

Agricultural Marketing Service
Office of the Deputy Administrator for Marketing Programs
Livestock and Seed Programs, Market News Branch
GS-303-6
Market Reporting Assistant (Office Automation)

SJ #: LM 23
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I. INTRODUCTION

This position is located in a Field Office of the Livestock and Grain Market News Branch, Livestock and Seed Program. The Branch is responsible for administering a nationwide market news program for livestock, meat, grain, feedstuffs, and their related products. This office is responsible for managing customer service, and producing and dissemination market reports for the Livestock and Grain Market News Program that have international, national, and/or regional significance.

The incumbent serves as a Market Reporting Assistant responsible for performing a variety of technical duties associated primarily with compiling market data or information, preparing or generating market reports for release, either by telephone, printed reports or by electronic means to field offices, subscribers, and others. Incumbent serves in a critical capacity that ensures the successful completion of the Program mission.

II. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Coordinates, monitors, and operates the full range of Branch communications equipment for preparation and release of a variety of market news reports. Works with field office employees or technical support specialists in resolving problems associated with communication systems or the Market News Information System (MNIS) for compilation and release of market news data and reports. Takes corrective actions to remedy communications problems.

Compiles and consolidates information and prepares for release reports originating at the local office and from other market news field offices through the use of a network computer system. Based on knowledge of data contained in local or consolidated market reports, reviews data received from field offices and determines relevant market information for inclusion in the report. Assures reports are prepared in proper format and that they are disseminated in a timely.

Reviews various reports from branch, field offices, other USDA agencies, and state and local agencies, edits information and prepares required commodity reports through the use of minicomputers, pertaining to livestock, meat, grain, feedstuffs, and their related products. Release reports for nationwide transmission by FAX, telephone and by Market News Communication System (MNCS).

Receives market information from Federal and/or State market news reporters and inputs information in computer data base system and prepares weekly, monthly, and yearly reports. Accesses data base to prepare responses to government, industry, and educational requests for

marketing information; responses are usually communicated electronically. When other field offices experience technical problems, the incumbent is responsible for ensuring that their data entered into the MNIS and transmitted over the MNCS.

As required, prepares: daily, monthly, and annual statistical reports of livestock, meat, and grain prices and volumes containing the appropriate prices and volumes for all commodities reported by the office; summary reports from data originating from local, other market news field offices, and other USDA agencies; and special reports to meet industry and government requests for marketing data. This involves compiling data from form files or accessing appropriate data base.

As required, compiles data in the absence of the market reporter and prepares for telephonic or electronic release market data for commodities reported by the field office. This involves compiling data and identifying trends and prices in the marketing of livestock, meat, grain, feedstuffs, and their related products.

Maintains files of market reports, and prepares mailing and electronic distribution to Branch Headquarters and field offices, as required.

Utilizing a personal computer for word processing and related functions, types a variety of correspondence including market news reports in final form. Including assimilating material; developing formats, designing tables and charts; and editing material. Uses previous reports as a model to ensure that the reports are complete prior to release.

Assists and instructs Office Automation Clerks and Market Reporting Clerks with PC and software operation and verification of material to be included in composite reports. Contacts field offices regarding missing, late or incomplete information.

Substitutes in the absence of clerks and performs other related duties as assigned.

Adheres to Equal Employment and Civil Rights policies, goal, and objectives in performing the duties of this position. Assures that written and oral communications are bias-free and that differences of other employees and clients are respected and valued.

III. Knowledge Required by the Position

Knowledge of the Program mission and the requirement for timely, accurate and unbiased market report.

Knowledge of the grades, varieties, qualities, and origins of a variety of livestock and grain products sufficient to prepare a variety of market news reports and determine necessary market reporting adjustments to obtain data information or inclusion in required market reports.

Knowledge of the industry's marketing practices in order to recognize discrepancies in data compiled for inclusion in market reports, and to obtain additional information and correct reports.

Knowledge of production areas, varieties, grades, qualities, and price relationships as well as comparative volume of different types of livestock and grain and their related products.

Knowledge of the overall Branch operations in order to respond to telephone and written inquiries regarding market data report preparation.

Knowledge of livestock and grain industry terminology in order to correct and record information according to official USDA standards. Terminology varies widely from one commodity to another and from State to State.

Knowledge of the reports codes used on market wires that are disseminated nationwide. MNCS wires from field offices are a primary source of data.

Skill in operating a personal computer and necessary software for word processing, program-specific spreadsheet, data transmission, and related functions. A qualified typist is required.

2. Supervisory Controls

The incumbent works under the general supervision of the Officer-in-Charge who defines area of responsibility and ongoing work assignments. The incumbent performs recurring work independently and seeks advice and guidance only with new or unusual assignments. Completed work is generally spot-checked for conformance to practices and policies.

3. Guidelines

Written guidelines include Department, Agency, Division, and Branch operating rules and regulations, the Market News Handbook, procedural manuals, and other similar instructions. Most of these guidelines are broadly defined and require the use of initiative and judgment for application to individual situations.

4. Complexity

Assignments involve compiling, organizing, and analyzing complex data associated with the preparation and release of market news reports. The incumbent detects inconsistencies and incomplete and conflicting data information submitted by the field offices for inclusion in nationwide reports and make necessary contacts to obtain correct information and prepare accurate reports. The incumbent uses judgment to determine relevant data for inclusion in market reports.

5. Scope and Effect

The Incumbent provides technical support to Agricultural Market Reporters, program technicians, and others by compiling data and preparing a variety of market news reports. The industry relies on the accuracy of data in market reports in making financial and other marketing decisions. The incumbent is required to report accurate and reliable data to maintain the credibility of the Agency and Department.

6. Personal Contacts

Personal contacts are with coworkers in headquarters and field offices, other USDA employees, officials of the livestock and grain industry and the general public.

7. Purpose of the Contacts

Personal contacts are for the purpose of receiving assignments and giving and exchanging information relating to market news reports and clarification of information which is contained in the reports.

8. Physical Demands

The work is primarily sedentary. There is some walking, standing, bending and carrying of relatively light items such as books and files and teletype paper.

9. Work Environment

The work is performed in an office setting.