

Supervisory Agricultural Economist  
(Head, Economics, Social Science, & Evaluation Staff)  
GM-110-15

INTRODUCTION

This position is located at the Midwest National Technical Center in Lincoln, Nebraska. The incumbent serves as National Leader in the areas of Range Economics, International Trade Economics, Research Tool Development and Economic Costs and Returns Database Management; as well as head of the Economics, Social Science, and Evaluation Staff, providing economic, cultural, and sociological evaluations and analyses for all activities of the Service.

DUTIES (NATIONAL)

- Directs major segments of national economics programs including Range Economics, International Trade Economics, Research Tool Development, and Economic Costs and Returns Database Management. Such duties include gathering, analyzing, interpreting and publishing economic information to the public, including those which administer legislative decisions.
- Assumes national responsibility for economic research in the areas of Range Economics, International Trade Economics, Tool Development and Economic Costs and Returns Database Management. This includes research carried out with universities and other agencies of government. Specifically, the incumbent determines research needs in these four phases of the soil and water conservation programs; recommends research activities necessary to meet needs and collaborates with the ERS, ARS, state experiment stations, and other agencies in developing research programs to maintain a correlated approach to all conservation problems; and keeps abreast of research activities, evaluates and integrates pertinent data for use in Service programs.
- Furnishes advice and council in the areas of Range Economics, International Trade Economics, Research Tool Development, and Economic Costs and Returns Database Management from the planning phase, through execution, and into proposed policy. In these areas the incumbent serves nationally as advisor to the Chief, Assistant Chiefs, Deputy and Associate Chiefs, division directors, state conservationists, directors of national technical centers and to other publics outside the SCS.
- Provides national and international liaison and representation in the areas of Range Economics, International Trade Economics, Research Tool Development, and Economic Costs and Returns Database Management to professional organizations and societies, and the top economics representatives in other federal agencies to assure that SCS is abreast of current needs and developments in the profession.

DUTIES (HEAD OF STAFF)

- Supervises the Economics and Social Sciences Staff. Provides work assignments; sets goals and objectives and makes evaluations of performance; provides training, recognition, and assistance or guidance on new or unusual projects; and provides administrative support for activities of the staff.

- Coordinates activities of staff specialists in assisting the state conservationists and their staffs to carry out a balanced and integrated conservation program.
- Develops plans of operations for the staff, coordinated with activities of other components of the NTC, the National Headquarters, and the states.
- Participates in and contributes to the development of policies, procedures, standards, and criteria for a comprehensive soil, water, and plant resource conservation and development program at the NHQ, NTC, and state levels.
- Works with state conservationists and their technical staffs in analyzing training needs and in the development of training programs.
- Directs the development or collection of the latest technical data and information including materials, methods, or techniques for improving the social sciences activities.
- Provides technical data and information to states for their use as instructional material, revision of standards, criteria on procedures, and for inclusion in technical guides.
- Provides leadership and guidance in the design, development, and maintenance of administrative procedures to assure that delivery of SCS programs and services are carried out without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or handicap. Reviews the implementation of civil rights policies to determine that they are translated into appropriate actions consistent with annual plans of operation in all units under their supervision, as well as by recipients.
- Provides leadership and guidance for the understanding and application of personnel rules and regulations as they apply to the Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Employment Programs to ensure their integration into recruitment, hiring, promotion, training, career development (including varied work assignments, details, and special developmental assignments), separations, grievances, and other personnel actions. Emphasizes meeting the objectives of equal opportunity and affirmative employment plans and requirements. Ensures that these functions are carried out without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or physical or mental handicap.

#### SUPERVISION RECEIVED

How work is assigned: The incumbent is under the supervision of the Director who supervises work largely through discussion on broad objectives, complex problems, and controversial situations.

Employee responsibility: Delegation of authority and responsibility for the scientific aspects of the assignment is essentially complete within the framework of established policy and program emphasis. Within broad policy, incumbent makes binding and authoritative decisions. In contacts made with representatives of other agencies, research groups and others, agreements reached usually constitute final technical commitments of the service with regard to economics, particularly in the areas of range, international trade, research tool development, and database management.

How work is reviewed: Projects are reviewed for compliance with agency policy, guidelines, and constraints of budget.

#### SCOPE AND COMPLEXITY OF ACTIVITIES

Incumbent has national responsibility for all Range Economics, International Trade Economics, Research Tool Development, and Economic Costs and Returns Database Management phases of the Service's program. The activities are involved in all Service programs and the staff leadership extends to the primary operations levels in the 50 states and Puerto Rico where activities are carried out in more than 3,000 area and field offices. Broad and complex problems are involved in the various phases of these activities as they relate and implement a coordinated national soil and water conservation program. The administration of these activities under an extremely wide variety of conditions directly affect individuals and groups of farmers and ranchers, small watersheds, municipal watersheds, as well as urban properties and is basic to the integrity of a sound soil and water conservation program.

Professional research activities of the incumbent, including publication and technology transfer, are of major importance to the economic discipline. Those responsibilities produce economic models and data which are sought after by other government agencies, universities, and private industry as well as international economic groups. Due to the vast array of outside contacts, the incumbent serves as SCS representative on numerous national economic committees, is invited to speak at national economics society meetings, and asked to review the research of peers for technical economics journals; all of which move forward the economic arts.

The incumbent serves as a consultant in the areas of Range Economics, International Trade Economics, Economics Research Tool Development, and Economic Costs and Returns Database Management to NHQ, other NTC's, and all states within SCS. Likewise, the incumbent consults with other agencies of government, universities, legislators, private business, and the media in these areas. These consultations occur in person, through written correspondence, by telephone, through outside national committee assignments, at national economics meetings and workshops, through professional journals, and through the popular press.

The incumbent also has responsibility for the direct supervision of four subordinate staff positions. Duties consist of supervising employees who are engaged in substantive professional work. The incumbent sets priorities for all projects to be completed by the staff, assigns work to individuals based on experience, provides general guidelines for new work or research within the staff, and redirects work assignments when resources or needs change.

Performance evaluations of staff members are completed periodically with annual official evaluations. The incumbent gives counselling and advice to staff members on training needs and career goals, and resolves complaints; conducts interviews for vacant positions; collaborates with the Director or personally makes selections; recommends employees within the staff for incentive awards, other recognition or disciplinary action, as appropriate; and carries out supervisory EEO responsibilities, as outlined in duties.

PERSONAL WORK CONTACTS

Personal contacts are with NHQ personnel in all Divisions; four NTC staffs; heads and staff members of numerous other federal, state and private agencies; Land Grant Colleges and other colleges and universities; heads of experiment stations and other research organizations; representatives of state and local governments and foreign governments; national farm organizations; professional groups interested in soil conservation and related fields; and technical societies, organizations and groups.

PURPOSE OF CONTACTS

Contacts are to coordinate work, influence, motivate and lead others; resolve difficulties through negotiations; and to transfer knowledge.