

Department of Agriculture and Industries



Functional Analysis & Records Disposition Authority

**Revision
Presented to the
State Records Commission
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Functional and Organizational Analysis of Department of Agriculture and Industries

Sources of Information

- Staff of the Department of Agriculture and Industries
- Code of Alabama 1975 § 2-1-1 through 2-31-9; § 8-17-80 through 8-17-173
- Alabama Administrative Code Chapters 80-1-1 through 80-13-9
- Alabama Government Manual (1998)
- Audit Reports of the Department of Agriculture and Industries (1995 through 1999)
- Department of Agriculture and Industries Annual Report (Fiscal Year 1997-1998)
- Records Retention Schedules of the Department of Agriculture and Industries
- State Agency Files, Department of Archives and History (1985-)
- State Agency Record Holdings, Department of Archives and History
- Department of Agriculture and Industries Website (<http://www.agi.alabama.gov>)

Historical Context

The Department of Agriculture was created by statute in 1883. It was originally located on the campus of what is now Auburn University, moving to Montgomery in 1886. Initially, the department was under the control of a commissioner appointed by the governor, who served a two-year term at a salary of \$2,100. In its early years, the department did not receive funds from the state legislature, operating on licensing fees collected from regulating the sale and distribution of fertilizer. In 1901, Alabama's new constitution established the commissioner of agriculture's election by popular vote. Between 1907 and 1915, the state legislature increased the department's role in regulating such areas as livestock and poultry, farm produce, horticulture, commercial foodstuffs, and investment in state agriculture. In cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Auburn University, the department began to conduct farm demonstrations, founding what is now the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service. The present Department of Agriculture and Industries was created in 1923, and the department became more active in promoting the state's industrial growth. Changes to the Code of Alabama in 1927 and 1940 further increased its enforcement powers and gave the commissioner autonomous authority to organize the department's work and structure.

Today's department, operating with a budget of just under \$30 million, employs 423 full-time and ca. 250 part-time employees, who carry out regulatory and promotional responsibilities that touch the lives of Alabamians.

Agency Organization

The Department of Agriculture and Industries is administered under the direction of the State Board of Agriculture and Industries. The board is composed of eleven members: four *ex officio* and seven appointed. *Ex officio* members are the governor, the commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Industries, the director of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System at

Auburn University, and the head of the School of Agriculture at Auburn University. The governor appoints seven additional members, subject to Senate confirmation. Four of the appointed members must be farmers, and three must be outstanding leaders of industry. Of the members representing either farmers or industry, no two may come from the same congressional district. Appointed members serve terms of office concurrent with that of the governor. The board holds regular meetings on the second Tuesday in February, May, August, and November. A quorum consists of a majority of the board members.

The department is headed by the commissioner of agriculture and industries, a constitutional officer elected by popular election. To qualify for the office, a candidate must be at least 25 years of age, a citizen of the United States for at least seven years, and a resident of Alabama for at least five years preceding the election. The commissioner must be of good character, of recognized executive ability, and trained in the practice and science of agriculture. The commissioner serves a four-year term and is eligible for one successive term.

Agency Function and Subfunctions

The mandated function of the Department of Agriculture and Industries is to promote agriculture and industries within the state and to enforce laws, rules, and regulations relating to agriculture and industries. The department is one of the agencies primarily involved in carrying out the Regulatory function of Alabama government.

In the performance of its mandated function, the Department of Agriculture and Industries may engage in the following subfunctions:

- **Promulgating Rules and Regulations.** The State Board of Agriculture and Industries is authorized, under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 2-3-4, to make and promulgate rules and regulations for the administration of the Department of Agriculture and Industries. The board is also required to cooperate with other national, state, or local agencies in the promotion of agriculture and the enforcement of matters relating to agriculture. This subfunction encompasses the board's efforts in making, altering, repealing, or amending rules and regulations that are implemented by the department to accomplish its duties and functions vested by law.
- **Regulating.** One of the department's primary subfunctions is to ensure quality products for consumers, to protect the health of livestock and poultry, and to provide fair competition between industries through regulatory process. Various divisions or offices in the department routinely issue licenses and permits, conduct inspections or investigations, collect samples for testing, and perform other related regulatory activities. Departmental staff members may engage in the following activities under this subfunction:

Regulating Agricultural Commodities (Feed, Fertilizer, and Lime Materials). Staff members collect necessary fees and issue licenses or permits to allow companies to manufacture, formulate, and sell their agricultural commodities (feed, fertilizer, and lime materials) in the state. In addition, staff conducts regular inspections relative to

feeds, fertilizers, and liming materials. To ascertain product compliance with the manufacturer's guarantee, samples are collected by inspectors and referred to the department's laboratories for testing and analysis.

Regulating Livestock and Poultry. The department administers programs to prevent, eradicate, and control infectious diseases of livestock and poultry. Staff members regularly test cattle and swine on farms, at livestock markets, or at slaughter establishments for possible diseases. They also review certificates of veterinary inspection issued by Alabama's accredited veterinarians for animals moving into interstate commerce, in order to ensure that all required tests and examinations have been properly performed. Under the National Poultry Improvement Plan, all hatching egg supply flocks of primary poultry breeds are selected and tested for hatchery disseminated diseases. All chick and livestock dealers are required to obtain permits and are subject to inspections. Every hatchery in the state is also periodically checked by the department's inspectors. Other activities may include registering livestock brands, providing veterinary diagnostic laboratories, and assisting law enforcement officials with the investigation of farm-related crimes.

Regulating Warehouses and Gins. All state bonded warehouses that store agricultural products, household goods, building materials, clothing, chemicals, and other commodities are subject to permit requirements and regular inspection by departmental personnel. Staff members are also responsible for permitting and checking the operation of gins.

