

**§ 6962a. Cooperative agreements**

Notwithstanding any other provision of law (including provisions of law requiring competition), the Secretary of Agriculture may on and after October 28, 2000, enter into cooperative agreements (which may provide for the acquisition of goods or services, including personal services) with a State, political subdivision, or agency thereof, a public or private agency, organization, or any other person, if the Secretary determines that the objectives of the agreement will: (1) serve a mutual interest of the parties to the agreement in carrying out the programs administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service; and (2) all parties will contribute resources to the accomplishment of these objectives: *Provided*, That Commodity Credit Corporation funds obligated for such purposes shall not exceed the level obligated by the Commodity Credit Corporation for such purposes in fiscal year 1998.

(Pub. L. 106-387, §1(a) [title VII, §714], Oct. 28, 2000, 114 Stat. 1549, 1549A-30.)

**CODIFICATION**

Section was enacted as part of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001, and not as part of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994, which in part comprises this chapter.

**§ 6963. Repealed. Pub. L. 115-334, title XII, § 12414(a)(5), Dec. 20, 2018, 132 Stat. 4981**

Section, Pub. L. 103-354, title II, §247, Oct. 13, 1994, 108 Stat. 3225, related to reorganization of Forest Service.

**SUBCHAPTER VI—RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND ECONOMICS****§ 6971. Under Secretary of Agriculture for Research, Education, and Economics****(a) Authorization**

The Secretary is authorized to establish in the Department the position of Under Secretary of Agriculture for Research, Education, and Economics (referred to in this section as the “Under Secretary”).

**(b) Confirmation required**

The Under Secretary shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, from among distinguished scientists with specialized training or significant experience in agricultural research, education, and economics.

**(c) Chief Scientist**

The Under Secretary shall—

(1) hold the title of Chief Scientist of the Department; and

(2) be responsible for the coordination of the research, education, and extension activities of the Department.

**(d) Functions of Under Secretary****(1) Principal function**

The Secretary shall delegate to the Under Secretary those functions and duties under the jurisdiction of the Department that relate to research, education, and economics.

**(2) Specific functions and duties**

The Under Secretary shall—

(A) identify, address, and prioritize current and emerging agricultural research, education, and extension needs (including funding);

(B) ensure that agricultural research, education, and extension programs are effectively coordinated and integrated—

(i) across disciplines, agencies, and institutions; and

(ii) among applicable participants, grantees, and beneficiaries;

(C) promote the collaborative use of all agricultural research, education, and extension resources from the local, State, tribal, regional, national, and international levels to address priority needs; and

(D) foster communication among agricultural research, education, and extension beneficiaries, including the public, to ensure the delivery of agricultural research, education, and extension knowledge.

**(3) Additional functions**

The Under Secretary shall perform such other functions and duties as may be required by law or prescribed by the Secretary.

**(e) Office of the Chief Scientist****(1) Establishment**

The Under Secretary shall organize within the office of the Under Secretary 6 Divisions, to be known collectively as the “Office of the Chief Scientist”, which shall coordinate the research programs and activities of the Department.

**(2) Division designations**

The Divisions within the Office of the Chief Scientist shall be as follows:

(A) Renewable energy, natural resources, and environment.

(B) Food safety, nutrition, and health.

(C) Plant health and production and plant products.

(D) Animal health and production and animal products.

(E) Agricultural systems and technology.

(F) Agricultural economics and rural communities.

**(3) Division Chiefs****(A) Selection**

The Under Secretary shall select a Division Chief for each Division using available personnel authority under title 5, including—

(i) by term, temporary, or other appointment, without regard to—

(I) the provisions of title 5 governing appointments in the competitive service;

(II) the provisions of subchapter I of chapter 35 of title 5 relating to retention preference; and

(III) the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5 relating to classification and General Schedule pay rates;

(ii) by detail, notwithstanding any Act making appropriations for the Department of Agriculture, whether enacted before, on, or after the date of enactment of this para-