

REQUEST FOR RECORDS DISPOSITION AUTHORITY		JOB NUMBER <i>NI-136-06-13</i>	
To: NATIONAL ARCHIVES & RECORDS ADMINISTRATION 8601 ADELPHI ROAD COLLEGE PARK, MD 20740-6001		Date received <i>9/26/05</i>	
1 FROM (Agency or establishment) U.S. Department of Agriculture		NOTIFICATION TO AGENCY	
2 MAJOR SUBDIVISION Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)		In accordance with the provisions of 44 U.S.C. 3303a, the disposition request, including amendments, is approved except for items that may be marked "disposition not approved" or "withdrawn" in column 10	
3 MINOR SUBDIVISION Livestock & Seed Program			
4. NAME OF PERSON WITH WHOM TO CONFER Janice Boteler, Janice.Boteler@usda.gov	5 TELEPHONE NUMBER 202 720-0566	DATE <i>7/3/06</i>	ARCHIVIST OF THE UNITED STATES <i>Ma. W...</i>
6 AGENCY CERTIFICATION I hereby certify that I am authorized to act for this agency in matters pertaining to the disposition of its records and that the records proposed for disposal on the attached _____ page(s) are not needed now for the business for this agency or will not be needed after the retention periods specified, and that written concurrence from the General Accounting Office, under the provisions of Title 8 of the GAO Manual for Guidance of Federal Agencies, <input type="checkbox"/> is not required <input type="checkbox"/> is attached, or <input type="checkbox"/> has been requested			
DATE <i>9/20/05</i>	SIGNATURE OF AGENCY REPRESENTATIVE <i>Janice Boteler</i>		TITLE AMS Records Management Officer
7 ITEM NO	8 DESCRIPTION OF ITEM AND PROPOSED DISPOSITION	9 GRS OR SUPERSEDED JOB CITATION	10 ACTION TAKEN (NARA USE ONLY)
	U.S. Department of Agriculture Agricultural Marketing Service Record Group 136 Electronic Information System – SRTIS (see attached) PRIOR APPROVAL BY NARA – AMS Unique Records Schedule Livestock and Seed Program, Record Series 7300 was previously approved by NARA (see attached) <i>cc Agency NR</i>		

7 ITEM NO	8 DESCRIPTION OF ITEM AND PROPOSED DISPOSITION	9 GRS OR SUPERSEDED JOB CITATION	10 ACTION TAKEN (NARA USE ONLY)
7300	<p>Name of electronic database system: Seed Regulatory and Testing Information System (SRTIS)</p> <p>Agency program or unit supported by the system: USDA, AMS, Livestock and Seed Program, Seed Regulatory and Testing Branch</p> <p>Purpose of the system: Seed sample testing and interstate investigation data storage and retrieval. Comparison of seed labeling, state laboratory results, and Federal laboratory results to produce tolerance calculation and report generation</p> <p>Disposition The disposition instructions apply to records regardless of physical form or characteristics. Records may be maintained in any format on any medium. These records are media-neutral.</p> <p>Dispose of paper and electronic records in accordance with AMS Unique Records Schedule Livestock and Seed Program, and in accordance to 36 CFR 32-30</p>		
Inputs 1	<p>Electronic and paper inputs consisting of seed shipment data and contact information</p> <p>Disposition Temporary Delete/Destroy after input into master file, and input has been verified</p>	New	
Outputs 1	<p>Seed Analysis Certificate (LS-375 CG) Electronic copy is scanned in with signature and this will become the recordkeeping copy</p> <p>Disposition Temporary Cut-off Seed Analysis Certificate file at the end of calendar year. Destroy/delete 6 years after cut-off</p>	7320 (New)	
2	<p>Seed Analysis Card (LS-233)</p> <p>Disposition Temporary Cut-off Seed Analysis Card file at the end of calendar year. Destroy/delete 6 years after cut-off</p>	7330 (New)	
3	<p>Record of Complaint Card (GR-338)</p> <p>Disposition Temporary Place Record of Complaint card in closed file at completion of case. Cut-off closed Record of Complaint card file at the end of calendar year. Destroy/delete 5 years after cut-off</p>	7350	NC1 136-79-1 Item 94
Master File 1	<p>Seed shipment data, shipper information, investigation information, seed testing data and violation settlement information. One database record is created for each seed sample received and each seed shipment investigated</p> <p>Disposition Temporary Cut-off Master File at the end of calendar. Destroy/delete 6 years after cut-off</p>	7360 (New)	
System Documentation 1	<p>Data dictionaries, document libraries, user manuals and operating manuals</p> <p>Disposition: Temporary Destroy or delete when superseded or obsolete</p>	New	

Word Processing and Electronic Records.