Regulating Plants and Plant Pests. The department is responsible for the prevention, control, and eradication of pests affecting the agricultural and horticultural interests of the state. All plant establishments (such as nurseries, nursery retailers, sweet potato growers, and honeybee colonies) must be inspected and/or certified by the department before plant material or honeybees can be sold or shipped to other states or countries. Under Act 84-746 of the Alabama legislature, the Commissioner of Agriculture and Industries is empowered to implement a program of boll weevil eradication in cotton. This program is funded by assessments paid by individual cotton producers to the department, which in turn deposits the money with the Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation of Alabama, Inc. The foundation disburses these funds to pay the operating costs of the program.

Regulating Seed. The department is responsible for seed testing and seed law enforcement. Seed dealers must apply for an annual permit and pay a permit fee before conducting business. Staff members collect samples of seeds offered for sale at all wholesale and retail seed outlets. Samples found to be in violation of the seed law must be suspended from sale, destroyed, or have their labeling corrected. Individual farmers or home gardeners are entitled to the seed testing service provided by the department.

Regulating Shipping Point Operations. Operated under federal cooperative agreements with the United States Department of Agriculture, the department maintains

field offices at major shipping points across the state to inspect and weigh outgoing and incoming peanuts, soybeans, wheat, corn, potatoes, fruits, vegetables, and tree nuts.

Regulating Food, Drugs, and Cosmetics. The department is responsible for enforcing food, drug, cosmetic, egg, and dairy product laws. Enforcement activities include routine or special inspections and testing of samples.

Regulating Meat and Poultry Food Products. To assure consumers of clean, wholesome, unadulterated, and properly labeled meat and poultry food products, staff members of the department routinely inspect meat and poultry food products prior to slaughter, as well as during slaughter and preparation.

Regulating Petroleum Products. In accordance with the Code of Alabama 1975 § 8-17-80, the department regulates the sale, storage, and use of petroleum products in the state. Activities include testing petroleum products, issuing permits, inspecting facilities, collecting fees, and auditing reports submitted by petroleum companies.

Regulating Pesticide Management. Activities include licensing pest control operators and pesticide applicators, and issuing permits to pest control professionals.

Regulating Weights and Measures. To ensure equity in all commercial transactions involving quantity, the department certifies, tests, and monitors the use of all weighing and measuring devices (such as supermarket scales, gasoline pumps, feed and fertilizer scales, heavy-duty weight scales, and universal price code scanners) for accuracy.

- **Promoting.** The department is responsible for the promotion of agricultural commodities and value-added agricultural products in the state and abroad. To accomplish this goal, departmental staff may design promotional materials (logos, posters, etc.), conduct meetings or farm visits, participate in county fairs or trade shows, hold “Taste of Alabama” products events, and initiate international trade missions.

Since 2013, the department has administered the Alabama Farmers Market Authority (previously an independent entity) as an Agriculture and Industries division. The authority was established, in 1965, “to assist in the marketing of agricultural products . . . by providing convenient, dependable places through which producers and buyers may carry on the process of marketing. This [work] assures the consumer a better-quality product at a reasonable price and a fair return to the producer.” Formerly, the department directly operated the Montgomery State Farmers Market, which was designed to increase awareness of farm-grown produce. That market is now operated by a private vendor.

The department staff is also responsible for coordinating activities relating to the Alabama Agricultural Development Authority (AADA), established by the legislature in 1980 as a public corporation to provide loans or funds for use in agricultural operations.

Another activity in this subfunction is to foster better communications and relationships among farming-related groups. Funded by a joint state and federal grant, the Alabama Agricultural Mediation Program provides free mediation service for farmers, their families, creditors, and various agencies and businesses that are associated with day-to-day farm operations.

- **Compiling Statistics.** In accordance with the Code of Alabama 1975 § 2-2-50, the commissioner is responsible for gathering, compiling, and publishing statistics related to agriculture. The Alabama Agricultural Statistics Service (AASS), operated under a cooperative agreement between the department and the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) of the United States Department of Agriculture, is obligated to collect data from farmers, hatchery workers, poultry processors, livestock dealers, slaughter plants, cotton ginner, fertilizer dealers, merchants and state and local government entities. Data reported is analyzed; and statistics are released for use in planning, marketing, and management decisions by the department and other groups.

In addition, department personnel gather price and volume information on livestock and grain commodities sold within the state and nation. This marketing information is then released to news media for dissemination.

- **Administering Internal Operations.** A significant portion of the agency's work includes general administrative, financial, and personnel activities performed to support its programmatic areas.

Managing the Agency. Activities involved in managing the agency may include internal office management activities such as corresponding and communicating; scheduling; meeting; creating policies and procedures; reporting; litigating; legislating (drafting, lobbying, tracking); publicizing and providing information; managing records; and managing information systems and technology.

Managing Finances. Activities involved in managing finances may include the following: budgeting (preparing and reviewing the budget package, submitting the budget package to the Department of Finance, documenting amendments and performance of the budget); purchasing (requisitioning and purchasing supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods, and authorizing payment for products received); accounting for the expenditure, encumbrance, disbursement, and reconciliation of funds within the agency's budget through a uniform system of accounting and reporting; authorizing travel; contracting with companies or individuals; bidding for products and services; and assisting in the audit process.

Managing Human Resources. Activities involved in managing human resources may include the following: recruiting and hiring eligible individuals to fill vacant positions within the agency; providing compensation and benefits to employees; supervising employees (evaluating performance, disciplining, granting leave, and monitoring the accumulation of leave); and providing training and continuing education for employees.

Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources. Activities involved in managing properties, facilities, and resources may include the following: inventorying and accounting for non-consumable property and reporting property information to the appropriate authority; constructing buildings and facilities; leasing and/or renting offices or facilities; providing for security and/or insurance for property; and assigning, inspecting, and maintaining agency property, including vehicles.

Analysis of Record Keeping System and Records Appraisal of the Department of Agriculture and Industries

Agency Record Keeping System

The agency currently operates a hybrid record-keeping system composed of paper and electronic records.

Paper-based Systems: Staff members create and maintain most of the agency's records in paper form.

Computer Systems: The department's information system is comprised of a Cisco wired and wireless network interconnecting physical and virtual Microsoft servers in support of approximately 130 local users. The department is dependent upon the State Data Center's main-frame for critical accounting and personnel documentation; all other document and data files are housed locally, with critical information backed up daily. Backup tapes are stored offsite. Microsoft Outlook is the primary form of digital communications.

The Department of Agriculture and Industries maintains a website at: <http://www.agi.alabama.gov/>. It contains a detailed history of the department and its previous directors, current information on each division, PDF versions of departmental forms, news of recent events and product recalls, and contact information.

Records Appraisal

The following is a discussion of the three major categories of records created and/or maintained by the Department of Agriculture and Industries: Temporary Records, Permanent Records, and Records No Longer Created.

I. Temporary Records. Temporary records should be held for what is considered to be their active life and disposed of once all fiscal, legal, and administrative requirements have been met. In this edition of the RDA, additions or revisions to the Department of Agriculture and Industries' temporary records fall into three categories:

- **Records Incorporated from a Previous RDA or RDA Revision.** On April 26, 2006, the State Records Commission approved revised disposition for several temporary records listed under the Regulating Petroleum Products and Regulating Weights and Measures activities. A new series (Unused Livestock Hunter Tags) was added to the Regulating Livestock and Poultry activity. These changes are incorporated in the present version. Certain temporary records from the now-obsolete RDA for the Farmers Market Authority (2002) have been transferred to this RDA. The authority was abolished as an independent entity in 2013 and now operates as an Agriculture and Industries Division.

- **Generic Additions or Revisions to All State RDAs.** Many “generic” changes to records common to most state agencies have occurred since 2002, when Agriculture and Industries’ original RDA was approved by the commission. Along with these changes, version of the RDA incorporates a change in disposition for many financial, payroll and other short-term records whose retention period was formerly “3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.” In compliance with a directive from the Examiners of Public Accounts, disposition for these records has been changed to: “Retain 1 year after audit.”
- **Changes Made for Consistency.** Because records appraisal for the original RDA was carried out on a division-by-division basis, there was inconsistency in retention periods for similar types of records held by various divisions. For example, in this version of the RDA the disposition for all records related to testing or inspection activities has been standardized as “Retain 5 years,” the period already common to most of them.

II. Permanent Records. The Government Services Division recommends the following records as permanent.

Promulgating Rules and Regulations

- **Meeting Minutes of the State Board of Agriculture and Industries.** The board is responsible for the adoption of policies, rules, and regulations for its operation. Minutes document proceedings of the regular and special meetings of the board. The Archives has Meeting Minutes of the State Board of Agriculture and Industries created between 1950 and 1984. **(Bibliographic Title: Meeting Minutes of the State Board of Agriculture and Industries)**
- **Meeting Minutes of the Alabama Agricultural and Industrial Exhibit Commission.** The commission was established in 1953 by the legislature to develop and approve overall plans for the distribution of awards and prizes to the Alabama State Fair Authority and the Alabama National Fair. The commission receives staff support from the commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Industries, who serves as its chairman. The commission holds one regular meeting each year, and meeting minutes are maintained by the department’s legal office. **(Bibliographic Title: Meeting Minutes of the Alabama Agricultural and Industrial Exhibit Commission)**
- **Meeting Minutes of the Alabama Public Livestock Market Board.** The board was established by the legislature in 1991, with the commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Industries as its chair. The board reviews applications and issues certificates of charter to livestock business entities. Meeting minutes are the core documentation of the board’s function. **(Bibliographic Title: Meeting Minutes of the Alabama Public Livestock Market Board)**
- **Policies and Procedures Manuals.** This series documents the department’s administrative policies and procedures. The manuals establish a course of action for departmental programs and staff members. **(Bibliographic Title: Policies and**

Procedures Manuals) (RDA Procedures Manuals)

Regulating

- **Records documenting the registration of livestock brands.** In accordance with the Code of Alabama 1975 § 2-15-25, the department is required to maintain a complete register of all livestock brands. Information in the files includes names and addresses of registrants, descriptions of brands, and drawings of brands. Brand registration records prior to 1952 are maintained in county probate offices and scheduled as permanent under their records disposition authority. The Archives has in its custody records documenting the registration of livestock brands from 1914 to 1916. **(Bibliographic Title: Register of Livestock Brands)**
- **Boll Weevil Eradication Program Files.** By act of the state legislature (Alabama Act 84-746), the commissioner of Agriculture and Industries is empowered to implement a program of boll weevil eradication in cotton. The program is funded by assessments paid by individual cotton producers to the department, which in turn deposits the money with the Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation of Alabama, Inc. The foundation disburses the funds to pay the program's operating costs. Included in these records are articles of incorporation, meeting minutes of the board of directors, and other documents deemed important to the program. **(Bibliographic Title: Program Files Relating to Boll Weevil Eradication)**
- **Annual Plant Quarantine Activity Summaries.** One of the department's regulatory responsibilities is to inspect plants imported into the state. Staff members in charge of the plant inspection program prepare an annual plant quarantine activity summary to document important activities for the previous year, as well as future plans. Information may contain narrative program summaries, statistics, and related tables. All summaries are prepared according to plant pest categories. **(Bibliographic Title: Annual Plant Quarantine Activity Summaries)**

