

United States Department of Agriculture
Foreign Agricultural Service



Foreign Agricultural Service
STRATEGIC PLAN
2019-2022



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MESSAGE FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

Food and agricultural products are the largest exports for the United States and represent a key component of our national economy. Currently, over 20 percent of all domestic agricultural production is destined for foreign markets. In addition, U.S. agriculture sets the standard as a safe, reliable, and high-quality supplier to all customers, providing economic opportunity in regions critical to our nation's security, and meeting the unprecedented increase in global demand that is accompanying the rise of the largest middle-class population in human history.

The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) is a critical component of USDA Secretary Perdue's charge to "do right and feed everyone," supporting a strong agricultural economy in the United States and promoting agricultural trade globally. We accomplish this through a unique 60-year partnership with the U.S. agricultural industry, a strong team in Washington, D.C., and a global network of agricultural attachés and locally employed staff who provide an unparalleled resource for engaging in trade policy, trade promotion, and market development issues in real-time around the world.



In May 2017, Secretary Perdue enhanced our Department's commitment to trade by establishing a new Under Secretary position dedicated exclusively to Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs (TFAA). Additionally, earlier this year, the Department published the USDA Strategic Plan for FY 2018-2022, which includes as the third goal FAS's role to "promote American agricultural products and exports."

Our FAS Strategic Plan for FY 2019-2022 outlines our approach to accomplishing that goal as well as the broader vision Secretary Perdue has for the Department's agencies to remain accountable to one another and to those who rely on us. This plan depends on our Agency's proven experience and recognized expertise in utilizing trade policy, international programming, and market analysis to expand exports, as well as the strong connection between FAS in Washington and our overseas offices to effectively execute our mission.

As FAS executes this plan in furtherance of these goals, I am pleased to be a part of this exceptional Agency doing such vital work that is central to our nation's well-being and the economic prosperity of U.S. farmers, ranchers, and processors.

Ken Isley
Administrator

INTRODUCTION

History of the Foreign Agricultural Service

Thomas Jefferson, as a Congressionally-appointed Minister to France, served as our nation's first agricultural attaché when he was dispatched to Paris in 1784. Jefferson's responsibilities focused on opening access to the European market, specifically for U.S. agricultural and fisheries products including whale oils, salted fish, salted meats, rice, and tobacco.

Eighty years later, as the nation expanded and matured into a larger global power, President Lincoln formally established USDA in 1862. The Department's Division of Statistics took on the responsibility of import and export reporting, and in 1882, hired its first official agent in the London Consulate General to collect statistics on European agriculture to better identify foreign demand for U.S. agricultural products. By the early 20th century, interest in foreign markets continued to increase, especially after domestic commodity prices plummeted after World War I. By the 1920s, USDA created ten additional postings to international capitals from Buenos Aires to Shanghai, and those overseas employees quickly became the Department's most important source of information on foreign agricultural markets.

In June 1930, with significant support from the U.S. agricultural community, President Hoover signed legislation granting diplomatic status to agricultural attachés and upgrading USDA's Foreign Section to the Foreign Agricultural Service, with the purpose of "encouraging and promoting the agriculture of the United States and assisting American farmers to adjust their operations and practices to meet world conditions." Passage of the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act in 1934 gave the new Agency responsibility for U.S. international trade policy involving agriculture as well. Then, in 1953, following the devastation World War II had on nearly all overseas markets, FAS was reconstituted as an independent agency with an expanded mission to address global agricultural issues.

FAS expanded its work through the end of the 20th century providing foreign market information to U.S. stakeholders; promoting the sale of U.S. agricultural products abroad; removing obstacles to foreign trade; and helping other countries through technical assistance, foreign investment, credit, food aid, and other means.

The establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995 ushered forth a new era for agricultural trade. FAS focused on implementation of new trade agreements that pursued elimination of tariffs and other non-tariff trade barriers which had inhibited market access for U.S. agriculture. This period also saw the launch of a broader effort by the United States and others to engage in the negotiation of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) that could build on the progress of tariff reductions achieved through the establishment of the WTO. Additionally, during this time, the former Office of International Cooperation and Development (OICD) merged with FAS, adding additional tools to the Agency's efforts in promoting export opportunities for American farmers, ranchers, and processors. Through implementation of technical assistance and trade capacity building programs,

FAS could focus on future market potential by working with developing countries to strengthen agricultural systems, providing for economic growth opportunities.

In 2014, the U.S. agriculture industry advocated for the establishment of an Under Secretary for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs within the 2014 Farm Bill. These recommendations came to fruition during USDA's 2017 reorganization, which formally established a TFAA Mission Area with FAS as the sole Agency under the Mission Area, along with the Codex Alimentarius Commission. This change reflected a renewed emphasis on the importance of the government's role in promoting U.S. agricultural exports, effectively elevating FAS's mission and voice within USDA and the broader international agricultural trade ecosystem.

Today, with approximately 1,400 staff including civil servants in Washington, D.C. and a global network of Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) and locally employed staff (LES) covering over 170 foreign countries from over 90 international offices, FAS continues to serve as the vital eyes, ears, voice, and hands of U.S. agriculture around the world.

What is a Strategic Plan?

In the early 1990s, the U.S. Government enacted two laws – the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) and the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010 (GPRAMA) – that require Federal agencies to set goals, measure performance, and submit related plans and reports to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review. These laws direct Federal agencies to develop these plans through a top-down process, creating a direct connection between leaders' priorities and agencies' activities. FAS recognizes the importance of documenting and communicating its priorities to its staff and its stakeholders, particularly with the Agency's recent move to the newly created TFAA. Consequently, this FAS Strategic Plan provides high-level guidance to FAS leadership and staff in navigating the dynamic nature of their work within the constantly shifting international agricultural trade ecosystem.

Without an effective Agency Strategic Plan, there would be little direction for FAS staff on how to prioritize and align their activities to meet Agency-wide desired outcomes. Through this plan, FAS provides top-down alignment of the Administration's and the Department's priorities to create Agency-level goals and objectives, which then inform FAS on how and where to work.

Elements of this Document

FAS's Strategic Plan is a guiding document for the Agency to set priorities, focus resources, and ensure its activities are resulting in the desired outcomes for FAS's stakeholders.

The FAS Strategic Plan aligns directly with FAS's mission. The mission is then supported by four goals that describe the high-level outcomes FAS aims to achieve.

Mission	FAS is a trade agency that promotes U.S. agricultural exports
Goal 1	Liberalize global agricultural trade by developing and enforcing policies to address trade barriers
Goal 2	Expand U.S. agricultural exports through implementation of trade-supporting initiatives
Goal 3	Inform global agricultural markets and advise U.S. decision-makers by providing relevant expertise and analysis
Goal 4	Efficiently and effectively operate FAS

The first three of these goals are more strategic, with a focus on achieving outcomes external to the Agency, whereas the last is more management-focused and internal to the Agency. Each FAS goal is then supported by objectives that provide greater detail on FAS’s goals. These objectives are intentionally written with broad language, encompassing the work of multiple Program Areas, Divisions, and offices across FAS. Collectively, the objectives under each goal provide an indication of priority activities and high-level guidance on where to direct Agency resources.

FAS’s performance on this plan is measured in two ways. First, at the mission-level, FAS has developed two contextual indicators that are outcome-oriented and measure the high-level progress of the Agency on fulfilling its mission. Then, aligned at the goal level, Agency-wide performance metrics convey how FAS directly measures its impact on each goal. These goal-level metrics are a mixture of output and outcome indicators, measuring activities from a variety of areas across the organization. Thus, taken together, leadership and staff, along with external stakeholders, will have a clear perspective on FAS’s performance at a mission-level, and at a more specific goal-level. This performance data will provide FAS leadership with valuable information illustrating how the Agency is doing, which will enable strategic decision-making on where to capitalize on areas of strength and where to improve upon areas of weakness.

Additionally, FAS utilizes several other metrics which are tracked internally to provide an even more comprehensive illustration of the performance of the entire Agency.

