs Mission Area seeks total funding of \$2.42 billion, of which \$884 million is for discretionary programs. This budget request represents a net reduction of \$57 million or 6 percent less than the FY 2012 appropriation. Later in the hearing, I will prompt you for more detail on a number of particular budget proposals and policies, but first I wanted to take this time to commend you Mr. Under Secretary for your efforts to find savings and efficiencies in the past two budgets. In addition to funding reductions associated with re-engineered processes, the budget includes two Agency programs slated for elimination because these activities no longer align closely with the core mission. Lastly, in addition to these efforts, you have proposed closing 15 APHIS offices in 11 states and 5 APHIS offices in 5 foreign countries. These are the types of things we need to do across-the-board with a National Debt in excess of \$15.5 trillion.

#####