

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

FSIS DIRECTIVE	3850.1	3/3/09
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CONFERENCE PLANNING AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

I. PURPOSE

This directive establishes new policy and procedures for:

- A. Planning FSIS-sponsored conferences.
- B. Obtaining advance approval from the Under Secretary for Food Safety for all FSIS conferences exceeding \$20,000.
- C. Obtaining advance approval from the USDA Chief Financial Officer (CFO) for all FSIS conferences exceeding \$40,000.
- D. Submitting annual and quarterly reports on plans for upcoming conferences sponsored by FSIS.

II. (RESERVED)

III. (RESERVED)

IV. REFERENCES

2008 Farm Bill
FSIS Directive 2100.1, Procurement of Supplies, Equipment, and Services
DM 2300-001, Agriculture Travel Regulation, dated May 1, 2008
41 CFR Chapter 300, Federal Information Resources Management Regulation, FTR
41 CFR Chapter 301, Temporary Duty (TDY) Travel Allowance, FTR
FTR, Part 301-74, Conference Planning
FTR, Appendix E to Chapter 301, Suggested Guidance for Conference Planning

DISTRIBUTION:
All Offices

OPI:
BD – Fiscal Services Branch

V. ABBREVIATIONS AND FORMS

The following appear in their shortened form in this directive:

BD	Budget Division
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
FSB	Fiscal Services Branch
FTR	Federal Travel Regulation
OM	Office of Management
OOEET	Office of Outreach, Employee Education and Training
PMB	Procurement Management Branch

FSIS Form 3160-13, Conference Approval Request

VI. POLICY

A. Program offices must receive approval from the Under Secretary for Food Safety to sponsor conferences exceeding \$20,000 and USDA CFO to sponsor conferences exceeding \$40,000. Program offices are required to report annual conference plan reports and quarterly attendance reports. (See DM 2300-001, Agriculture Travel Regulation and the 2008 Farm Bill.)

B. All conferences must be held at the most cost-effective location. Program offices must consider costs when planning and obtaining approval for conferences. If the majority of the attendees are in the same commuting area, the conference must be held locally unless another location is more cost-effective.

C. The procurement processing time, also known as lead time, is generally 30 to 120 days depending on the complexity and size of the conference. The lead time begins after PMB receives a complete procurement package (**examples:** requisition and finalized statement of work). The procurement lead time is not the same as the approval time under paragraph IX. To increase the likelihood of the Agency securing the preferred conference location, program offices are encouraged to plan early and work with PMB. **NOTE:** Conference space for larger events is often booked a year or more in advance, so the procurement lead time may not be a sufficient amount of time. Program offices should plan accordingly.

VII. CONFERENCE PLANNING

A. Conferences are meetings held for consultation, training, awareness, or discussion that include participants from at least one USDA agency, which includes FSIS. All or a portion of a meeting can be held in a location outside of USDA (**examples:** a meeting is held half a day at a convention center and the next day it is held all day at a hotel). Meetings can involve costs associated with travel and transportation for some participants. (**EXCEPTIONS:** Training conferences do not include continuing education or curriculum-based educational programs. Training programs must be held independent of a conference and with a non-governmental organization.)

B. When planning a conference, the planners must follow FTR, Part 301-74, Conference Planning and FTR, Appendix E to Chapter 301, Suggested Guidance for Conference Planning. Go to <http://www.gsa.gov/fttr> to access this information.

C. To ensure that proper procurement procedures are followed, program offices must consult PMB at the beginning of the planning process. The procurement process can proceed concurrently with the Under Secretary for Food Safety and USDA CFO conference approval process. **NOTE:** No obligation for funding can occur prior to receiving approval from the Under Secretary for Food Safety or USDA CFO. (See FSIS Directive 2100.1, Procurement of Supplies, Equipment, and Services.) Contact PMB at the following address:

USDA FSIS ASD
 PROCUREMENT MANAGEMENT BRANCH
 5601 SUNNYSIDE AVENUE (MAILDROP 5230)
 BELTSVILLE MD 20705-5230

VIII. CONFERENCE APPROVAL PROCEDURES

A. Complete FSIS Form 3160-13, Conference Approval Request, for all requests exceeding \$20,000. (See Attachment 1 for a sample of the form.)

B. Complete a cost comparison for conferences exceeding \$20,000 for at least three locations that were considered as part of the conference site selection. One of the sites must include a location near where the majority of attendees are stationed. (See Attachment 2, Sample of a Conference Cost Comparison. Attachment 2 provides three site examples for multiple attendees traveling from multiple locations.)