How was this Document Created?

The FAS 2019-2022 Strategic Plan was informed by the USDA Strategic Plan and closely directed by the leadership of the Under Secretary for TFAA and the FAS Administrator, as well as through consultation with a diverse sub-section of technical staff from across the Agency.

Guiding Documents for the FAS Strategic Plan

The FAS Strategic Plan outlines the organization’s mission and priorities, and ties directly to other relevant strategies from above and below the Agency level.

The President's Annual Budget sets forth the Administration's long-term vision for the government on behalf of its citizens. The priorities spelled out there guide each Department's strategic plan. Thus, the USDA FY 2018-2022 Strategic Plan, published in early 2018, cascades directly from the White House and informs the work of the entire Department. As part of the vision to make USDA the most efficient, most effective, and most customer-focused department in the Federal Government, USDA created and established seven strategic goals for fiscal years 2018-2022.

USDA Strategic Goals for FY2018-2022

1. Ensure USDA programs are delivered efficiently, effectively, and with integrity and a focus on customer service.
2. Maximize the ability of American agricultural producers to prosper by feeding and clothing the world.
- 3. Promote American agricultural products and exports.**
4. Facilitate rural prosperity and economic development.
5. Strengthen the stewardship of private lands through technology and research.
6. Foster productive and sustainable use of our National Forest System Lands.
7. Provide all Americans access to a safe, nutritious and secure food supply.

The goals above and the full text of the USDA Strategic Plan can be found here:
<https://www.usda.gov/our-agency/about-usda/strategic-goals>.

The chief responsibility for execution of Goal 3, bolded above, lies with FAS. The USDA Strategic Plan's Goal 3 section outlines key priorities, strategies, and objectives that are critical to the business of FAS's customers – the farmers, ranchers, and processors of American agriculture. FAS contributes to the achievement of USDA's objectives by supporting America's agricultural sector in the sale of U.S. agricultural products to markets around the world.

The FAS Strategic Plan is also aligned with the Global Market Analysis (GMA). The GMA is an FAS-led annual process to identify priority country-commodity markets to focus organizational resources. Consequently, the GMA works in tandem with the FAS Strategic Plan by informing the organization on where to work, while the FAS Strategic Plan directs the Agency on how to work (i.e. how to achieve its goals). Both these guiding documents and processes are high-level in nature and certainly do not cover the depth and breadth of all the geographies in which FAS works, nor all the activities it undertakes; instead, they provide directional guidance for the Agency on where and how to prioritize its efforts to achieve desired outcomes. The FAS Strategic Plan and the GMA then provide top-level guidance for the creation of Agency sub-strategies and action plans, which function at a greater level of detail and with more explicit direction to different parts of the organization regarding what types of activities to undertake to achieve Agency goals. Appendix C provides an overview of the top-down alignment of USDA and FAS's various strategic documents.

MISSION

Mission: FAS is a trade agency that promotes U.S. agricultural exports

FAS is the lead U.S. agency tasked with promoting exports of U.S. agricultural products. The Agency advances the growth of U.S. agricultural exports through market intelligence, trade policy, trade capacity building, and trade promotion programs. In concert, these capabilities allow FAS to engage foreign markets all along the market development spectrum – from developing economies to mature markets – facilitating an environment for trade growth opportunities for U.S. agriculture.

FAS also serves as the voice for U.S. agriculture in international affairs, bringing together the diverse views of American farmers, ranchers, processors, and trade associations, as well as U.S. Government agencies and non-governmental organizations. FAS's enacting legislation from 1930 allows for agricultural attachés and LES in international offices to serve as the vital eyes, ears, voice, and hands of U.S. agriculture around the world. These international offices often serve as the first point of contact for companies looking to export to a foreign market. Thus, FAS leadership in foreign agricultural affairs is realized through its global network of civil servants, FSOs, and LES.

Overall, FAS achieves its mission through relationship-building. The Agency's employees understand the importance of relationships in creating and maintaining an open and positive global trade environment. With its long-standing and unprecedented partnership and collaboration with the U.S. agricultural industry, other U.S. Government agencies, and non-governmental organizations, FAS consistently evaluates and addresses customer needs. Equally essential are FAS's relationships with international partners, including foreign governments, international organizations, and international agriculture associations, as employees evaluate, advise on, and support the strengthening of the global market environment for U.S. food and agricultural products.

FAS embraces the challenge of being flexible and adaptable in an ever-evolving trade environment while delivering on its mission. FAS staff bring market intelligence data to life by delivering timely, accurate, and comprehensive analysis to policymakers and industry partners that directly informs agricultural trade policy decisions, program delivery, and decision-making. FAS advocates for trade-promoting, science-based policies through trade agreements, partnerships, bilateral engagement, and international fora to address the evolving challenges of feeding a growing global population. FAS trade promotion and trade capacity building programs proactively expand export opportunities by creating awareness of and demand for U.S. agricultural products and offering tools to support market participation. In coordination, all these activities advance the growth of U.S. agricultural exports.

Contextual Indicators

As FAS works to maintain and increase U.S. agricultural exports, it is important to measure and track progress. FAS tracks two outcome-oriented contextual indicators that measure the high-level progress

of the Agency on fulfilling its mission. First, FAS measures and tracks the percent increase in value of U.S. agricultural products being exported. This number is the sum total of all U.S. agricultural export sales, compared year-over-year to calculate the percent change. Second, FAS measures and tracks the percent increase in volume of agricultural products being exported. This number is the sum total of all U.S. agricultural goods exported annually, by volume, then compared year-over-year to calculate the percent change. Together, these value and volume-based indicators provide high-level context for the exporting environment to which FAS contributes.

While FAS dedicates its time and resources to increasing both numbers, the value and volume of U.S. agricultural exports vary from year-to-year due to many external factors outside the control of farmers, ranchers, processors, policy-makers, and FAS. Weather, both in the United States and globally, plays a key role in agricultural trade by shifting the patterns of supply and demand. Extreme weather events such as droughts or flood can alter global production and prices from year to year. Further, geopolitical factors can also affect the international agricultural ecosystem. Lastly, macro-economic trends, commodity prices, and currency fluctuations can also dramatically affect the value and volume of commodities exported. For these reasons, export performance as measured by value alone can be misleading, as total export volumes may in fact rise, but lower commodity prices result in an overall decline in agricultural export value. For example, in 2016, the United States had record shipments on a volume basis, but the overall export value was lower than previous year levels.

Regarding the volume indicator, most traded commodities use metric tons (MT) as the standard unit of measurement (or a similar measure that is easily converted to MT). As a result, nearly 95 percent of all U.S. agricultural exports, by value, can be represented in metric tons. For example, in 2017, the MT volume measurement covered \$130.6 billion of the \$138.4 billion in total U.S. agricultural exports. There are, however, some notable exceptions not included in the MT volume measurement: beer & wine (\$2.3 billion), hides & skins (\$1.9 billion), fruit & vegetable juices (\$1 billion), live animals (\$829 million), eggs (\$400 million), and fluid dairy products (\$300 million). These values are sourced from U.S. Census Bureau Trade Data for FY2017.

While value and volume are not perfect performance indicators for FAS due to the reasons described above, they offer context as to the United States' participation in export markets for U.S. agricultural goods.

Contextual Indicator	Baseline (FY 2018)	Target (FY 2022)	Notes
Percent increase in value of U.S. agricultural exports	2.0%	2.0%	Baseline data represents U.S. Census export data for agricultural products from FY2018. The FY2022 target is based on long-term projections of the expected trading environment and continued growth in global food demand (ceteris paribus).
Percent increase in volume of U.S. agricultural exports	-0.4%	2.0%	Baseline data represents U.S. Census exports that have units of measure in metric tons for agricultural products from FY2018. The FY2022 target is based on long-term projections of the expected trading environment and continued growth in global food demand (ceteris paribus).

