

**RESEARCH LEADER
PERFORMANCE PLAN**

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
PERFORMANCE PLAN, PROGRESS REVIEW AND APPRAISAL WORKSHEET

1. Name (Last, First, M.I.) Position Title:	Pay plan, Series, Grade	Agency/Division	APPRAISAL PERIOD From: _____ To: _____
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2. PERFORMANCE ELEMENT No. 1 (Describe below the duty or responsibility for which the employee is accountable and responsible. Indicate if the element is critical or noncritical.)	X CRITICAL NONCRITICAL
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Element Number 1 - PLANS AND CONDUCTS PERSONAL & TEAM RESEARCH, RESEARCH UNIT/LABORATORY LEADERSHIP

3. **STANDARD** (Describe the level expected for "Fully Successful" performance. Include appropriate indicators of quality, quantity, cost efficiency, or timeliness, where applicable.)

Alignment to Strategic Plan: This position directly contributes to the accomplishment of ARS Strategic Goal No _____ and the ARS National Program _____. The elements of these Performance Standards reflect the specific milestones, outcomes, and accomplishments expected.

FULLY SUCCESSFUL LEVEL

- Ensures that Project Plans developed for required peer reviews are submitted within scheduled deadlines set by the Area Office, the Office of National Programs (ONP) and the Office of Scientific Quality Review (OSQR). Development of Project Plans is accomplished by soliciting input from scientific staff on the research team and other scientists internal and external to the Agency. Project Plans are organized according to OSQR formatting guidelines and are coherent, scientifically sound and accurate, and grammatically correct. Project Plans reflect research objectives and procedures that are consistent with the guidance provided by the ONP, the pertinent National Program Action Plans, Agency priorities, and Area specific requirements. Project Plans are developed cooperatively with research scientists, Laboratory/Center/Institute Directors, the Area Office, and the ONP in all phases of project development and preparation for the peer review process. Responses to peer review recommendations adequately address reviewers' concerns by reflecting recommended changes in the Project Plans or by appropriate and constructive justification as to why the recommended changes were not made. Ensures that Project Plans are successfully reviewed and certified for implementation. Ensures that the Unit's research is performed as outlined in the approved Project Plans. Continuously oversees research projects to ensure the quality and appropriateness of the research being conducted, and to ensure appropriate management procedures are used to promptly address deficiencies.
- Provides leadership and vision in the development of Project Plans that enhances the research program and maximizes synergistic effectiveness of the Unit's research projects to fulfill the ARS mission. Recommends and implements needed changes in research priorities and goals for the Unit. Keeps the Laboratory/Center/Institute/Area Director and the ONP informed of the Unit's research plans and progress.
- Ensures all program activities, including Current Research Information System (CRIS) project documentation, agreements, technology transfer activities [Cooperative Research and Development Agreements (CRADAs), Material Transfer Agreements (MTAs), etc.], and extramural funding proposals are consistent with Project Plan objectives or enhance research to address the Administration's research priorities.
- Critically evaluates manuscripts arising from the Unit's research. Ensures that manuscripts have received credible peer review, are of high quality and are entered into the Agricultural Research Information System (ARIS).
- Ensures that the Unit's research plans and publications meet ARS Guidelines on Authorship requirements [ARS P&P 152.1 and 152.2] for participation in conception or design of experiments, and/or analysis and interpretation of data.
- Develops personal research plans that address the objectives of the assigned research project(s). When preparation of a new CRIS Project Plan is required, there is appropriate personal contribution to the development of research objectives and approaches that are consistent with assigned problem area(s) and Agency priorities.
- Conducts personal and team research according to the approved Project Plan. Executes research protocols so that the investigations generate timely, reliable and valid data that will yield meaningful contributions to knowledge or technology suitable for publication of original full-length articles in refereed journals or as other documentable evidence of accomplishment (patents, variety releases, model releases, etc.).