Promoting

- **“Alabama Experts in the Field” State Logo Program Files.** The goal of the logo program is to promote Alabama-produced or -manufactured products in state and world-wide marketplaces. Registered with the Office of the Secretary of State, the logo may be used by companies or producers that have applied to the department. Included in these files are official logo program documents, completed application forms, custom-made logos for those companies, and other related materials. **(Bibliographic Title: Logo Program Files)**
- **Informational and Promotional Publications.** The department publishes a variety of publications designed to inform farmers and the general public on market or price trends, or to advertise services offered by the department. Examples of these publications may include *Alabama Farm Facts* (monthly), *Alabama Farmers' and Consumers' Bulletins* (monthly), *Alabama Agricultural Directory* (yearly), *Alabama Hay Directory* (yearly),

and various posters and brochures. The Archives has a number of informational and promotional publications created between 1884 and 2000. **(Bibliographic Title: Informational and Promotional Publications)**

- **News Releases.** This series consists of statements or announcements concerning the department and its activities issued for distribution to the news media and the public. Included may be copies of news releases, published articles, photographs, typescripts of broadcast announcements, and other reference materials used to create the news release. **(Bibliographic Title: News Releases)**
- **Alabama Century and Heritage Farm Program Files.** This program was designed to recognize and honor farms that have been in operation as a family farm for over a century and have played a significant role in Alabama history. A Century Farm is one that has at least forty acres of land, has been owned by a family continuously for at least 100 years, and currently has some agricultural activities. The Heritage Program is likewise for family farms operated continuously for at least 100 years, which also have one or more structures over forty years old. This series consists of ownership registration forms completed by applicants. Information available includes name, address, and telephone number of applicant; location and acreage of farm, current use of land (crops/livestock produced, number of generations living on the farm, list of structures over forty years old); and detailed data on the history of owners. Photographs of historic structures are also attached to the form. Qualified applicants are awarded certificates of recognition. These records possess information on historical farms in Alabama and should be preserved permanently. **(Alabama Century and Heritage Farm Program Files)**
- **Meeting Minutes of the Alabama Agricultural Development Authority.** The authority was created to promote development of agriculture in the state. It is empowered to make loans, receive contributions, invest funds, borrow money, sell or exchange property, and issue bonds for the construction of agricultural facilities. The board has seven members, including the commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Industries, the director of the Finance Department, the superintendent of the Banking Department, and four appointed members. The board's records, including meeting minutes and other program records, are maintained by the department. **(Bibliographic Title: Meeting Minutes of the Alabama Agricultural Development Authority)**
- **Annual Reports of the Alabama Agricultural Mediation Program.** The Alabama Agricultural Mediation Program, supported by federal-state matching grant funding, is designed to ease tensions and to foster creative and factual communications among farmers in the state. Information in the annual report may include program procedures, summaries of program effectiveness, statistics of case disposition, recommendations for improving delivery of mediation services, and estimated savings to the state. Copies of the reports are generally distributed to the federal government, Alabama congressional delegates, and state legislators. **(Bibliographic Title: Annual Reports of the Alabama Agricultural Mediation Program)**

Compiling Statistics

- **Detailed Livestock and Hay Quotations.** Departmental personnel routinely gather and compile daily and weekly price and volume information on livestock and grain commodities sold within the state and nation. These reports are released to the media, the agricultural community, and the public. They allow agency staff to track market trends and may be used by researchers to study long-term market trends or prices during a specific time period. Information is only partially summarized in *Annual Alabama Agricultural Statistics* (**Bibliographic Title: Reports of Price and Volume for Livestock and Grain**)
- **Annual Alabama Agricultural Statistics.** This volume is a complete compilation of statistics relating to Alabama agriculture published by the department on a yearly basis. In addition to state highlights, the publication also contains a county statistical profile section for each of Alabama's 67 counties. These records are core research documentation, as they provide a comprehensive picture of Alabama agriculture. The Archives has copies of the *Annual Alabama Agricultural Statistics* published between 1948 and 1998. (**Bibliographic Title: Annual Alabama Agricultural Statistics**)

Administering Internal Operations

- **Annual Reports.** The department publishes annually a full report of its operations and administration. The report summarizes the activities of each departmental program for the previous year. The Archives has copies of Annual Reports dating back to 1883. (**Bibliographic Title: Annual Reports**)
- **Commissioner's Administrative Correspondence.** This is correspondence between the commissioner and other federal, state, or local government entities, or private organizations, on a wide range of subjects critical to the department's operation and administration. The Archives has Commissioner's Administrative Correspondence created between 1883 and 1998. (**Bibliographic Title: Correspondence**)
- **Opinions of General Counsel.** Part of the responsibilities of the general counsel is the preparation of opinions interpreting agriculture-related laws and establishing policy to implement them. These records form part of the department's core administrative documentation. (**Bibliographic Title: Opinions of General Counsel**)
- **Website and Social Media Sites.** The Department of Agriculture and Industries maintains a website at: <http://www.agi.alabama.gov/>. It contains a detailed history of the department and its previous directors, current information on each division, PDF versions of departmental forms, news of recent events and product recalls, and contact information. ADAH archivists capture and preserve agency websites, and other social media sites, through a service offered by the Internet Archive (Archive It). This series documents the office's functions and interaction with budgeted entities and the public. (**Bibliographic Title: Website and Social Media Site[s]**)

- **Grant Project Final Reports.** These records are final reports of the grants managed by the Department of Agriculture and Industries. They document the grant project's goals, activities, and accomplishments. Among these files is the Farmers Market Authority's federal Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program grant, appraised as permanent in the authority's RDA before its disappearance as an independent entity. **(Bibliographic Title: Grant Project Final Reports)**
- **Real Property Files.** These records document the ownership of real property and should be maintained permanently in the agency.