STRATEGY

Summary of FAS's Goals and Objectives

MISSION | FAS is a trade agency that promotes U.S. agricultural exports

GOAL 1 | Liberalize global agricultural trade by developing and enforcing policies to address trade barriers

Objective 1.1 | Engage with international institutions and member countries to strengthen the rules-based trading system

Objective 1.2 | Prevent or mitigate adverse effects from foreign country policy decisions

Objective 1.3 | Negotiate and enforce trade agreements to maintain and expand markets

GOAL 2 | Expand U.S. agricultural exports through implementation of trade-supporting initiatives

Objective 2.1 | Support existing and potential exporters and agricultural organizations to expand U.S. agricultural exports

Objective 2.2 | Support existing and potential foreign trading partners to expand markets for U.S. agricultural products

GOAL 3 | Inform global agricultural markets and advise U.S. decision-makers by providing relevant expertise and analysis

Objective 3.1 | Advise U.S. decision-makers on policy issues

Objective 3.2 | Provide intelligence and market analysis to encourage informed market decisions

GOAL 4 | Efficiently and effectively operate FAS

Objective 4.1 | Implement non trade-focused congressionally mandated programs

Objective 4.2 | Strengthen organizational performance, efficiency, and collaboration

Objective 4.3 | Recruit, retain, and develop a highly talented, motivated, and diverse workforce

Objective 4.4 | Coordinate international Departmental activities to promote a unified USDA agenda abroad

GOAL I

Goal I: Liberalize global agricultural trade by developing and enforcing policies to address trade barriers

FAS pursues fair and open markets by advocating for, developing, and enforcing trade-promoting and evidence-based policies intended to address trade barriers. FAS will continue to pursue these policies through trade agreements, partnerships, bilateral engagements, and engagement in international fora.

FAS partners with U.S. Government agencies and trade associations, as well as regional and international organizations, to increase market access and transparency by participating in international negotiations and encouraging the establishment of science-based standards that facilitate global trade. FAS also works to prevent or mitigate the effects of foreign country policy decisions by providing technical advice and support to governments around the world. Finally, working with the overall U.S. government lead on trade, the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR), FAS negotiates and enforces trade agreements (bilateral, multilateral, and plurilateral) to maintain current markets and create new market opportunities for U.S. agriculture.

A global, rules-based trade system sets the stage for smoothly functioning agricultural markets, broader economic development, greater food safety, and increased global food security. In 1994, the rules established under the Uruguay Round were groundbreaking, particularly in the agriculture sector. The WTO Agreement on Agriculture codifies global rules to lower tariffs and minimize market-distorting subsidies, allowing for increased market predictability and transparency. The WTO Agreements on Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) provide further disciplines to agricultural trade by establishing a rules-based approach to the development and enforcement of trade-impacting food and agriculture standards and regulations. Most recently, the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement of 2017 aims to simplify and clarify international import and export procedures, customs formalities, and transit requirements making trade-related administration easier and less costly. Coupled with these multilateral agreements are other bilateral and plurilateral agreements that create better opportunities for U.S. agriculture to compete globally.

Objective 1.1: Engage with international institutions and member countries to strengthen the rules-based trading system.

FAS advocates for the development and adoption of science-based standards and policies by raising global awareness of scientific methods and evidence underlying U.S. positions. FAS achieves this through coordination with international bodies and member fora, including the Codex Alimentarius Commission, the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), among others. FAS also achieves this through direct, bilateral engagement with foreign governments.

Support the development of science-based standards

Through involvement in international fora and bilateral engagement, FAS helps to support the development of science-based standards. For example, FAS is an active participant in the Codex Alimentarius Commission's work to establish international standards based on sound science. FAS suggests work streams, comments on proposed standards, and participates rigorously in Codex work.

Encourage adherence and transparency to the international, rules-based trading system

Through constant monitoring and participation in international fora and bilateral engagements, FAS encourages both adherence and transparency to the international rules-based trading system. FAS is an active participant in WTO Agriculture, SPS, and TBT Committees. FAS reviews new legislation and regulations promulgated by trading partners, advocates for U.S. agriculture at WTO Committee meetings, and meets bilaterally on the margins of those meetings to encourage trading partners to be transparent about their domestic policies and to adhere to their WTO and bilateral commitments. Additionally, FAS's overseas offices routinely coordinate, educate, and encourage member country governments to become more involved and support science-based decisions in these fora.

Objective 1.2: Prevent or mitigate adverse effects from foreign country policy decisions.

FAS monitors foreign country trade policy proposals and practices and mobilizes USDA resources to avoid the establishment of restrictive regulations on U.S. agricultural exports. FAS cultivates bilateral and regional relationships to build coalitions of like-minded countries to avoid potential trade barriers and, further, uses technical assistance, training, and exchanges to help trading partners become more accessible to U.S. agricultural exports through compliance with internationally recognized standards.

Monitor and anticipate possible trade issues to prevent foreign governments from adopting policies that pose potential barriers to U.S. trade

FAS monitors and anticipates possible trade issues through on-the-ground engagement as well as regular market analysis. Consequently, FAS intercedes when necessary and may prevent foreign governments from adopting adverse trade policies. For example, FAS helps to influence other government food security policies to move toward free and open trade. As the official U.S. Government SPS Enquiry Point and an active partner with the TBT Enquiry Point, FAS has created the System for Tracking Agricultural Regulations (STAR). This system notifies industry and other users when potentially adverse foreign regulations are notified and allows users to provide input into official U.S. Government comments. By writing and submitting these official comments during the draft phase of regulation writing, FAS can influence final regulations and trading partners from adopting policies which would create potential trade barriers for the United States.

Engage internationally to support open markets, consistent with U.S. trade policy objectives

FAS supports participation in global, open markets in several ways. FAS engages with partners bilaterally and in groups of like-minded partners with international organizations to advance policies worldwide that support open markets. For example, FAS participates in committees and general sessions in WTO, Codex, FAO, and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). FAS is also a key player in U.S. Government bilateral and multilateral

meetings maintaining a presence on the margins of meetings to press trading partners to open markets and developing U.S. Government positions and statements used for floor interventions. FAS staff working at overseas offices and in Washington engage daily with counterparts bilaterally to press current and future trading partners.

Objective 1.3: Negotiate and enforce trade agreements to maintain and expand markets.

FAS supports trade liberalization through the negotiation of bilateral, plurilateral, and multilateral trade agreements. Staff monitors compliance through formal and informal mechanisms, supporting the use of enforcement actions, as necessary.

Negotiate favorable trade agreements with foreign governments

FAS works with the other members of the Interagency to negotiate FTAs with different economies, encouraging free and open markets for free trade amongst greater populations and markets. The Dominican Republic-Central America FTA (CAFTA-DR) is one example of a successful regional agreement, while the U.S.-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement is an example of a successful bilateral trade agreement.

Identify foreign measures inconsistent with trade agreements

For those governments that have already entered into trade agreements with the United States, FAS monitors and identifies practices that run counter to the text of those agreements. For example, FAS regularly tracks new trade irritants and communicates with industry to determine whether those irritants run counter to that trading partner's commitments. In the case of India's ban on U.S. poultry products due to avian influenza, FAS determined that the action was inconsistent with WTO rules. FAS researched the issue, gathered evidence, and proposed a new WTO dispute settlement action, ultimately resulting in a favorable legal judgement against India.

Take appropriate action against countries in violation of trade agreements to enforce commitments

FAS continually monitors derogations from trade agreements for actions ranging from technical engagement all the way to formal dispute settlement. When a country's practices are inconsistent with trade agreement conditions and those countries do not address those practices in a timely manner, FAS takes appropriate action to enforce those commitments. This enforcement varies from country to country. For instance, FAS researched and proposed two WTO dispute settlement actions against China's domestic support policies and tariff rate quota (TRQ) administration. Working with USTR, FAS is in process of litigating those disputes at the WTO and anticipates receiving favorable findings from the dispute settlement panel.

Metrics

The metrics used to track performance on Goal 1 illustrate how effective trade policy leads to increased trade.