SPECIFIC GOALS FOR THE RATING PERIOD:

4. ELEMENT RATING (At the end of the rating period, compare the employee's performance with standard and assign an element rating.)

| | EXCEEDS | | FULLY SUCCESSFUL
| | DOES NOT MEET

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

5. CERTIFICATION OF DEVELOPMENT AND RECEIPT OF PLAN

Signatures certify discussion with the employee and receipt of plan that reflects current position description

Employee's	Date
Supervisor's Signature	Date
Reviewer's Signature	Date

6. PROGRESS REVIEWS (at least one must be completed)

Employees' Initials and Date			Supervisor's Initials and Date		

PERFORMANCE PLAN, PROGRESS REVIEW AND APPRAISAL WORKSHEET

1. Name (Last, First, M.I.) Position Title:	Pay plan, Series, Grade	Agency/Division	APPRAISAL PERIOD From: To:
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2. PERFORMANCE ELEMENT No. 2 (Describe below the duty or responsibility for which the employee is accountable and responsible. Indicate if the element is critical or noncritical.)	X CRITICAL NONCRITICAL
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Element Number 2 - REPORTS RESEARCH RESULTS

3. STANDARD (Describe the level expected for "Fully Successful" performance. Include appropriate indicators of quality, quantity, cost efficiency, or timeliness, where applicable.)

FULLY SUCCESSFUL LEVEL

- Ensures completion and submission of annual reports (ARS-421) that accurately document progress towards meeting CRIS Project research objectives, milestones, outcomes and accomplishments, following Agency instructions for format, style and content.
- Completes manuscripts that reflect original research and valid interpretations for publication in refereed journals. Enters all publications, including manuscripts (scientific journal articles, semi-technical or trade journal articles, book chapters, reviews, popular articles, workshop reports, symposium proceedings, etc.), books, monographs, electronic publications, and abstracts into ARIS via form ARS-115.
- The minimum requirement for reporting research results can be met by authorship on two manuscripts of original research for refereed journals. Manuscripts must be submitted to journal and/or other outlet and documented in ARIS within the rating period.
- A patent application, approved germplasm release/registration submitted to a refereed journal and documented in ARIS within the rating period, or a peer-reviewed model may provide equivalency credit for reporting original research in a refereed journal.
- With the approval of the Area Director, minimum reporting requirements may be modified for new hires during the first two rating periods, in case of personal or medical hardship.
- Makes diligent efforts to pursue publication of manuscripts by submitting revisions within journal editorial guidelines. Revises and resubmits any rejected manuscript to an appropriate journal within one year of the rejection notice date. Continuously updates the status of unpublished manuscripts in ARIS. Justification for not resubmitting a rejected manuscript is subject to supervisory review and approval. Resubmission of a rejected manuscript approved in a prior performance period does not count toward fulfilling the minimum requirement for reporting research in the current rating period.

SPECIFIC GOALS FOR THE RATING PERIOD:

4. ELEMENT RATING (At the end of the rating period, compare the employee's performance with standard and assign an element rating.)	EXCEEDS FULLY SUCCESSFUL DOES NOT MEET
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ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