Records No Longer Created

The following records are no longer created by the agency:

- **Meeting Minutes of the Agricultural Center Board.** Established in 1945, this board was responsible for leasing and managing property of the Agricultural Center, known as the Garrett Coliseum, which is located in Montgomery. The board had five members, and the commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Industries was an *ex officio* member. The board's meeting minutes were maintained by the department's legal office. The Agriculture Center Board was abolished in 2011. Its permanent records have already been accessioned by ADAH. The Department of Agriculture and Industries has custody of its remaining temporary records, which may be disposed of in accordance with the defunct board's RDA. **(Bibliographic Title: Meeting Minutes of the Agricultural Center Board)**
- **Meeting Minutes of the Farmers Market Authority.** The Farmer's Market Authority was established in 1965 (under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 2-5-1 through § 2-5-17) to promulgate rules and regulations for the operation of "convenient, dependable places through which [agricultural] producers and buyers may carry on the process of marketing." In 2013, the authority ceased to exist as an independent entity and became an Agriculture and Industries division. Although its three-member board was abolished, the board's minutes continue to provide the most complete documentation of its rules, regulations, and decisions. **(Bibliographic Title: Meeting Minutes of the Farmers Market Authority)**
- **Alabama Horticultural Products Marketing Study Findings.** The Farmers Market Authority sponsored and conducted an Alabama Horticultural Products Marketing Survey to determine how best to help Alabama farmers market their horticultural products. Its objectives included: identifying new markets, establishing relationships with produce buyers, assessing prospects for increasing agricultural production, and defining industry needs. The authority compiled a pamphlet documenting major findings. Other records may include narrative or statistical reports. This was a one-time study, but it provides core documentation of the authority's strategic planning process. **(Bibliographic Title: Alabama Horticultural Products Marketing Study Findings)**

Permanent Records List

Department of Agriculture and Industries

Promulgating Rules and Regulations

1. Meeting Minutes of the State Board of Agriculture and Industries
2. Meeting Minutes of the Agriculture Center Board
3. Meeting Minutes of the Alabama Agricultural and Industrial Exhibit Commission
4. Meeting Minutes of the Alabama Public Livestock Market Board
5. Policies and Procedures Manuals

Regulating

1. Records document the registration of livestock brands*
2. Annual Plant Quarantine Activity Summaries
3. Boll Weevil Eradication Program Files*

Promoting

1. “Alabama Experts in the Fields” State Logo Program Files
2. Informational and Promotional Publications
3. News Releases
4. Alabama Century and Heritage Farm Program Files
5. Meeting Minutes of the Alabama Agricultural Development Authority
6. Annual Reports of the Alabama Mediation Program

Compiling Statistics

1. Detailed Livestock and Hay Quotations*
2. Annual Alabama Agricultural Statistics

Administering Internal Operations

1. Annual Reports
2. Commissioner’s Administrative Correspondence
3. Opinions of General Counsel*
4. Website and Social Media Sites
5. Grant Project Final Reports
6. Real Property Files*

Records No Longer Created

1. Meeting Minutes of the Agricultural Center Board
2. Meeting Minutes of the Farmers Market Authority
3. Alabama Horticultural Products Marketing Study Findings

*Indicates records that ADAH anticipates will remain in the care and custody of the creating agency.

ADAH staff is available to work with the agency in determining the best location and storage conditions for the long-term care and maintenance of permanent records not transferred to ADAH.

Department of Agriculture and Industries Records Disposition Authority

This Records Disposition Authority (RDA) is issued by the State Records Commission under the authority granted by the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-13-5 and § 41-13-20 through 21. It was compiled by the Government Services Division, Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH), which serves as the commission's staff, in cooperation with representatives of the Department of Agriculture and Industries. The RDA lists records created and maintained by Department of Agriculture and Industries in carrying out its mandated functions and activities. It establishes retention periods and disposition instructions for those records and provides the legal authority for Department of Agriculture and Industries to implement records destruction.

Alabama law requires public officials to create and maintain records that document the business of their offices. These records must be protected from "mutilation, loss, or destruction," so that they may be transferred to an official's successor in office and made available to members of the public. Records must be kept in accordance with auditing standards approved by the Examiners of Public Accounts (Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-12-2, § 36-12-4, and § 41-5-23). For assistance in implementing this RDA, or for advice on records disposition or other records management concerns, contact the ADAH Government Services Division at (334) 242-4452.

Explanation of Records Requirements

This RDA shall govern the disposition of all records, regardless of format, created by the Department of Agriculture and Industries from its creation to its dissolution. Please contact the Department of Archives and History before destroying any record created prior to 1940.

This RDA supersedes any previous RDAs or records disposition schedules governing the retention of the Department of Agriculture and Industries' records. Copies of superseded RDAs or schedules are no longer valid and should be discarded.

The RDA establishes retention and disposition instructions for records, regardless of the medium on which those records may be kept. Electronic mail, for example, is a communications tool that may record permanent or temporary information. As for records in any other format, the retention periods for e-mail records are governed by the requirements of the subfunctions to which the records belong.