- Tracking the value of trade preserved or attained through resolution of foreign market access issues directly links market access activities in the trade policy space to the desired outcome of liberalized trade.
- The percent increase in value of exports stemming from FTAs clearly illustrates the positive impact of free trade structures for U.S. farmers, ranchers, and processors.
- The number of agriculture-related offensive cases being pursued in the WTO or under FTAs reflects the resources and expertise FAS is dedicating to holding trading partners to their commitments to maintain fair trade opportunities in the interests of U.S. agriculture.
- Tracking the number of measures and questions FAS has raised with trading partners to address barriers to trade illustrates how FAS holds trading partners accountable to their commitments under the WTO.

Metric	Baseline (FY 2018)	Target (FY 2022)	Notes
Value of trade preserved or attained through resolution of foreign market access issues	\$12.75 B	\$5.5 B	FY2018 performance was uncharacteristically high due to resolution of three market access issues that had the potential to affect multiple commodities within several large markets. Future performance is likely to be closer to the 2022 target.
Percent increase in value of exports to Free Trade Agreement partners	171%	204%	Baseline data represents U.S. Census exports that have units of measure in metric tons for agricultural products from FY2018. The FY2022 target is based on long-term projections of the expected trading environment and continued growth in global food demand (ceteris paribus).
Number of agriculture-related offensive cases being pursued in the WTO or under FTAs	6	N/A	Target performance cannot be predicted.
Number of SPS and TBT measures, and COA questions asked with foreign countries	263	270	

GOAL 2

Goal 2: Expand U.S. agricultural exports through implementation of trade-supporting initiatives

FAS's policy work to reduce trade barriers in Goal 1 is complemented with FAS's programs and activities that proactively expand export opportunities. These trade-supporting initiatives succeed by creating awareness of and demand for U.S. agricultural products and offering tools to support market participation. Overall, this goal focuses on promoting export opportunities for U.S. agricultural products through trade capacity building, market development, and trade promotion efforts.

FAS trade capacity building activities and programs promote economic growth in developing countries through the implementation of activities that support integration into the global agricultural trade economy. These activities strengthen local infrastructure and regulatory systems, develop science-based frameworks for monitoring and mitigating plant and animal diseases, improve consistency with U.S. practices and positions, and increase compliance with international obligations. Then, market development and promotion programs, including participation at international trade shows and Agribusiness Trade Missions (ATMs), expand export opportunities for U.S. agriculture by building demand for U.S. products and supporting U.S. promotional efforts in foreign markets. By partnering with U.S. agricultural industry groups, as well as State and Regional Trade Groups (SRTGs), FAS administers several programs including: Market Access Program (MAP), Foreign Market Development Cooperator Program (FMD), Cochran and Borlaug Programs, Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops Program (TASC), Emerging Markets Program (EMP), and Quality Samples Program (QSP). In addition, FAS Export Credit Guarantee Programs expand U.S. agricultural exports through loan guarantees that enable private financial institutions to extend financing to buyers of U.S. agricultural products in emerging markets, particularly when other financing is difficult to obtain.

In all, these FAS initiatives open new markets and support the maintenance and increase of exports for U.S. agricultural products. FAS achieves success on this goal through support to two corresponding stakeholders. First, FAS supports existing and potential U.S. exporters and agricultural organizations. In addition, FAS also provides technical support to existing and potential foreign customers. Together, these efforts facilitate increased trade in new and existing markets for U.S. agricultural products.

Objective 2.1: Support existing and potential exporters and agricultural organizations to expand U.S. agricultural exports.

FAS market development and promotion programs and activities are an integral part of the Agency's efforts to maintain and expand U.S. agricultural exports. Through a highly strategic relationship with private U.S. agricultural partners, FAS assists the U.S. domestic agricultural industry to create awareness and build demand for U.S. agricultural products abroad.

Facilitate programs, resources, and activities to support exporters in their sale of products in foreign countries

Fluctuating world economic conditions result in uncertain traditional sources of trade financing which threaten the ability of U.S. agribusiness to make sales abroad. FAS administers several programs supporting domestic exporters including TASC, EMP, QSP, and GSM-102. Specifically, the GSM-102 export credit guarantee program facilitates commercial financing of U.S. agricultural exports by guaranteeing credit extended by the private financial sector in the United States (or less commonly, by the U.S. exporter) to approved foreign financial institutions for purchase of U.S. food and agricultural products by foreign importers. By facilitating financing, the GSM-102 program directly supports U.S. agricultural exports.

Create demand for U.S agricultural products overseas to expand exporters reach and access

Through market development programs such as FMD and MAP, and support for trade shows and ATMs, FAS, in collaboration with its industry partners, aims to develop, maintain, and expand demand for U.S. agricultural products. These programs leverage the private sector's technical skills and resources, to promote the quality and value of U.S. products, help resolve urgent export access issues, build trade relationships, and provide opportunities for U.S. agribusinesses to showcase their products to potential international buyers. FAS overseas offices also provide key support to exporters in their marketing efforts by identifying new market opportunities, organizing marketing activities, and providing guidance on market requirements for new-to-market exporters.

Objective 2.2: Support existing and potential foreign trade partners to expand markets for U.S. agricultural products.

FAS trade capacity building programs focus on building relationships with and developing capacity within foreign countries. FAS undertakes this effort to implement open market- and science-based trade policies consistent with U.S. policy and positions; and meet trade commitments under the WTO and trade agreements with the United States. Overall, capacity building benefits U.S. agricultural exporters and enhances the ability of developing countries to trade.

Design, facilitate, and implement international exchanges to create a trade-enabling environment for U.S. agriculture

FAS helps to build trade capacity through technical assistance programs such as the Cochran Fellowship Program which exposes agricultural officials and industry representatives from other countries to U.S. products and policies, helping to facilitate lasting, global relationships. FAS provides these short-term training programs to assist countries in developing agricultural systems that can strengthen and enhance trade opportunities for U.S. exporters.

Support the development of foreign governments' agricultural institutions and systems to enhance their ability to be effective trading partners

The Norman E. Borlaug International Agricultural Science and Technology Fellows Program promotes food security and economic growth by providing training and collaborative research opportunities to fellows from developing and middle-income countries. The program continues to show success, with fellows from across the world integrating their newfound training into their home-country's institutions.

Metrics

Goal 2 metrics clearly reflect FAS's programmatic investments.

- By tracking the percent increase of market share in select country-commodity markets, within the context of total U.S. export value and volume of the commodity, FAS can spot check the impact of its different programs and investments in target markets.
- FAS can similarly track these activities in low-to-middle income countries, illustrating FAS's impact on market creation in the developing world.
- The Economic Return Ratio for GSM-102 is an indicator proving the value of FAS's investments.
- The value of agricultural exports resulting from USDA trade shows and missions also indicates how FAS actions and activities contribute to increased global exposure for U.S. agricultural goods that then result in increased sales.
- The number of agricultural commodities for which annual U.S. exports to all U.S. trade partners exceed \$200 million indicates how FAS activities also contribute to market diversity.
- The final metric on program participants implementing new agricultural trade technologies reflects the success of FAS capacity-building programs, ensuring that these countries become sustainable buyers of U.S. agricultural products.

Metric	Baseline (FY 2018)	Target (FY 2022)	Notes
Percent increase of market share in select country-commodity markets	Wheat: 33% Beef: 36% Soybeans: 40% Cotton: 38%	Wheat: 35% Beef: 39% Soybeans: 40% Cotton: 41%	Baseline data represents CY2017 performance. CY2018 import data will be made available in May 2019. 2022 market share targets increase in three out of the four select commodities, while maintaining existing market share for soybeans is itself an ambitious goal.
Annual percent increase in value of U.S. agricultural exports to low-to-middle income countries	2.5%	2.5%	
Economic Return Ratio (\$ Total Return/Total Costs) for GSM-102	103/1	100/1	Estimates for future years are always 100/1. GSM-102 is a commercial program with use subject to global financial conditions. Target performance cannot be predicted beyond this estimate.