Electronic copies of records that are created on electronic mail and word processing systems and used solely to generate a record keeping copy of the records covered by the other items in this schedule. Also includes electronic copies of records created on electronic mail and word processing systems that are maintained for updating, revision, or dissemination.

1. Copies that have no further administrative value after the record keeping copy is made. Includes copies maintained by individuals in personal files, personal electronic mail directories, or other directories on hard disk or network drives, and copies on shared network drives that are used only to produce the record keeping copy.

Disposition: Destroy/delete within 180 days after the record keeping copy has been produced.

2. Copies used for dissemination, revision, or updating that are maintained in addition to the record keeping copy.

Disposition: Destroy/delete when dissemination, revision, or updating is completed.

National Archives and Records Administration

8601 Adelphi Road
College Park, Maryland 20740-6001

Date. April 3, 2006
To NWML
From. Jim Cassedy, WG 4, NWML
Subject N1-136-05-13

The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) submits NARA Job N1-136-06-13 for the Seed Regulatory and Testing Branch (SRTB), Seed Regulatory and Testing Information System (SRTIS). A representative from NARA met with Ms. Janice Boteler, AMS Records Officer, as well as Mr Jonathan Farmer, Mr. Tony Proctor, and Ms Aida Hage, AMS Program Officials, on January 23, 2006. A demonstration of SRTIS was provided on this date.

The Seed Regulatory and Testing Branch enforces the interstate commerce provisions of the Federal Seed Act (7 USC 1551-1611) and provides seed testing service under the Agricultural Marketing Act. Federal seed legislation in the United States dates back to 1905 with the passage of the Annual Importation Act, which gave the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) authority to purchase seed on the open market and test it for adulteration and mislabeling. Legislation governing seed was gradually developed over the next thirty-five years, culminating with the enactment of the Federal Seed Act of 1939. This act is the single most important piece of seed legislation in U.S. history and covers all agricultural and vegetable seeds imported into the United States and shipped in interstate commerce. Several amendments have since been made as needed.

The Federal Seed Act is essentially a truth-in-labeling law which covers the sale of seed in interstate commerce and that imported into the United States. Its purpose is to provide for the orderly marketing of seed on a national basis. It requires that all seed sold in interstate commerce and imported into the United States be truthfully labeled for quality, but does not set minimum acceptable standards of quality. It generally has no jurisdiction over seed sold within state boundaries where various state seed laws apply. However, federal and state seed laws normally have similar requirements and seed labeled in compliance with the Federal Seed Act would generally comply with the regulations of the state into which it is shipped. Thus, the Act helps maintain the integrity of each state seed law.

The Federal Seed Act is enforced by the Seed Branch, part of the Livestock, Meat, Grain and Seed Division of the USDA. The Seed Branch is staffed by examiners who investigate possible violations of the Act and help prepare appropriate enforcement action. The Seed Branch also operates a seed-testing laboratory and has a staff of seed analysts who test seed for regulatory purposes. The Seed Branch receives notification of possible interstate violations from state seed inspectors. When apparent violations occur, seed samples may be exchanged and tested by both the federal and state seed laboratories.

When a violation is established, state seed control officials send all information and possible evidence to the Seed Branch headquarters. Depending on the seriousness of the violation, one of several alternatives may be followed. A cease and desist order may be issued informing the seller of the apparent violation so that steps may be taken to prevent similar violations in the future. Seed Branch examiners may also obtain a court order putting the seed under seizure, thus preventing further sales or holding the lot as evidence in case of court action. In addition, fines, or even imprisonment, may be imposed, depending on the seriousness of the violation.¹

¹ **China Farmers' Daily, Foreign Seed Industry Edition, Article 4**, American Seed Legislation and Law Enforcement,

In addition, the Seed Branch's Testing Section tests agricultural and vegetable seeds to bring about efficient, orderly marketing, and to assist in the development of new and expanding markets. This voluntary seed testing service is available on a fee for service basis, and seed will be checked for factors such as purity, germination, noxious weed seeds, and moisture content. The test results are reported in a Federal Seed Analysis Certificate. Many seed importing countries require this certification of U.S. seed and grain. The Testing Section is accredited by the International Seed Testing Association and is recognized as an unbiased authority for conducting tests on export samples.²

The Seed Regulatory and Testing Information System (SRTIS) supports the AMS Seed Branch program by providing a tracking/billing function for the Branch, and supporting both the enforcement function of the Branch, and the Certification function of the branch. Information input into the system includes data about specific seed companies or shippers, information about specific state government contacts, and information concerning seed samples, including AMS assigned tracking information. One database record is created for each seed sample received and each seed shipment investigated.

For a request for a seed analysis in which seed companies or shippers are seeking a Federal Seed Analysis Certificate, SRTIS would track information such as the name of the seed or shipping company and associated contact/billing information. Additional information is input into SRTIS including sample or lot number, date received, kind of seed and variety, amount of seed tested, types of tests requested, number of hours it took to administer the requested tests, and total cost for the test. Tests are generally conducted for moisture content, the percentage of noxious-weeds, germination, and purity of seed.

