



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Research  
Education  
Economics

Office  
of the Under  
Secretary

Room 216W  
Jamie L. Whitten Building  
Washington, DC 20250-0110

AUG 24 2006

**TO:** REE Personnel

**FROM:** Gale A. Buchanan  
Under Secretary

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gale A. Buchanan". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned to the right of the typed name.

**SUBJECT:** Review of Research, Education, and Economics Mission Area

The success of American agriculture is attributable, in large part, to advances in science and technology generated by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Research Education, and Economics (REE) agencies, in partnership with the Land Grant Universities and other cooperators. It is critical that REE programs stay at the cutting edge and continue to work effectively with our partners and cooperators to serve our stakeholders and American consumers across the Nation.

I firmly believe that all organizations can be strengthened, and that we have a responsibility to strive continuously to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our programs. In view of these principles, this correspondence is to keep you apprised of an internal discussion regarding the REE Mission Area.

I have charged Deputy Under Secretary Pierson and our four REE Administrators to review our current programs, linkages and effectiveness. This will guide our discussion of potential opportunities through the next Farm Bill, as well as other administrative actions. This will also provide an opportunity to review external proposals to redefine and restructure the REE Mission Area.

Their review will be guided by the following three goals:

1. Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of existing REE programs.
2. Strengthen the linkages, communications, and coordination of REE with the Nation's Land Grant Universities, as well as other cooperators.
3. Highlight and enhance the quality of USDA-conducted and supported science.

REE is an integral part of USDA and supports the activities of the Department and agriculture broadly both within the United States and worldwide. Our programs provide the scientific foundation to assist in policy decisions and program execution, as well as the knowledge base for improving our food, fiber, and energy foundation. In that regard, we must ensure in our deliberations that REE programs are coordinated, compatible, and supportive of the overall goals and mission of the Department.

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While I am confident of the success and effectiveness of REE programs as they exist today, I have always subscribed to the 4-H motto – “To make the best better.” We face many challenges. Fortunately, they are accompanied by just as many opportunities. The diverse programs in the REE Mission Area can and will address many of these challenges, thereby enhancing the quality of life for all Americans. Building on the wealth of experience here and throughout the agricultural science system, and listening to our customers, we can make it happen.

We will keep our employees, stakeholders and partners informed as this internal process moves forward.