Metric	Baseline (FY 2018)	Target (FY 2022)	Notes
Value of agricultural exports resulting from participation in USDA endorsed foreign agricultural trade shows and trade missions	\$2.04 B	\$2.35 B	
Number of agricultural commodities for which annual U.S. exports to all U.S. trade partners exceed \$200 million	135	139	Baseline data represents CY2017 performance. CY2018 export data will be made available in February 2019.
Number of participants who implement new agricultural techniques and technologies that support a trade-enabling environment	Cochran: 248 Borlaug: 30 Total: 278	Cochran: 248 Borlaug: 30 Total: 278	The Cochran and Borlaug targets represent the number of fellows FAS selects for training – as related to this metric. The budgets for these two programs have historically remained the same over the years – with modest increases, depending on the year. Although these programs are discretionary at the Agency level, FAS cannot assume that the budget will increase (or decrease); therefore, estimates for the number of fellows remain steady.

GOAL 3

Goal 3: Inform global agricultural markets and advise U.S. decision-makers by providing relevant expertise and analysis

In addition to policy work and program implementation, FAS employees gather overseas policy developments, market data, and intelligence to inform domestic decision-making and support U.S. foreign policy around the globe. The Agency is trusted by U.S. decision-makers and entities worldwide to provide relevant, sound, and reliable information related to foreign agricultural markets, international trade barriers, crop conditions, and related policy developments. Through market analysis in Washington and reporting from FAS overseas offices on foreign production and demand, FAS contributes to the USDA economic information system establishing official estimates of world agricultural supply and demand that drive trading on commodity markets worldwide. In addition, FAS maintains key public-facing databases to provide convenient access to up-to-date international market information to inform strategy and business decisions.

FAS staff also identify policy problems, provide practical solutions, and work to inform U.S. decision-makers to advance opportunities for U.S. agriculture and support U.S. foreign policy around the globe. FAS's FSOs and LES in overseas offices serve as the vital eyes, ears, voice, and hands of U.S. agriculture around the world. Today, this global network provides an unparalleled resource for understanding trade policy and market development issues as they arise.

As the U.S. lead in global agricultural affairs, FAS uses its market intelligence, local presence in foreign markets, and global contacts to maintain long-standing relationships. These contacts are valuable to U.S. agricultural exporters in establishing and communicating the institutional understanding of other countries' agricultural sectors. Collecting and communicating market information is invaluable for U.S. exporters, as it provides a level playing field for U.S. organizations working abroad and supports these organizations in identifying new market opportunities.

Objective 3.1: Advise U.S. decision-makers on policy issues.

As the lead government entity supporting the U.S. agricultural trade mission, FAS is uniquely qualified to synthesize information, provide advice on policy, and guide decision-makers to facilitate the movement of U.S. agricultural goods globally.

Provide agricultural expertise to inform decision-making

FAS has established and maintained long-standing relationships with leaders in the broader agricultural trade ecosystem. FAS works to inform those leaders with information collected from the field and analysis generated in Washington. Consequently, when different leaders need FAS expertise, the Agency is ready to support them.

Represent and advocate for U.S. agricultural interests in the Interagency

In addition to informing U.S. decision-makers, FAS represents U.S. agricultural interests within USDA, Congress, National Security Council (NSC), USTR, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Department of State (DoS), Department of Commerce (DoC), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and in the foreign assistance and business communities. FAS's relationships with these stakeholders enables the Agency to bring the broader U.S. Government community together to eliminate duplication, leverage joint plans and activities, and advocate for agricultural trade positions and investments that are in the best interest of U.S. agricultural stakeholders.

Objective 3.2: Provide intelligence and market analysis to encourage informed market decisions.

FAS provides agricultural expertise to the exporting community to encourage informed agricultural trade decisions through FAS market intelligence and analytics. FAS resources include Global Agricultural Information Network (GAIN) reports, trade databases, commodity reports, crop and livestock analysis, and other related information.

Regularly provide reliable data and analysis on production supply and demand to inform markets

FAS is a key participant in USDA's economic information system contributing to the formulation of official estimates of agricultural supply and demand that drive commodity markets throughout the world. FAS collects data, develops reports, and shares information to the wider agricultural community to provide insight on foreign market conditions. For example, GAIN reports generated by overseas offices provide insight and analysis on agricultural production and trade. These reports provide objective, factual information on key commodities produced and traded across the globe that is vital for companies to make informed export decisions. Commodity reports are distributed monthly and stored in an online database, along with production, supply, and demand (PS&D) data. In addition, detailed global geospatial crop, weather and agronomic information is provided through the Crop Explorer website and the Global Agricultural and Disaster Assessment System (GADAS).

Develop and disseminate data and analysis on country and commodity markets to educate the global agricultural community

In addition to GAIN and PS&D resources, FAS publishes weekly information on U.S. export sales, including the type and quantity of the commodity, the country of designation, if known, and the marketing year of shipment through the Export Sales Reporting (ESR) service. All exporters of agricultural commodities produced in the United States are required to immediately report to FAS any information with respect to export sales of agricultural commodities. FAS also maintains the Global Agricultural Trade System (GATS) to provide agricultural stakeholders convenient access to U.S. Census trade data.

Provide real-time information on risks and opportunities through a global intelligence network

FAS has a global network of approximately 140 FSOs in over 90 offices covering over 170 countries around the world. These offices are also staffed by locally employed agricultural

experts who assist FAS staff to identify problems, provide practical solutions, and work to advance opportunities for U.S. agriculture around the globe. FAS’s overseas staff facilitates U.S. agricultural exports by providing objective intelligence on foreign market conditions, preparing production forecasts, assessing export opportunities, highlighting growing opportunities for U.S. exporters, and tracking changes in policies affecting U.S. agricultural trade. These activities are critical to efforts aimed at removing trade barriers and monitoring and enforcing compliance with bilateral and international trade agreements. In this effort, FAS offices work with foreign governments, international organizations, U.S. industry, and USTR. FAS overseas offices also partner with over 70 U.S. agriculture industry groups to help U.S. exporters develop and maintain markets overseas. FAS’s overseas offices’ network of global contacts and long-standing relationships with international groups contribute to the Agency’s unique market intelligence capacity. These experts are also available to support U.S. exporters in country to identify market opportunities, navigate regulations, or resolve import problems.

Metrics

The metrics used to track performance on Goal 3 illustrate how relevant analysis and expertise contribute to FAS’s advisory role.

- The number of visits to the FAS website, publications, and PS&D database illustrate FAS’s reach in providing expert information to its stakeholders.
- The percent accuracy of the quarterly Outlook for U.S. Agriculture Trade Forecast reflects the overall quality of USDA supply and demand forecasts used by stakeholders to make sound business decisions.

Metric	Baseline (FY 2018)	Target (FY 2022)	Notes
Number of visits from both public and private sector stakeholders to the FAS website, FAS GAIN reports, and the PS&D database	Website: 1,349,060 GAIN: 151,589 PS&D: 706,009	Website: 1,810,351 GAIN: 162,593 PS&D: 720,853	
Percent accuracy of the quarterly Outlook for U.S. Agriculture Trade Forecast	97%	95%	In creating the Quarterly Outlook for U.S. Agricultural Trade, FAS is responsible for putting a dollar value on total U.S. agricultural exports, which is primarily used to inform policy makers and industry contacts. Maintaining an accuracy of 95 percent or above is FAS’s target, given the capricious nature of extraneous factors that can affect trade at any given moment, e.g., policy changes, major weather events, exchange rate movements, etc.

GOAL 4

Goal 4: Operate FAS efficiently and effectively

FAS depends on a variety of enabling tools and processes to effectively deliver its mission. Consistent with the Departmental goal of ensuring USDA programs are delivered efficiently, effectively and with integrity, FAS intends to bring renewed attention to Agency operations to ensure FAS's diverse staff and complex work portfolio is effectively supported by appropriate service personnel, processes, and systems.