C. Submit conference requests in the excess of \$20,000 to:

BD FSB BRANCH CHIEF
 1400 INDEPENDENCE AVENUE
 ROOM 2144 SOUTH BUILDING
 WASHINGTON DC 20022
 E-mail: Sheila.fant@fsis.usda.gov

IX. APPROVAL PROCESS TIMELINES

The following timelines are provided to ensure advance approvals of conferences are met.

Minimum of 25 Calendar Days for Approving Conferences Between \$20,000 and \$40,000	
Within 5 - 10 days of receiving the submitted request	FSB reviews program office conference request.
Within 10 - 15 days of receiving the submitted request	FSB submits the program office conference request to the Under Secretary for Food Safety for review and approval.

Minimum of 45 to 60 Calendar Days for Approving Conferences Exceeding \$40,000	
Within 5 -10 days of receiving the submitted request	FSB reviews program office conference request.
Within 10 - 15 days of receiving the submitted request	FSB submits the program office conference request to the Under Secretary for Food Safety for review and approval. After approving, the Under Secretary forwards the request to the USDA CFO for final approval.
Within 21 days of receiving the submitted request	USDA CFO reviews and approves the program office conference request.

X. ANNUAL AND QUARTERLY CONFERENCE REPORTS

A. Annual Conference Plan Reports. Program offices must complete and submit an Annual Conference Plan Report for annual conferences being sponsored by their program that exceed \$20,000 to FSB at the end of each fiscal year. (See Attachment 3, Instructions for Completing the Annual Conference Plan Report.)

B. Quarterly Conference Attendance Reports. Program offices must complete and submit a Quarterly Conference Attendance Report (see Attachment 4, Sample of Annual Conference Plan Report and Quarterly Conference Attendance Report) for each individual from their program office attending a conference to FSB within the following timeframes:

QUARTER	PERIOD	REPORT DUE DATE
First	October 1 – December 31	January 16
Second	January 1 – March 31	April 17
Third	April 1 – June 30	July 17
Fourth	July 1 – September 30	October 16

XI. INQUIRIES

Contact the Chief, FSB at 202-690-3787 with questions.



Assistant Administrator
Office of Management

Attachments

- 1 Sample FSIS Form 3160-13, Conference Approval Request
- 2 Sample of a Conference Cost Comparison
- 3 Instructions for Completing the Annual Conference Plan Report and the Quarterly Conference Attendance Report
- 4 Sample of Annual Conference Plan Report and Quarterly Conference Attendance Report

SAMPLE FSIS FORM 3160-13, CONFERENCE APPROVAL REQUEST

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE	
CONFERENCE APPROVAL REQUEST	
<i>Please complete pages 1 & 2, and submit form to: Fiscal Services Branch, 1400 Independence Ave SW, Room 2144 South Building, Washington, DC 20250</i>	
BASIC INFORMATION	
AGENCY	OFFICE
SELECT ONE: <input type="checkbox"/> Conference <input type="checkbox"/> Training	COST EXCEEDING: <input type="checkbox"/> \$20,000 <input type="checkbox"/> \$40,000
NAME OF CONFERENCE OR TRAINING	
LOCATION OF CONFERENCE OR TRAINING	
DATES OF CONFERENCE OR TRAINING	RECURRING EVENT: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <i>If yes, frequency:</i>
JUSTIFICATION	
<i>(Respond to all and provide additional information, if necessary)</i>	
1. EXPLAIN HOW THE CONFERENCE OR TRAINING EVENT WILL HELP FURTHER THE AGENCY'S MISSION OR THE DEPARTMENT'S STRATEGIC PLAN.	
2. EXPLAIN WHY THE CONFERENCE OR TRAINING EVENT CANNOT BE EFFECTIVELY SHARED THROUGH ALTERNATIVES MEANS <i>(examples: a teleconference or the internet).</i>	
3. EXPLAIN WHY THE CONFERENCE OR TRAINING EVENT LOCATION WAS SELECTED. FURTHER EXPLAIN WHY THE CONFERENCE OR TRAINING EVENT IS "NECESSARY", CONSIDERING LIMITED BUDGETS OF THE AGENCY.	
4. EXPLAIN WHY THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES ARE ATTENDING THE CONFERENCE OR TRAINING EVENT. IF THE CONFERENCE OR TRAINING EVENT IS NOT LOCATED NEAR THE ATTENDEE'S DUTY STATION, EXPLAIN IN DETAIL THE REASONS WHY.	
5. ATTACH A COST COMPARISON OF AT LEAST THREE LOCATIONS THAT WERE CONSIDERED AS PART OF THE CONFERENCE OR TRAINING SITE SELECTION. <i>(One of the sites should include a location of where the majority of attendees are stationed.)</i>	
FSIS FORM 3160-13 (02/18/2009)	
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SAMPLE