Certain other record-related materials need not be retained as records under the disposition requirements in this RDA. Such materials include: (1) duplicate record copies that do not require official action, so long as the creating office maintains the original record for the period required; (2) catalogs, trade journals, and other publications received that require no action and do not document government activities; (3) stocks of blank stationery, blank forms, or other surplus materials that are not subject to audit and have become obsolete; (4) transitory records, which are temporary records created for short-term internal purposes that may include, but are not limited to: telephone call-back messages; drafts of ordinary documents not needed for their evidential value; copies of material sent for information purposes but not needed by the receiving office for

future business; and internal communications about department social activities; and (5) honorary materials, plaques, awards, presentations, certificates, and gifts received or maintained by department staff. These materials may be disposed of without documentation of destruction.

Any record created prior to 1900 shall be regarded as permanent unless there is a specific action by the State Records Commission to authorize its destruction.

Records Disposition Requirements

This section of the RDA is arranged by subfunctions of the Department of Agriculture and Industries and lists the groups of records created and/or maintained by the department in carrying out these subfunctions. The department may submit requests to revise specific records disposition requirements to the State Records Commission for consideration at its regular quarterly meetings.

**Denotes agency vital records, defined as records required to carry on its essential operations, to protect its legal and financial interests, and to assist in its recovery during a period of emergency or natural disaster.*

Promulgating Rules and Regulations

MEETING MINUTES OF THE STATE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRIES

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

MEETING MINUTES OF THE ALABAMA AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL EXHIBIT COMMISSION

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD

MEETING MINUTES OF THE ALABAMA PUBLIC LIVESTOCK MARKET BOARD

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Recordings of Meetings

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until the official minutes are adopted and signed.

Printout of Acknowledgment from the Secretary of State Relating to Notices of Meetings Posted by State Agencies

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUALS

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Administrative Procedures Rule Filings

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

REGISTER OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES RULE FILINGS

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Retain in office (Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-22-6).

Administrative Code Books (Agency Copy)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

Regulating

Regulating Agricultural Commodities (Feed, Fertilizer, and Lime Materials)

Records documenting applications for and issuance and renewal of annual licenses and permits for manufacturers of agricultural commodities (feed, fertilizer, and lime materials)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Monthly agriculture commodity sale and receipt reports submitted by business entities

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Records documenting the inspection of agricultural product samples

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Records documenting activities relating to the investigation of consumer complaints

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after the case was closed.

Records documenting the testing and analysis of samples by the department's regulatory laboratories

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Laboratory Log Books

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the last entry.

Records documenting activities relating to the audit of agricultural commodity business entities

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Examinations completed by milk testers

Disposition: Retain for useful life.

Regulating Livestock and Poultry

Records documenting livestock (cattle, swine, and poultry) disease testing and eradication activities

Disposition: Temporary Record. Records of infected animals: Retain 15 years. Records of non-infected animals: Retain 10 years.

Certificates of Veterinary Inspections (copies) completed by Alabama accredited veterinarians

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Records documenting applications for and issuance and renewal of annual permits or certificates for poultry-related businesses

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Records documenting applications for and issuance and renewal of annual permits for livestock markets, dealers, haulers, and weighers

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Unused Livestock Hauler Tags

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year following audit.

Note: Tags are metal. Contact General Services for disposal.

Livestock Market Transaction Tickets

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

RECORDS DOCUMENTING THE REGISTRATION OF LIVESTOCK BRANDS

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Records documenting the examinations and diagnosis of animal species by the department's veterinary diagnostic laboratories

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Records documenting activities relating to the investigation and settlement of livestock or farm-related complaints and crimes

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after the case was closed.

Regulating Warehouses and Gins

Records documenting applications for and issuance and renewal of annual permits or licenses for cotton buyers, public ginnermen, public warehousemen, and grain dealers

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Regulating Plants and Plant Pests

Records documenting applications for and issuance and renewal of annual certificates or permits for nurseries, nursery retail dealers, sweet potato growers, honeybee colonies, and ginseng dealers

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Records documenting the inspection of regulated business entities

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

BOLL WEEVIL ERADICATION PROGRAM FILES

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Boll Weevil Eradication Program Referendum Ballots

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years or until completion of next referendum.

Records documenting the audit of the Boll Weevil Eradication Program operation related activities

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Records documenting filings of assessment forms by cotton producers

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

State and federal compliance agreements filed by nurseries and nursery dealers

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the business entity was closed.

ANNUAL PLANT QUARANTINE ACTIVITY SUMMARIES

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Records documenting the quarantine process for plants imported to the state

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the quarantine process was completed.

Records documenting the purchase and export of ginseng by dealers

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Regulating Seed

Records documenting applications for and issuance and renewal of annual permits for seed-related businesses

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Records documenting the testing and analysis of seed samples collected from business entities

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Records documenting the testing and analysis of seed samples submitted by individual farmers and gardeners

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Regulating Shipping Point Operations

Records documenting grain, fruit, and vegetable shipping point inspections

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Records documenting the testing and analysis of nuts, corn, and peanut products by the department's aflatoxin laboratory

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Regulating Food, Drug, and Cosmetics

Records documenting applications for and issuance and renewal of annual permits for egg and dairy businesses

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Records documenting the inspections of food and drug warehouses and retail establishments

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Reports and correspondence documenting the testing and analysis of samples collected by the department's regulatory laboratory

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Records documenting activities relating to the investigation and settlement of consumer complaints

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after the case was closed.

Records documenting the inspection of egg-packing facilities by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Records documenting the inspection of poultry products distributed into school programs by the U.S. Department of Agriculture

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Regulating Meat and Poultry Food Products

Slaughterhouse and Processing Plant Application and Compliance Agreement Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the establishment ceased operation.

Slaughterhouse and Processing Plant Violation Case Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the establishment ceased operation.