If the sample submitted passes the certification examination, a certificate is printed out and signed by an AMS official, and mailed to the customer. Before it is mailed, however, the certificate with the signature is scanned into SRTIS, and the scanned electronic image becomes the record keeping copy. The certificate contains information on the name of the seed, the percentage of pure seed, inert matter, and weed seeds, the amount due for the cost of testing, the expiration of the certification, and the name and contact information of the party requesting testing.

As previously noted, the AMS Seed Branch works closely with State Government Seed agencies. The Federal Government has no jurisdiction over seed sold within state boundaries where various state seed laws apply. Under the Federal Seed Act, the Federal Government does hold jurisdiction over seed sold in interstate commerce and imported into the United States.

The Seed Branch receives notification of possible interstate violations from state seed inspectors. Under these circumstances, state seed control officials send all information and possible evidence to the Seed Branch headquarters. Information input into the system would include state contact information, including names of officials and address information, sample lots and source of seed, addresses and state of suspect seed, brand name, type of tests, AMS Federal case numbers. If applicable, information concerning the type of violation and actions taken to rectify the situation are also input into the system.

Results of tests for violations are sent to the complainant via e-mail, and in cooperation with state authorities further action is undertaken. Further actions may include letters of warnings for first offenses, minor violations, and technical violations, as well as monetary penalties for serious or repeated violations. Case files are retained for

*Translation by Dr. Wiejun Zhao, Michigan State University, Institute of International Agriculture
Located at: www.amseed.com/docs/CFD_article4_doc, March 6, 2006.*

² Livestock and Seed Program, Seed Regulatory and Testing Programs, General Information Located at www.ams.usda.gov/lsg/seed/geninfo.htm March 6, 2006

violations of the Federal Seed Act, and are scheduled under NC1-136-79-1 and NC1-136-83-2.³

Seed Regulatory and Testing Information System (SRTIS): Disposition

1. Inputs

Information input into SRTIS includes data about specific seed companies or shippers, information about specific state government contacts, and information concerning seed samples, including AMS assigned tracking information, and other investigative information. Once this information is verified after input into the master file, it will no longer be necessary to retain it. Therefore I agree with the proposed disposition to destroy/delete inputs (both paper and electronic) upon verification of data.

2. Master File. This database provides tracking information concerning seed shipment data, state government information, complainant information, seed company and shipper information, investigation information, seed testing data, test costs and other billing information, violation settlement information, and other data that will support the operation of SRTIS. One database record is created for each seed sample received and each seed shipment investigated.

The information in the master data file will support efficient operations of the AMS Seed Branch, as it certifies seed for customers and maintains the purity of seed shipped internationally and interstate. The information it contains, however, is not permanent and should not be transferred to the National Archives. Most of the information is of routine testing for certification of seeds; a certification that is of interest until the seed is used. The certification and laboratory results of individual tests will not be of long term interest. The records of the development and dissemination of grades and standards against which the quality of seed is measured is scheduled as permanent by NC1-136-79-1/96, and it is this policy information, along with annual reports about the activities of the seed branch that will provide historical information.

Nor will the information found in the database concerning individual violations of the Federal Seed Act be of historical information. There are approximately 500 – 700 recorded violations of the Act every year. Most of these violations are resolved informally, or through letters of warning. Information concerning those egregious cases that require longer term retention will be found in other AMS Seed Branch case files or other judicial case files, or in other annual reports.

AMS proposes this data should be destroyed or deleted after six years. This disposition is adequate for the AMS Seed Branch administrative tracking, billing, and legal needs. I agree with this disposition, and recommend its approval.

3. Outputs. Among the documents output by SRTIS are Seed Analysis Certificates (proposed for destruction six years after issue), Seed Analysis Cards (proposed for destruction 5 years after analysis), and Record of Complaint Cards (proposed for destruction six years after the case is closed). None of these records contain enough information to be of permanent evidential, legal or historical

³ Ibid

value. All of these dispositions have been previously approved by NARA for these records in their paper form, and consideration of the disposition demonstrates that they remain valid. Other reports output by this system will be abstracts or screen shots of this database, and can be destroyed when no longer needed by GRS 20, items 5 and 6. I recommend approval of this disposition.

4. System Documentation. AMS recommends that system documentation such as data dictionaries, document libraries, user manuals, and other operating manuals be destroyed when SRTIS is superceded or obsolete. As system documentation will no longer be needed after cessation of the system, I recommend approval of this item.

In addition, AMS provides for adequate disposition for electronic copies of word processing and electronic versions of these records that may be part of the SRTIS business operations.

I recommend approval of this schedule.



JAMES G. CASSEY
Work Group 4
NWML