PERFORMANCE PLAN, PROGRESS REVIEW AND APPRAISAL WORKSHEET

1. Name (Last, First, M.I.) Position Title:	Pay plan, Series, Grade	Agency/Division	APPRAISAL PERIOD From: To:
2. PERFORMANCE ELEMENT No. 4 (Describe below the duty or responsibility for which the employee is accountable and responsible. Indicate if the element is critical or noncritical.)			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CRITICAL NONCRITICAL
Element Number 4 - PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATIONS, SUPERVISION & HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT			
3. STANDARD (Describe the level expected for "Fully Successful" performance. Include appropriate indicators of quality, quantity, cost efficiency, or timeliness, where applicable.)			
<p>FULLY SUCCESSFUL LEVEL</p> <p>Keeps the Area/Institute/Center/Laboratory Director informed of research and related activities. Develops and maintains contacts and positive interactions with team members, supervisors, cooperators, cooperating institutions, customers, and administrative personnel in a cooperative manner that ensures the mission and objectives of the research are fully communicated and that provides appropriate access to information associated with the project.</p> <p>Conducts regular staff meetings to inform the employees of the changes in Agency regulations and policies; to share progress of Unit research and associated problems or issues; and to seek employees' thoughts and suggestions for improving performance.</p> <p>Seeks employee feedback to identify needs and expectations and considers employee perspective when making decisions affecting employees to develop a well-informed staff who are effective and efficient implementers of management decisions.</p> <p>Considers internal and external stakeholder needs and expectations in making decisions, devising solutions, and resolving conflicts. Includes those that are consistent with Agency priorities in plans and commitments, and monitors for success in achieving results.</p> <p><u>Recruitment and Hiring</u> Leads by example; promotes an atmosphere of open communication, cooperation and teamwork.</p> <p>Organizational goals, objectives, priorities, work assignments, and deadlines are clearly communicated to employees. Resources and priorities are adjusted to meet workload demands. Human Capital initiatives and strategies (e.g. performance management system changes, Workforce and Succession Planning) are implemented in accordance with mission area and agency policy. Employees are encouraged to participate in employee surveys to assist ARS in measuring organizational health, morale and satisfaction.</p> <p>Recruits and selects new employees based on organizational goals, budget considerations, and staffing needs. When filling a position, the supervisor engages and collaborates with HR to ensure skills required for the job are identified, posting of the job vacancy is accurate, and assists in indentifying contacts for diverse locations or organizations for recruiting purposes. Participates as needed with HR in the proper screening of applications, and appropriate categorization of applicants based on qualifications.</p> <p>Utilizes flexible hiring authorities when filling a vacancy (e.g., targeted disabilities, student employment, direct hire, appointing veterans, etc.) to ensure diversity in recruitment and hiring.</p> <p>Recruitment plans reflect assessment of potential candidate pools and diversity goals.</p> <p><u>Retention and Succession Planning</u> Successfully transitions new hires into the position by promptly providing an orientation into the workforce and establishing performance elements and standards. Supervisor provides ongoing feedback and coaching, and makes appropriate use of the probationary period to assess the new hire's ability to perform in the position.</p> <p>Implements retention strategies that focus on key internal processes (e.g., work environment, employee orientation, executing Individual Development Plans for all employees--subject to bargaining obligations, coaching, development, and mentoring, etc.) and that promote employee growth, support the health of the workforce and drive the future success of the organization's people and infrastructure.</p> <p>Assesses current workforce plans to ensure they are up-to-date in order to meet Program/Agency goals and objectives. Works with senior management officials and HR to comply with the workforce planning process as described in the Department's position management policy.</p> <p><u>Performance Management</u> The supervisor establishes subordinate employee performance plans within established timeframes and that align with Agency and</p>			

Departmental goals and objectives. Communicates to employees how their work supports the Agency mission and strategic plan/initiatives. Employee performance plans contain clear, results-focused measures and the supervisor provides accurate and timely feedback to determine progress and success in meeting expectations:

- The supervisor completes performance plans, progress reviews, and appraisals of subordinate employees by the due dates established by the Department or Agency. Performance plans for each employee must include at least one critical element that is traceable to the agency's goals and objectives (e.g., Mission Results critical performance element).
- Provides ongoing feedback and coaching as demonstrated through performance feedback sessions as evidenced by 100% of employees receiving at least one feedback session at the midpoint of the rating period.
- Ensures appropriate action is taken to address performance problems in a manner that supports organizational goals and objectives.
- Ensures subordinate managers and supervisors adhere to the Agency performance management policy with regard to performance appraisal and employee recognition.

Performance and employee feedback data is used as an indicator of compliance and general satisfaction or needed improvement with regard to the planning, developing, monitoring, rating and rewarding of performance.

Performance and accomplishments are recognized in a timely manner, utilizing various methods (monetary, non-monetary, and time-off awards).