Records documenting the inspections of slaughterhouses and processing plants

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Regulating Petroleum Products

Records documenting applications for and issuance/renewal of annual permits for gasoline, lubricating oil, and brake fluid related business entities

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Records documenting monthly inspection fees collected by the department on petroleum products sold, stored, used, or offered for sale in the state

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Petroleum Commodity Certificates for Reduced Inspection Fee Rate

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the company was closed.

Records documenting specific and continuous reporting information for companies marketing petroleum products.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the company was closed or discontinued business in the state.

Records documenting insurance and surety bonds filed by petroleum product marketing companies

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the company was closed or fails to renew bonds.

Monthly sales and receipts computer cross match printouts

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Records documenting activities relating to the audit of petroleum product marketing companies

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Monthly petroleum commodity fee collection worksheets

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Regulating Pesticide Management

Monthly reports of termite inspection and eradication activities submitted by termite control companies

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Records documenting insurance and surety bonds filed by termite control companies

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the company was closed.

Records documenting applications for issuance or renewal of annual pesticide licenses and permits

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Records documenting the annual registration with the department of all pesticides sold, distributed, or transported within the state

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit in the year the registration expired.

Records documenting compliance inspections and sample analysis of pesticide manufacturers and dealers

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Records documenting activities relating to the investigation of consumer complaints

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Regulating Weights and Measures

Records documenting the inspection of light- and heavy-duty weight scales or measuring devices

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Records documenting the testing of weight and measuring equipment by the department's metrology laboratory

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Records documenting applications for and issuance and renewal of annual weight master certificates

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit in the year the certificate holder becomes inactive.

Records documenting the process of annual registration of weights and measures equipment service personnel

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit in the year the registrant became inactive.

Records documenting departmental inspectors' daily work recapitulation

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Promoting

"ALABAMA EXPERTS IN THE FIELD" STATE LOGO PROGRAM FILES

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

INFORMATIONAL AND PROMOTIONAL PUBLICATIONS

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

NEWS RELEASES

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

ALABAMA CENTURY & HERITAGE FARM PROGRAM FILES

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

MEETING MINUTES OF THE ALABAMA AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (AADA)

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

AADA Loan Participation Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit in the year the loan was paid in full.

AADA Bond Issue Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit in the year the bond was redeemed.

AADA Members' Appointment and Service Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit in the year the term expired.

ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE ALABAMA AGRICULTURAL MEDIATION PROGRAM

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Alabama Agricultural Mediation Program Individual Case Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after the case was closed.

Farmers Market/Agricultural Products Marketing Facility Lease or Sale Agreement Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the cost is paid in full.

Farmers Market/Agricultural Products Marketing Facility Visit and Monitoring Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record: Retain 5 years.

Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Pilot Program Vendor Agreements

Disposition: Temporary Record: Retain 1 year after audit in the year the farmer withdrew from participation.

Redeemed Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Pilot Program Checks

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program Financial Records

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after submission of the final federal expenditure report.

Records documenting the receipt of gate fees, weighing service fees, and rents for the Montgomery State Farmers Market

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Compiling Statistics

DETAILED LIVESTOCK AND HAY QUOTATIONS

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

ANNUAL ALABAMA AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD

Administering Internal Operations: Managing the Agency

ANNUAL REPORTS

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Division or Office Supporting Documents for the Departmental Annual Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until the annual report is published or no longer useful.

Board/Commission Members' Appointment and Service Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after the audit in the year in which the term expired.

Commissioner's Daily Reminder Engagement Books

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

COMMISSIONER'S ADMINISTRATIVE CORRESPONDENCE

DISPOSITION: PERMANENT RECORD.

OPINIONS OF LEGAL COUNSEL

DISPOSITION: PERMANENT RECORD.

Routine Correspondence

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Departmental Publication Mailing Listings

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

Administrative Reference Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain for useful life.

Legal Case Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 10 years after the final disposition of the case.

Administrative Hearing Case Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after the final disposition of the case.

Board of Adjustment Case Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years after the final disposition of the case.

Legislation Tracking Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years.

Records documenting the implementation of the department's approved RDA (copies of transmittal forms to the Archives and the State Records Center, evidence of obsolete records destroyed, and annual reports to the State Records Commission)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Copies of RDA

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after the audit period in which the RDA is superseded.

Computer System Documentation (hardware and software manuals and diskettes, warranties)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain documentation of former system 1 year after the audit period in which former hardware and software no longer exists anywhere in the agency and all permanent records have migrated to a new system.

WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA SITE(S)

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

(ADAH staff captures and preserves the agency's website and other social media sites via a service offered by the Internet Archive [Archive It]. Check with ADAH website at www.archive-it.org/organizations/62 to ensure your agency website and social media site(s) are captured and preserved. If your agency's website and social media site(s) are not captured by the service, please contact the Government Services Division at 334-242-4452 to get them included.)

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Finances**Records documenting the preparation of a budget package and reporting of the status of funds, requesting amendments of allotments, and reporting program performance**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Records documenting the requisitioning and purchasing of supplies and equipment, receipting and invoicing for goods, and authorizing payment for products

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Records of original entry or routine accounting transactions, such as journals, registers, ledgers, and funds deposited outside the state treasury.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Records documenting the collection of standard regulatory fees (permits, licenses, certificates, assessment, and inspections, etc.) and deposit of the money into the appropriate fund/account.

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit in the year the transaction occurred.

Blank or Voided Permits, Licenses, or Receipts

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

GRANT PROJECT FINAL REPORTS

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Grant Project Financial Records and Interim Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after submission of the final financial report.

Records documenting requests for authorization from supervisors to travel on official business either within or outside the state, and other related materials, such as travel reimbursement forms

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Records documenting contracts for services or personal property

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after expiration of the contract.