By delivering on mandated responsibilities, strengthening organizational performance, better engaging employees, and coordinating the Department's international activities, FAS aims to improve both its internal and external relations. FAS will administer and deliver on mandated programs in the most efficient and effective way possible. Next, FAS will improve its internal business processes, enabling better and more consistent collaboration, and ultimately, performance. FAS will also honor commitments to the workforce by creating and maintaining an environment that ensures fair treatment of all employees and empowers employees to excel. Lastly, FAS will coordinate with agencies within the Department to ensure coordination and promote a unified USDA message. Together, efficient implementation, stronger internal processes, empowered staff, and effective coordination will enable the Agency to better deliver on its mission.

FAS's renewed focus and dedication to operations will result in operational efficiencies, process improvements, and increased performance across the organization. These improvements will allow employees to do their work in a timely and efficient manner and enable them to better serve the broader U.S. agricultural community.

Objective 4.1: Implement non trade-focused congressionally mandated programs.

FAS takes steps to employ efficient management practices and to monitor the use of government funds in the most effective manner. All stakeholders (employees, awardees, and partners throughout the Department and across U.S. Government agencies) routinely provide feedback which is used to continuously evaluate programs and resources.

Effectively operate food aid programs

FAS funds several food aid programs, namely Food for Progress (FFP) and the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program. FFP uses the food resources of the United States to support developing countries to develop and expand their agricultural economies. The McGovern-Dole Program provides for the donation of U.S. agricultural products, as well as financial and technical assistance, to support school feeding and maternal and child nutrition projects. These programs are implemented with strict adherence to their legal mandates and effective management, ensuring FAS is both effective and efficient in its food aid delivery.

Effectively operate legislated import programs

The U.S. Dairy, Sugar, Cotton, and Wool Programs are U.S. Farm Bill programs which provide price supports, domestic marketing allotments, and TRQs. These programs, administered in coordination with the Farm Service Agency (FSA), have specific legislative requirements which enable FAS to manage these commodities to their outlined allocations. These programs reduce the economic injury to domestic manufacturers resulting from tariffs respectively on imports of specific dairy products, raw cane sugar, refined sugar, sugar syrups, specialty sugars, sugar-containing products, cotton fabric, and wool fabric. As with its food aid portfolio, FAS manages these import programs to be both effective and efficient.

Objective 4.2: Strengthen organizational performance, efficiency and collaboration.

FAS dedicates time, energy, and resources to the management of its programs and operations. To achieve its mission, FAS will prioritize the evaluation and review of its internal organization. Overall, FAS commits to increasing the efficiency of its operations through modernization of information technology infrastructure and data-driven decision making to improve program delivery and communicate more effectively with stakeholders.

Modernize information technology infrastructure, facilities, and support services to improve the user experience

FAS is seeking to improve its technology, management systems, and policies in a cost-effective manner to develop a better user experience for both staff and external stakeholders. FAS will investigate opportunities to advance mission support technology systems to better achieve its mission. To strategically enhance its technology, FAS will conduct an organization-wide assessment to inventory existing technology systems and tools, along with respective stakeholders' needs and requirements. Utilizing this information, FAS will develop a technology strategy that aligns with Department initiatives and FAS's overall strategy to refresh its infrastructure. This modernization effort will foster greater employee output and stakeholder engagement.

Implement business processes to increase efficiency and effectiveness of FAS activities

FAS recognizes and champions the need for a fully integrated, cost-efficient, and streamlined administrative infrastructure. As with technology, FAS will explore options to improve its financial management and accounting processes, as well as the use of financial management systems. FAS will document and evaluate current processes to adjust and move towards the desired state, developing standard operating procedures to standardize and institutionalize financial management activities. Implementation and maintenance of strategic and robust financial management will provide Agency leadership with real-time information to make informed decisions and guide Agency activities. FAS will continue to use lessons learned, employee and stakeholder engagement, and best business practices in these modernization efforts.

Utilize data-driven analysis and effective performance management to maximize return on investment

Facilitation of regular data-driven reviews (DDRs) of Agency activities will inform decision-making processes across FAS. DDRs support measurement of Agency activities against this

strategic plan. FAS will conduct DDRs on mission indicators, output and outcome-based performance metrics, and processes to track progress against the Agency's strategic goals and ensure continued alignment to the Mission. Moreover, FAS will leverage technology to streamline communication and use data to identify opportunities for efficiencies in its services internally and externally.

Encourage innovation and information-sharing to enhance collaborative efforts to achieve FAS's mission

FAS encourages collaborative information-sharing and problem-solving across FAS to better deliver reports, information, and advice to the U.S. agriculture community and U.S. policy-makers. Through improved technology systems and processes, FAS will create new, results-based reporting mechanisms to develop analysis and work with increased efficiency.

Objective 4.3: Recruit, retain and develop a highly talented, motivated and diverse workforce.

Recognizing that its people drive FAS's success, the Agency seeks to attract the best skilled and self-motivated talent to drive Agency performance. FAS aims to drive a continuous culture of learning, development, and empowerment for all staff throughout the Agency. FAS's people, including the skills, knowledge, and experiences which staff possess, is the Agency's most important resource. For that reason, FAS is actively engaged in a review of its human resources capabilities, including its management and talent acquisition processes to improve the recruitment, development, and retention of its staff.

Maintain a high-performing and accountable workforce

FAS strives to institute an inclusive and high-performance culture that not only values the differences offered by a diverse workforce, but also empowers staff that are dedicated and passionate about their jobs and service delivery. With greater empowerment, staff are more willing to invest personally to support the mission. In addition, FAS seeks to encourage staff and leadership performance by strengthening individual performance management and accountability systems and supporting effective team management within the daily work environment.

Create an environment that ensures fair and equitable treatment of employees and customers

Because FAS recognizes its most valuable assets are its diverse and multi-talented workforce and its partnerships with various stakeholders, FAS ensures equal employment opportunities for employees and commits to respecting the rights of all employees and stakeholders. The Agency is strongly committed to maintaining a workplace free from harassment (non-sexual and sexual) regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex (includes pregnancy, equal pay, gender identity, and sexual orientation), disability, veteran status, marital or familial status, political beliefs, parental status, receipt of public assistance, genetic information, or retaliation for participating in equal employment opportunity activity. FAS also provides reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities ensuring access to employment and service opportunities. Employees are held accountable for upholding Departmental Regulation 4070-735-001, Employee Responsibilities and Conduct, to ensure standards are stated and upheld. FAS provides training and education on civil rights related

matters to improve the work environment and minimize risk to the maximum extent possible. Lastly, FAS supports Diversity and Inclusion and Alternative Dispute Resolution programs to foster an improved culture and open and clear communication. These tenets are part of FAS's commitment to maintain a safe and thriving environment for its employees and stakeholders.

Integrate workforce planning and targeted recruiting strategies to improve the talent pipeline for FAS's future workforce

In response to the rapid changes in the workforce today, FAS must be a cohesive, agile and highly capable Agency. FAS will implement a recruitment and hiring plan that will ensure the continued success and evolution of the Agency's mission. FAS will effectively and efficiently attract talent and staff to roles with skills needed to carry out mission priorities.

Implement effective training and development programs to prepare employees at all levels to excel

FAS will work towards institutionalizing a strong talent development program within the Agency to support mission delivery for both the civil and foreign service staff. Core development skills should include: a shared understanding of the Agency's mission and vision, the ability to advise and inform stakeholders and decision-makers, a mastery of diplomatic processes, and a fundamental understanding of the global agricultural trade ecosystem. Each of these core skills should be complemented and balanced by specific technical skillsets, relevant to the employee's specific role within the Agency.

Objective 4.4: Coordinate international Departmental activities to promote a unified USDA agenda abroad.