ATTENDEE INFORMATION

TOTAL ATTENDEES

LIST SPONSORING AGENCY ATTENDEES/PARTICIPANTS

LIST OTHER USDA ATTENDEES/PARTICIPANTS

LIST NON-USDA ATTENDEES/PARTICIPANTS

ESTIMATED COSTS

TOTAL COST

EMPLOYEE TRAVEL EXPENSES -- LOCAL

-- TDY

COSTS

SALARY

SPEAKER FEES

PRINTING & REPRODUCTION

RENTAL FACILITY CHARGES

REFRESHMENTS

COSTS NOT OTHERWISE IDENTIFIED

EXPLAIN LIST OF OTHER COSTS

SAMPLE

SAMPLE OF A CONFERENCE COST COMPARISON FOR SITE #1

	Air Fare Round- Trip	Per Diem 5 days * \$201	Misc. Park/Tolls/Phone	Total Estimate Per Attendee	Number of Attendees	Per Office Estimate	Adjusted Per Diem (25%) and Conference Rooms	Revised Per Office Estimate
SAN DIEGO								
Alameda	\$0.00	\$1,005.00	\$75.00	\$1,080.00	16	\$31,712.00	\$371.25	\$17,280.00
Albany	\$500.00	\$1,005.00	\$75.00	\$1,580.00	16	\$39,040.00	\$371.25	\$25,280.00
Atlanta	\$822.00	\$1,005.00	\$75.00	\$1,902.00	16	\$33,184.00	\$371.25	\$30,432.00
Beltsville	\$662.00	\$1,005.00	\$75.00	\$1,742.00	10	\$7,800.00	\$371.25	\$17,420.00
Chicago	\$446.00	\$1,005.00	\$75.00	\$1,526.00	16	\$27,776.00	\$371.25	\$24,416.00
Dallas	\$488.00	\$1,005.00	\$75.00	\$1,568.00	16	\$39,616.00	\$371.25	\$25,088.00
Denver	\$348.00	\$1,005.00	\$75.00	\$1,428.00	16	\$31,328.00	\$371.25	\$22,848.00
Des Moines	\$416.00	\$1,005.00	\$75.00	\$1,496.00	15	\$31,200.00	\$371.25	\$22,440.00
Jackson	\$1,041.00	\$1,005.00	\$75.00	\$2,121.00	16	\$41,184.00	\$371.25	\$33,936.00
Lawrence	\$394.00	\$1,005.00	\$75.00	\$1,474.00	12	\$22,680.00	\$371.25	\$17,688.00
Madison	\$308.00	\$1,005.00	\$75.00	\$1,588.00	12	\$21,600.00	\$371.25	\$19,056.00
Minneapolis	\$526.00	\$1,005.00	\$75.00	\$1,606.00	11	\$27,038.00	\$371.25	\$17,666.00
Philadelphia	\$700.00	\$1,005.00	\$75.00	\$1,780.00	16	\$28,560.00	\$371.25	\$28,480.00
Raleigh	\$362.00	\$1,005.00	\$75.00	\$1,442.00	15	\$28,620.00	\$371.25	\$21,630.00
Springdale	\$650.00	\$1,005.00	\$75.00	\$1,730.00	16	\$30,816.00	\$371.25	\$27,680.00
Washington, DC	\$662.00	\$1,005.00	\$75.00	\$1,742.00	16	\$1,200.00	\$0.00	\$27,872.00
							\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
Average / Total	\$532.81	\$1,005.00	\$75.00	\$1,612.81	235	\$443,354.00	\$25,568.75	\$379,212.00