Records documenting the bid process, including requests for proposals and unsuccessful responses

- a. Original bid records maintained in the agency's purchasing office for contracts over \$15,000
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 7 years after end of the fiscal year in which the bids were opened.
- b. Duplicate copies of bids (originals are maintained by the Division of Purchasing, Department of Finance)
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year following audit.

Agency Audit Reports

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Bad Check Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after the audit following final disposition of the case.

Business Bankruptcy Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after the audit following final disposition of the case.

Notice and Release of Lien Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after the audit in which the account was satisfied.

Uncollectible Liens

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Human Resources**Position Classification Files**

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 4 years after position is reclassified.

Application Materials

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

Records documenting payroll (e.g. pre-payroll reports, payroll check registers)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Records documenting payroll deduction authorizations

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.

Records documenting payroll deductions for tax purposes (including Form 941)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Records documenting an employee's work history—generally maintained as a case file

- a. Records documenting work history of employees
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of employee from the agency.
- b. Records located within divisions or offices that document an employee's work history
Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after separation of the employee from the agency

Records documenting employees' daily and weekly work schedules

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Records documenting an employee's hours worked, leave earned, and leave taken (including time sheets)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Records documenting final leave status

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.

Records documenting sick leave donations

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Employee Flexible Benefits Plan Files

- a. General information

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until superseded.

- b. Other (applications, correspondence)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after termination of participation in program

State Employee Injury Compensation Trust Fund Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Case Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years.

Employees Administrative Hearing Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after separation of the employee from the agency.

Records documenting the employee appeal to the Personnel Board of formal reprimands, personnel suits, demotions, transfers, or terminations

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 5 years following decision of Personnel Board.

Administering Internal Operations: Managing Properties, Facilities, and Resources**REAL PROPERTY FILES**

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Retain in office.

SEMI-ANNUAL INVENTORY LISTS

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD. Retain in office (Code of Alabama 1975 § 36-16-8 [1]).

Transfer of State Property Forms (SD-1) (Agency copies)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit.

Property Inventory Cards and/or Computer Files

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit in the year the items were removed from inventory.

Receipts of Responsibility for Property

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain until return of item to property manager.

Real Property Leasing or Renting Records

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after expiration of the lease.

Facilities and Building Security Records (including visitor logs)

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 3 years after the end of the fiscal year in which the records were created.

Records documenting the ownership and disposition of vehicles owned by the agency

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year after audit in the year the vehicle was removed from the property inventory.

Motor Pool Vehicle Use Records

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year following audit.

Insurance Policies and Risk Management Records

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 6 years after termination of policy or membership.

Building Maintenance Work Orders

Disposition: Temporary Record. Retain 1 year.

Records No Longer Created**MEETING MINUTES OF THE AGRICULTURAL CENTER BOARD**

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

MEETING MINUTES OF THE FARMERS MARKET AUTHORITY

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

ALABAMA HORTICULTURAL PRODUCTS MARKETING STUDY FINDINGS

Disposition: PERMANENT RECORD.

Requirement and Recommendations for Implementing the Records Disposition Authority

Requirement

Under the Code of Alabama 1975 § 41-13-21, “no state officer or agency head shall cause any state record to be destroyed or otherwise disposed of without obtaining approval of the State Records Commission.” This records disposition authority constitutes authorization by the State Records Commission for the disposition of records of the Department of Agriculture and Industries as stipulated in the document.

One condition of this authorization is that the department submit an annual Records Disposition Authority (RDA) Implementation Report on its records management activities, including documentation of records destruction, to the State Records Commission in April of each year.

Recommendations

In addition, the department should make every effort to establish and maintain a quality record-keeping program through the following activities:

The Department of Agriculture and Industries should designate a managerial position as the agency records officer. This position is responsible for: ensuring the development of quality record-keeping systems that meet the department’s business and legal needs, coordinating the transfer and destruction of records, ensuring that permanent records held on alternative storage media (such as microforms and digital imaging systems) are maintained in compliance with national and state standards, submitting an annual report on records management activities to the State Records Commission in April of each year, and ensuring the regular implementation of the department’s approved RDA.

Permanent records in the department’s custody should be maintained under proper intellectual control, and in an environment that will ensure their physical order and preservation.

Destruction of temporary records, as authorized in this RDA, should occur department-wide on a regular basis—for example, after the successful completion of an audit, at the end of an administration, or at the end of a fiscal year. Despite the RDA’s provisions, no record should be destroyed that is necessary to comply with requirements of the Open Meetings Act, audit requirements, or any legal notice or subpoena.

The department should maintain full documentation of any computerized record-keeping system it employs. It should develop procedures for: (1) backing up all permanent records held in electronic format; (2) storing a back-up copy off-site; and (3) migrating all permanent records when the system is upgraded or replaced. If the department chooses to maintain permanent records solely in electronic format, it is committed to funding any system upgrades and migration strategies necessary to ensure the records’ permanent preservation and accessibility.

Electronic mail may contain permanent, temporary, or transitory record information. Although e-mail messages can be printed out, filed, and retained according to the RDA's requirements, the department should preferably employ an electronic records management system capable of sorting e-mail into folders and archiving messages having long-term value.

The staff of the State Records Commission or the Examiners of Public Accounts may examine the condition of permanent records in the department's custody and inspect records destruction documentation. Government Services Division archivists are available to instruct departmental staff in RDA implementation and otherwise assist the department in implementing its records management program.

The State Records Commission adopted this records disposition authority on April 22, 2015.

Steve Murray, Chairman
State Records Commission

Date

By signing below, the agency acknowledges receipt of the retention periods and requirements established by the records disposition authority.

John McMillan, Commissioner
Department of Agriculture and Industries

Date