FAS brings together expertise from a collection of USDA and U.S. Government agencies to promote a unified agricultural trade agenda within the United States and abroad. Consequently, as the lead USDA agency responsible for trade and international agricultural affairs, FAS coordinates with these other governmental entities to ensure such a strategy captures the role and interests of the Department and the U.S. Government. Coordination among policy and regulatory agencies will provide consistent and effective solutions to foreign agricultural affairs in offices in Washington and overseas.

Ensure overseas activities and trade policy objectives are communicated and coordinated across USDA

Through FAS's overseas offices, FAS staff represent the USDA mission abroad. Overseas activities and priorities, conversely, are communicated back to Washington and are shared with the Department via the Intra-Departmental Coordination Committee on International Affairs (ICC-IA) and the Intra-Departmental Trade Policy Committee (ITPC). FAS facilitates both committees and ensures that Department efforts are coordinated between staff in Washington and overseas.

Effectively communicate and enforce adherence to international logistics and travel policy requirements to ensure compliance across USDA

FAS manages Departmental international travel plans and travel policy requirements through effective communication and management of protocols. The Agency regularly identifies opportunities to ensure all international activities are aligned with U.S. policy goals.

In addition, FAS provides quarterly updates on related issues presented and discussed at ICC-IA meetings.

Metrics

The metrics used to assess performance on Goal 4 reflect how FAS will track and monitor its management goals to efficiently and effectively operate the Agency.

- The percent of workforce rating FAS highly favorable using Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) illustrates how FAS retains and motivates a workforce with both the needed talent and skillsets.
- FAS analyzes the percent of management actions detailed in audit recommendations completed by deadline to reflect how FAS prioritizes internal improvements to ensure performance, efficiency, and collaboration are at their highest levels.
- FAS calculates the percentage of Food for Progress projects that have increased a project participant’s value of sales to understand progress toward competitiveness of those beneficiaries receiving USDA assistance and the success of the Food for Progress program.

Metric	Baseline (FY 2018)	Target (FY 2022)	Notes
Favorability rating of FAS workforce using FEVS results	64	66	
Percent of management actions detailed in audit recommendations completed by deadline	46%	100%	
Percentage of Food for Progress projects that increase a project participant’s value of sales by 9% or higher	36%	43%	

PLAN FOR PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

What is Performance Management?

Performance management is the method of ensuring successful delivery on the mission, goals, and objectives outlined in an organization's strategy. Effective performance management is conducted through a series of integrated business processes that support an organization's efforts to understand its current performance, identify areas where improvement is needed to achieve set goals, set action plans to remedy areas of improvement, and support resource allocations to areas of priority and need.

This FAS Strategic Plan sets forth the Agency's priorities in a high-level document. As the plan is put into practice, performance management will act as a mechanism to ensure successful implementation by taking the Plan's priorities and tracking them with metrics and targets for improvement. Overall, it is a way to operationalize the plan and ensure successful mission achievement within the Agency.

To achieve positive outcomes, performance management programs need to have:

- A small, agile, and dedicated team reporting to the Agency executive, with commitment to the regular tracking and performance improvement of the Agency
- Strong sponsorship, engagement, and buy-in from Agency executive leadership
- Execution of regular data-driven activities based on the gathering of qualitative and quantitative information from the front-lines of the Agency to provide a holistic view of performance, with integration of lessons learned with every performance cycle
- A joining of those responsible for results and those managing day-to-day mission delivery in regular DDR sessions, allowing for real-time, informed decision-making to strengthen areas of weakness, capitalize on areas of strength, mitigate emerging risks, and chart new paths in areas of opportunity

The use of data to drive improvement cycles can lead to better, quicker results. These results are bolstered by a well-informed executive who sits at the center of the process. With Agency leadership directly overseeing the performance management program, the program can overcome barriers that often delay progress. Effective performance management with the above characteristics can overcome common obstacles such as siloed departments, units with conflicting priorities and unclear goals, dilution or breakdown of information as it moves up the hierarchy, and inefficient decision-making unable to address urgent, evolving needs.

Performance Management at FAS

While every employee across the Agency is responsible for contributing to the success of FAS's mission, the Office of the Administrator (OA) is ultimately responsible for providing direction to the Agency to deliver on FAS's mission. Thus, within OA, the Enterprise Transformation Office (ETO) is tasked specifically with the execution of the Agency's organizational performance management program.

The ETO works across the Agency, engaging with every Program Area, service function, and overseas office to ensure all FAS activities are contributing to the Agency's mission and strategic goals. This is achieved through effective publication and communication of this Strategic Plan, along with alignment of other FAS action plans and processes. Collectively, FAS needs to focus its efforts, and the ETO helps to achieve this.

The ETO also works with employees across the Agency to gather and compile performance data. This data includes metrics published in this document, in addition to internally-tracked performance indicators as well as qualitative information on Agency activities. Regularly, the ETO communicates this data to Agency leadership through facilitated DDRs, as a measure of performance against strategic objectives. These DDRs are attended by relevant stakeholders to provide for an informed discussion and real-time decision making, enabling necessary resource allocations and corrective actions when gaps or areas of improvement are recognized.

Furthermore, the ETO works closely with the Department, particularly the Office of Budget and Program Analysis (OBPA), to report on the Agency's key performance indicators (KPIs) as part of the annual budget process. More broadly, the ETO frequently liaises with Department leadership, providing regular updates on the Agency's performance, including monitoring efforts, as they relate to USDA and FAS' strategic priorities.

Through successful communication of the plan and sustained focus on its achievement, FAS will continue to expand on its success of promoting U.S. agricultural exports to markets around the world.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Summary of Goals with Supporting Metrics

GOAL 1 | Liberalize global agricultural trade by developing and enforcing policies to address trade barriers

Objective 1.1 | Engage with international institutions and member countries to strengthen the rules-based trading system

Objective 1.2 | Prevent or mitigate adverse effects from foreign country policy decisions

Objective 1.3 | Negotiate and enforce trade agreements to maintain and expand markets

METRICS

- Value of trade preserved or attained through resolution of foreign market access issues
- Percent increase in value of exports to Free Trade Agreement partners
- Number of agriculture-related offensive cases being pursued in the WTO or under FTAs
- Number of SPS and TBT measures, and COA questions asked with foreign countries

GOAL 2 | Expand U.S. agricultural exports through implementation of trade-supporting initiatives

Objective 2.1 | Support existing and potential exporters and agricultural organizations to expand U.S. agricultural exports

Objective 2.2 | Support existing and potential foreign trading partners to expand markets for U.S. agricultural products

METRICS

- Percent increase of market share in select country-commodity markets
- Annual percent increase in value of U.S. agricultural exports to low-to-middle income countries
- Economic Return Ratio ($\$ \text{ Total Return} / \text{ Total Costs}$) for GSM 102
- Value of agricultural exports resulting from participation in USDA endorsed foreign agricultural trade shows and trade missions
- Number of agricultural commodities for which annual U.S. exports to all U.S. trade partners exceed \$200 million
- Number of participants who implement new agricultural techniques and technologies that support a trade-enabling environment

GOAL 3 | Inform global agricultural markets and advise U.S. decision-makers by providing relevant expertise and analysis

Objective 3.1 | Advise U.S. decision-makers on policy issues

Objective 3.2 | Provide intelligence and market analysis to encourage informed market decisions

METRICS

- Number of visits from both public and private sector stakeholders to the FAS website, FAS GAIN reports, and the PS&D database
- Percent accuracy of the quarterly Outlook for U.S. Agriculture Trade Forecast

GOAL 4 | Efficiently and effectively operate FAS

Objective 4.1 | Implement non trade-focused congressionally mandated programs

Objective 4.2 | Strengthen organizational performance, efficiency, and collaboration

Objective 4.3 | Recruit, retain, and develop a highly talented, motivated, and diverse workforce

Objective 4.4 | Coordinate international Departmental activities to promote a unified USDA agenda abroad

METRICS

- Favorability rating of FAS workforce using FEVS results
- Percent of management actions detailed in audit recommendations completed by deadline
- Percentage of Food for Progress projects that increase a project participant's value of sales by 9% or higher

Appendix B: Legislative and Departmental Authorities

Legislative and Departmental authorities that affect FAS and its activities are outlined below. Over time, FAS's role has evolved, and the pieces below serve as guiding documents.