SAMPLE OF A CONFERENCE COST COMPARISON FOR SITE #2

WASHINGTON	Air Fare Round-Trip	Per Diem 5 days * \$297	Misc. Park/Tolls/Phone	Total Estimate Per Attendee	Number of Attendees	Per Office Estimate	Adjusted Per Diem (25%) and Conference Rooms	Revised Per Office Estimate
Alameda	\$422.00	\$1,485.00	\$75.00	\$1,982.00	16	\$31,712.00	\$371.25	\$32,083.25
Albany	\$880.00	\$1,485.00	\$75.00	\$2,440.00	16	\$39,040.00	\$371.25	\$39,411.25
Atlanta	\$514.00	\$1,485.00	\$75.00	\$2,074.00	16	\$33,184.00	\$371.25	\$33,555.25
Beltsville	\$0.00	\$1,485.00	\$75.00	\$1,560.00	10	\$7,800.00	\$371.25	\$8,171.25
Chicago	\$176.00	\$1,485.00	\$75.00	\$1,736.00	16	\$27,776.00	\$371.25	\$28,147.25
Dallas	\$916.00	\$1,485.00	\$75.00	\$2,476.00	16	\$39,616.00	\$371.25	\$39,987.25
Denver	\$398.00	\$1,485.00	\$75.00	\$1,958.00	16	\$31,328.00	\$371.25	\$31,699.25
Des Moines	\$520.00	\$1,485.00	\$75.00	\$2,080.00	15	\$31,200.00	\$371.25	\$31,571.25
Jackson	\$1,014.0	\$1,485.00	\$75.00	\$2,574.00	16	\$41,184.00	\$371.25	\$41,555.25
Lawrence	\$330.00	\$1,485.00	\$75.00	\$1,890.00	12	\$22,680.00	\$371.25	\$23,051.25
Madison	\$240.00	\$1,485.00	\$75.00	\$1,800.00	12	\$21,600.00	\$371.25	\$21,971.25
Minneapolis	\$898.00	\$1,485.00	\$75.00	\$2,458.00	11	\$27,038.00	\$371.25	\$27,409.25
Philadelphia	\$225.00	\$1,485.00	\$75.00	\$1,785.00	16	\$28,560.00	\$371.25	\$28,931.25
Raleigh	\$348.00	\$1,485.00	\$75.00	\$1,908.00	15	\$28,620.00	\$371.25	\$28,991.25
Springdale	\$366.00	\$1,485.00	\$75.00	\$1,926.00	16	\$30,816.00	\$371.25	\$31,187.25
Washington, DC	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$75.00	\$75.00	16	\$1,200.00	\$0.00	\$1,200.00
							\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
Average / Total	\$452.94	\$1,392.19	\$75.00	\$1,920.13	235	\$443,354.00	\$25,568.75	\$468,922.75

SAMPLE OF A CONFERENCE COST COMPARISON FOR SITE #3

NEW ORLEANS	Air Fare Round-Trip	Per Diem 5 days * \$199	Misc. Park/Tolls/Phone	Total Estimate Per Attendee	Number of Attendees	Per Office Estimate	Adjusted Per Diem (25%) and Conference Rooms	Revised Per Office Estimate
Alameda	\$684.00	\$995.00	\$75.00	\$1,754.00	16	\$28,064.00	\$248.75	\$28,312.75
Albany	\$1,038.00	\$995.00	\$75.00	\$2,108.00	16	\$33,728.00	\$248.75	\$33,976.75
Atlanta	\$204.00	\$995.00	\$75.00	\$1,274.00	16	\$20,384.00	\$248.75	\$20,632.75
Beltsville	\$350.00	\$995.00	\$75.00	\$1,420.00	10	\$14,200.00	\$248.75	\$14,448.75
Chicago	\$378.00	\$995.00	\$75.00	\$1,448.00	16	\$23,168.00	\$248.75	\$23,416.75
Dallas	\$472.00	\$995.00	\$75.00	\$1,542.00	16	\$24,672.00	\$248.75	\$24,920.75
Denver	\$662.00	\$995.00	\$75.00	\$1,732.00	16	\$27,712.00	\$248.75	\$27,960.75
Des Moines	\$600.00	\$995.00	\$75.00	\$1,670.00	15	\$25,050.00	\$248.75	\$25,298.75
Jackson	\$150.00	\$995.00	\$75.00	\$1,220.00	16	\$19,520.00	\$248.75	\$19,768.75
Lawrence	\$330.00	\$995.00	\$75.00	\$1,400.00	12	\$16,800.00	\$248.75	\$17,048.75
Madison	\$834.00	\$995.00	\$75.00	\$1,904.00	12	\$22,848.00	\$248.75	\$23,096.75
Minneapolis	\$1,150.00	\$995.00	\$75.00	\$2,220.00	11	\$24,420.00	\$248.75	\$24,668.75
Philadelphia	\$996.00	\$995.00	\$75.00	\$2,066.00	16	\$33,056.00	\$248.75	\$33,304.75
Raleigh	\$396.00	\$995.00	\$75.00	\$1,466.00	15	\$21,990.00	\$248.75	\$22,238.75
Springdale	\$462.00	\$995.00	\$75.00	\$1,532.00	16	\$24,512.00	\$248.75	\$24,760.75
Washington, DC	\$350.00	\$995.00	\$75.00	\$1,420.00	16	\$22,720.00	\$248.75	\$22,968.75
							\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
Average / Total	\$566.00	\$995.00	\$75.00	\$1,636.00	235	\$382,844.00	\$23,980.00	\$406,824.00

