

In reply, please refer to
FOIA 2012-AMS-02647-F

Lisette Garcia, J.D.
Judicial Watch
425 Third St., S.W.
Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20024

FEB - 1 2013

Dear Ms. Garcia:

This is the final response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request dated May 18, 2012 and subsequently referred to other USDA agencies, including the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), by the USDA Chief FOIA Officer on June 7, 2012. You requested the following information:

1. All contacts and expense records related to training or services provided by Samuel Betances or his firm, Souder, Betances & Associates, of Chicago, Illinois;
2. All communications related to training and services provided by Samuel Betances or his firm, Souder, Betances & Associates, of Chicago, Illinois;
3. All records and email from the offices of Secretary Thomas Vilsack, Under Secretary Edward Avalos, Administrator Greg Parham, and Deputy Administrator Joanne Munro regarding the above-referenced training and services.

In Batch #1 of our response, AMS provided you with 40 pages of records responsive to your request, in their entirety, on December 13, 2012. Ninety-two additional pages of responsive records were provided to their submitter for review under the Executive Order 12600 ("EO 12600") process.

Having completed the review of 92 pages of records partially responsive to items 1 and 2 of your request pursuant to Executive Order 12600, we are releasing these records to you in their entirety. Please find these records in a PDF file on the Compact Disc attached.

Please note that with respect to Item 3, AMS has no records responsive to this part of your request. The requested documents and emails from the offices of Secretary Thomas Vilsack, et al., is responsive by Mr. Greg Bridges, of the Office of Chief Information Office (OCIO) FOIA Service Center; email: greg.bridges@ocio.usda.gov. and telephone: (202) 694-0003.

You may appeal this action within 45 days from the date of this letter. Any such appeal should be in writing, addressed to: Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Stop 0201, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Room 3071, South Building, Washington, D.C. 20250-0201. If you decide to file an appeal, please provide specific reasons

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why you believe modification of the initial action is warranted. To facilitate processing of your appeal, the phrase "FOIA APPEAL" should be placed in capital letters on the front of the envelope.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Valerie L. Emmer-Scott".

Valerie L. Emmer-Scott
AMS Freedom of Information Act Officer

Enclosure