- [Foreign Agricultural Service Act of 1930](#): Foreign Agricultural Service (attaché service with diplomatic status) and Foreign Agricultural Service Division (headquarters) are created
- **Secretary's Memorandum No. 1320, Supplement 1**: Established FAS as independent agency within USDA
- [Public Law 83-690](#): Transferred the agricultural attachés from the Department of State to FAS
- **Title 5 of the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978**: Gave the FAS Administrator power to perform duties related to foreign agriculture ([Title 5, section 502b](#)), and oversight of FAS, the General Sales Manager, and the Agricultural Attaché Service ([Title 5, section 502c](#))
- [Foreign Service Act of 1980](#) and [7 USC §1762](#): Authorized the Secretary to appoint agricultural attachés and post them overseas “for the purpose of encouraging and promoting the marketing of agricultural commodities of the United States and assisting American farmers, ranchers, processors, distributors, and exporters to adjust their operations and practices to meet world conditions”
- [7 USC §1765a](#): Directed the Secretary to appoint Agricultural Trade Officers “for the purpose of developing, maintaining, and expanding international markets for United States agricultural commodities”
- **Secretary's Memorandum No. 1020-39**: Transferred the functions of the former Office of International Cooperation and Development to FAS
- [Section 3107 of the 2002 Farm Bill](#): Authorized the President (through FAS) to provide U.S. commodities and financial and technical assistance through the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program
- [USDA Regulation 1051-002](#): Stated that FAS's responsibilities include 1) coordinating Department agencies on carrying out foreign agriculture policies and programs, 2) acting as a liaison on foreign agriculture with DoS, USTR, USAID and foreign governments, 3) conducting USDA functions relating to the WTO and legislation affecting international agricultural trade, and 4) administering and directing the Department's programs in international development, technical assistance and training carried out under the [Foreign Assistance Act of 1961](#), as amended
- [USDA Regulation 1051-001](#): Defined the role of FAS as the Department's lead agency in coordinating all agricultural matters with foreign countries
- Title 5 of the Agricultural Trade Act of 1978 amended: Updated FAS's mandate to include Food for Peace Act ([7 USC §5693](#))
- [Farm Bill 2014](#): Mandated the creation of an Undersecretary position focused on trade;
- authorized up to \$80 million for the Local and Regional Procurement Program (LRP) and made program permanent; re-authorized the McGovern Dole Program through 2018; provided more flexibility for USAID to use cash assistance for Food for Peace; increased flexibility for assistance in emergency situations; re-authorized and appropriated funds for the export promotion programs (MAP, FMD, EMP, QSP, TASC); and created two new FAS programs (Pima Cotton Trust Fund and Wool Manufacturers Trust Fund)

- [Global Food Security Act of 2016](#): Articulated FAS's participation within the Feed the Future initiative which reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to ending global hunger, poverty, and child malnutrition
- [7 Code of Federal Regulations \(CFR\) § 2.16\(a\)\(3\)](#): Delegated the Secretary's authority to conduct the Department's functions involving foreign agricultural policies and programs to the U/S FFAS
- [7 CFR § 2.43](#): Further delegated the authorities from 7 CFR § 2.16 by the U/S FFAS to the Administrator of FAS

Appendix C: Alignment of Relevant Strategies and Strategic-Like Documents

Strategies and strategic-like documents should serve specific purposes at all levels of government. The FAS Strategic Plan sets the overall goals for the Agency and the approach to achieve them. To fully understand the FAS Strategic Plan, though, one must gain a broader understanding of the context in which it resides. Collectively, the FAS Strategic Plan and several other guiding documents align together to support the organization and the mission behind the organization.

The President's Annual Budget articulates the Administration's priorities and provides top-down direction to the Department. Next, the USDA Strategic Plan outlines Departmental goals and Key Performance Indicators. As a result, the Department's strategic plan is heavily informed by priorities within the Executive Branch, as related to the mission of USDA.

As part of the vision to make USDA the most efficient, most effective, and most customer-focused department in the Federal Government, the USDA Strategic Plan for FY2018-2022 outlines seven goals split amongst the Department's Mission Areas which work toward the cardinal mission and vision of the Department. Within the USDA Strategic Plan for FY2018-2022, FAS is designated responsibility for Strategic Goal 3: Promote American agricultural products and exports.

USDA Strategic Goals for FY2018-2022

1. Ensure USDA programs are delivered efficiently, effectively, and with integrity and a focus on customer service.
2. Maximize the ability of American agricultural producers to prosper by feeding and clothing the world.
- 3. Promote American agricultural products and exports.**
4. Facilitate rural prosperity and economic development.
5. Strengthen the stewardship of private lands through technology and research.
6. Foster productive and sustainable use of our National Forest System Lands.
7. Provide all Americans access to a safe, nutritious and secure food supply.

The goals above and the full text of the USDA Strategic Plan can be found here: <https://www.usda.gov/our-agency/about-usda/strategic-goals>.

The chief responsibility for execution of Strategic Goal 3, bolded above, pertains to the TFAA Mission Area and FAS. Consequently, the USDA Strategic Plan's Goal 3 section outlines key priorities, strategies, and objectives that align to FAS's Strategic Plan.

In addition, the FAS Strategic Plan is also aligned with the Global Market Analysis (GMA) which informs FAS on where it should work and in which global markets to prioritize its actions. The GMA is another FAS-developed document that identifies priority country-commodity markets which the TFAA Mission Area focuses on. GMA creation is led by FAS; however, the document itself sits at the TFAA Mission Area level.

Together, the GMA and the FAS Strategic Plan cascade down to Agency sub-strategies and action planning documents for the Agency. These documents serve as instructional resources which provide clarity on what activities to undertake and where to focus Agency efforts. Each of these action plans and sub-strategies have a distinct purpose in relation to others and articulate how FAS plans to meet its stated priorities.

Overall, the strategy and strategic-like documents outlined above collectively support effective implementation of FAS stated priorities and mission achievement.

Appendix D: Acronyms Used in this Document

The acronyms below appear in the order that they were used in this document.

APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation	IPPC	International Plant Protection Convention
ATM	Agribusiness Trade Mission	ITPC	Intra-Departmental Trade Policy Committee
CAFTA-DR	Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement	KPI	Key Performance Indicator
COA	Committee on Agriculture	LES	Locally Engaged Staff
DDR	Data-Driven Review	MAP	Market Access Program
DoC	Department of Commerce	MT	Metric Tons
DoS	Department of State	NSC	National Security Council
EMP	Emerging Markets Program	OA	Office of the Administrator
ESR	Export Sales Reporting	OBPA	Office of Budget and Program Analysis
ETO	Enterprise Transformation Office	OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization	OICD	Office of International Cooperation and Development
FAS	Foreign Agricultural Service	OIE	World Organization for Animal Health
FDA	Food and Drug Administration	OMB	Office of Management and Budget
FEVS	Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey	PS&D	Production, Supply, and Demand
FFP	Food for Progress	QSP	Quality Samples Program
FMD	Foreign Market Development Cooperator Program (FMD)	SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
FSA	Farm Service Agency	SRTG	State and Regional Trade Group
FSO	Foreign Service Officer	STAR	System for Tracking Agricultural Regulations
FTA	Free Trade Agreement	TASC	Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops
GADAS	Global Agricultural and Disaster Assessment System	TBT	Technical Barriers to Trade
GAIN	Global Agricultural Information Network	TFAA	Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs
GATS	Global Agricultural Trade System	TRQ	Tariff Rate Quota
GMA	Global Market Analysis	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
GPRA	Government Performance and Results Act	USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
GPRAMA	Government Performance and Results Modernization Act	USTR	Office of the United States Trade Representative
ICC-IA	Intra-Departmental Coordination Committee on International Affairs	WTO	World Trade Organization