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE PLAN REPORT AND THE QUARTERLY CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE REPORT

Using a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, create 24 columns. In each column, provide the following information for the annual conference plan report and the quarterly conference attendance report.

Label the 24 columns as follows:	Enter the following:
1. Conference/Training Name	Provide the exact name of the conference listed in the brochure, flyer, publication, or organization's Web site.
2. Category	Select one of the following: - Training Workforce (Mandatory) - Training Workforce (Mission Critical) - Training Workforce (Discretionary) - Training Partners - Training Participants - Program Execution - Outreach - Communicating Priorities
3. A/S	Select and provide either "A" for attended conference or "S" for sponsored conference.
4. City	Provide the actual city where the conference was held. Do not list hotel and lodging location.
5. State	Provide the actual state or country where the event was held. Use the standard two-digit postal code or country code. Do not list hotel or lodging location.
6. Start	Provide the beginning date of the conference listed in the brochure, flyer, publication or organization's Web site. Do not list dates of travel. Use the MM/DD/YYYY format.
7. End	Provide the ending date of the event listed in the brochure, flyer, publication, or organization's Web site. Do not list the dates of travel. Use the MM/DD/YYYY format.

Label the 24 columns as follows	Enter the following:
8. # of Agency Participants	If attended, provide the total number of agency or program participants who attended the conference. If sponsored, provide total number of agency participants plus those employees engaged in the preparation of the conference.
9. # of Other USDA Participants	If attended, enter 0. If sponsored, enter total number of other USDA participants.
10. # of Non-USDA Participants	Attended: enter 0. Sponsored: enter total number of non-USDA participants paid for by the agency. If none, enter 0.
11. Recur Yes/No	Enter 'Yes' if event is held on a periodic basis. Enter 'No' if event is one-time.
12. Frequency	For recurring events only, specify how often the conference occurs using the following codes: QUARTERLY = Q ANNUALLY = A SEMIANNUALLY = H BIANNUALLY = T
13. Sponsor	If attended, list the name in the brochure, flyer, publication, or organization's Web site. If sponsored, list "USDA" and spell out the agency or program name.
14. TDY Travel Expenses (\$)	List the travel expenses incurred for each program area to attend or sponsor an event outside the local commuting area. Enter \$0 if no costs were incurred.
15. Local Travel Expenses (\$)	List the travel expenses incurred for each program area to attend or sponsor the conference within the local commuting area. Enter \$0 if no costs were incurred.
16. Fees Paid (\$)	List the costs paid for each program area to enroll individuals in the conference. Enter \$0 if no costs were incurred (examples: conference, tuition, or registration).
17. Salary Costs (\$)	List the salary costs of employees for each program area engaged in the preparation of the conference. (EXAMPLE: Staff salaries.) Do not include salary costs of agency employees attending the conference. Enter \$0 if no costs were incurred.
18. Speakers' Fees (\$)	List the costs paid to speakers for services provided at the conference. Enter \$0 if no costs were incurred.
19. Printing Costs (\$)	List the costs incurred to print and reproduce materials used at the conference. Enter \$0 if no costs were incurred.

Label the 24 columns as follows	Enter the following:
20. Rental/Facility Costs (\$)	List the costs incurred to rent the facility used for the conference. Enter \$0 if no costs were incurred.
21. Refreshment Costs (\$)	List the costs incurred to provide light refreshments at the conference. Enter \$0 if no costs were incurred.
22. Other Costs (\$)	List all additional costs incurred to attend or sponsor the conference. Specify the types of costs in the "Comments" column. Enter \$0 if no costs were incurred.
23. Comments	Provide an explanation of "other" costs.
24. Contracting Sponsored Events	Indicate whether a procurement contract was awarded. Attach and send a description of the contracting procedures related to the conference. <i>(This information is not required for the quarterly conference attendance report.)</i>