Individual Development Plans (IDPs) are established and reviewed/updated annually. Within available funding, provides developmental opportunities to ensure that employees possess appropriate competencies for work assignments; utilizes no cost options in employee development including AgLearn and mentoring. IDPs reflect assessment of current employee skills and future skill needs of the unit.

Cultural Transformation

Supports the Secretary's initiative for Cultural Transformation by continually examining program delivery and surveying the workforce and/or stakeholders/customers. Creates an environment of inclusion, exceptional performance, effective leadership, and works to eliminate any barriers to operational and service excellence. Examines workforce and workplace processes and flexibilities and implements improvements where needed.

Supports the Secretary's initiative for USDA Diversity Recruitment Roadmap by expanding upon mission-specific activities and timelines to ensure diversity recruitment program success and leadership accountability.

SPECIFIC GOALS FOR THE RATING PERIOD:

4. ELEMENT RATING (At the end of the rating period, compare the employee's performance with standard and assign an element rating.)

| | EXCEEDS | | FULLY SUCCESSFUL
| | DOES NOT MEET

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

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2. PERFORMANCE ELEMENT No. 5 (Describe below the duty or responsibility for which the employee is accountable and responsible. Indicate if the element is critical or noncritical.)	X CRITICAL NONCRITICAL
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Element Number 5 - EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY, CIVIL RIGHTS (EEO/CR) AND OUTREACH

3. STANDARD (Describe the level expected for "Fully Successful" performance. Include appropriate indicators of quality, quantity, cost efficiency, or timeliness, where applicable.)

FULLY SUCCESSFUL LEVEL

- Performs all duties in a manner that consistently demonstrates fairness, cooperation, and respect toward coworkers, office visitors, and all others in the performance of official business. Demonstrates an awareness of EEO/CR policies and responsibilities.
- Through personal action, demonstrates support of EEO principles in all decisions affecting the Unit's employees which may include activities in one or more of the following functional areas: recruitment, interviewing, selection, training, performance evaluation, promotion, travel, awards, adverse action, and work assignments.
- Advises the Unit's employees and establishes, through personal example, that when addressing employees, delivering speeches, making public appearances, or representing the Agency in any capacity, inappropriate comments regarding race, age, color, sex, religion, national origin, individuals with disabilities, or marital status will not be tolerated.
- Is conversant on the Agency's Affirmative Employment Program Plan (AEPP) and actively participates in the accomplishment of the Agency's goals and objectives.
- Distributes Agency and Departmental EEO issuances to all employees with supportive comments.
- Maintains an atmosphere of equal treatment in the Unit by discouraging discrimination of any form. This includes assuring the prompt and fair resolution of all formal and informal complaints of discrimination.
- Participates and encourages participation of all employees in outreach activities that foster appreciation for science and agriculture.

SPECIFIC GOALS FOR THE RATING PERIOD:

4. ELEMENT RATING (At the end of the rating period, compare the employee's performance with standard and assign an element rating.)	EXCEEDS FULLY SUCCESSFUL DOES NOT MEET
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2. PERFORMANCE ELEMENT No. 6 (Describe below the duty or responsibility for which the employee is accountable and responsible. Indicate if the element is critical or noncritical.)			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CRITICAL <input type="checkbox"/> NONCRITICAL
Element Number 6 - LEADERSHIP IN SECURITY, SAFETY, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT			
3. STANDARD (Describe the level expected for "Fully Successful" performance. Include appropriate indicators of quality, quantity, cost efficiency, or timeliness, where applicable.)			
FULLY SUCCESSFUL LEVEL In fulfilling the duties of this element, due diligence includes but is not limited to the following four items: 1) communicating to staff members the importance, rationale, and necessity of Safety, Health, and Environmental Management (SHEM) responsibilities, 2) ensuring the development of required plans and other materials, 3) ensuring the documentation of compliance through required reports, and 4) taking steps for abatement projects or remedial measures as required for functionality or compliance with statutes and regulations.			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAFETY, HEALTH & ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT (SHEM) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports applicable ARS and USDA SHEM Programs as provided in USDA-REE Manual 230.0. Achieves and maintains compliance with those programs and applicable State and local requirements and standards. • Provides leadership, resources, training, and opportunities for employees to participate in programs related to safety, health, and environment (e.g., safety committee, Environmental Management System (EMS) committee, green team, etc.). Emphasizes responsibilities of employees for these programs and holds employees accountable through their Performance Plan. Actively promotes the establishment and work of these committees. • Supports Occupational Medical Surveillance Program (OMSP), Worker’s Compensation, and related leave policies as established by the ARS Human Resources Division (HRD). • Supports applicable animal use and care programs as provided in Directive 130.4 and USDA-REE 635.1 and any applicable Federal regulations. • Ensures that the Annual Resource Management Plans (ARMPs) reflect needs and budgets for safety, health, and environmental requirements, such as facilities, equipment, clothing, personnel monitoring, and training. • SECURITY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that ARS Homeland Security requirements are met and properly documented (ARS 230) when hosting visiting scientists or foreign workers whether or not sponsored by ARS. Supports Homeland Security programs relating to physical and cyber security. • Supports ARS and Area security policies, procedures, and guidelines related to the physical security and protection of employees, experimental materials, organisms, and facilities. Promptly reports any security breaches and malfunctioning security equipment to the responsible Security Officer. Participates in security awareness programs and actively supports the promotion of a secure work environment. • Supports ARS and USDA Information Systems Security Programs as outlined in 253.3-ARS and other issuances provided by the ARS Office of the Chief Information Officer (ARS-OCIO). • Supports applicable ARS Biosafety and Biosecurity programs as required by ARS and other relevant agencies. 			
SPECIFIC GOALS FOR THE RATING PERIOD:			
4. ELEMENT RATING (At the end of the rating period, compare the employee's performance with standard and assign an element rating.)			<input type="checkbox"/> EXCEEDS <input type="checkbox"/> FULLY SUCCESSFUL <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> DOES NOT MEET

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

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2. PERFORMANCE ELEMENT No. 7 (Describe below the duty or responsibility for which the employee is accountable and responsible. Indicate if the element is critical or noncritical.)			X CRITICAL NONCRITICAL
Element Number 7 - MANAGEMENT OF FISCAL, PHYSICAL, & IT RESOURCES (and SERVES AS LOCATION COORDINATOR AS APPROPRIATE)			
3. STANDARD (Describe the level expected for "Fully Successful" performance. Include appropriate indicators of quality, quantity, cost efficiency, or timeliness, where applicable.)			
FULLY SUCCESSFUL LEVEL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judiciously manages fiscal resources according to Agency procedures. Ensures that resources used and research efforts have program and fiscal accountability that are in line with one or more project objectives. • Develops and implements ARMPs for the Management Unit according to Agency guidelines by appropriate deadlines. ARMPs should accurately reflect staff changes, salaries, repair and maintenance, indirect research cost and all other fund categories. Maintains discretionary funding per SY at appropriate guideline levels established by the Agency, to the extent possible, and develops strategies for the future to improve funding for the Unit. • As funds allow, evaluates and upgrades facilities, vehicles, equipment, and IT capacity. Maintains facilities, vehicles and equipment in functional and safe condition. Declares surplus and disposes of excess equipment. • Supports ARS and USDA programs governing engineering, real property management (USDA-REE 245.1) and personal property management (USDA-REE 221.1M). • Promotes synergistic sharing of equipment and facilities within and outside the Management Unit. <p>SPECIFIC GOALS FOR THE RATING PERIOD:</p>			
4. ELEMENT RATING (At the end of the rating period, compare the employee's performance with standard and assign an element rating.)			EXCEEDS FULLY SUCCESSFUL DOES NOT MEET
ACCOMPLISHMENTS			