

USDA Responds to Mississippi Poultry Growers' Concerns

Washington, DC (February 11, 2000)--A rapid response team from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration was in Jackson, MS, during the week of February 9, 2000, to respond to poultry growers' concerns of unfair treatment under the Packers and Stockyards Act.

GIPSA's rapid response teams are designed to deal with high priority investigations that require fast action to prevent or minimize major competitive or financial harm caused by violations of the Act.

The eight-member team investigated complaints made by poultry growers about changes to their growout contracts. The investigation into potential violations of the Packers and Stockyards Act was initiated in response to numerous complaints made to GIPSA's Violations Hotline (800-998-3447).

"We spoke with growers, met with Mississippi's Commissioner of Agriculture and Attorney General, collected a great deal of records and data, and now have the information we need to determine if violations of the Packers and Stockyards Act are taking place," said GIPSA administrator James R. Baker.

GIPSA is responsible for enforcing the Packers and Stockyards Act, which prohibits poultry companies from unfair and unjust practices related to contracting with poultry growers.

For more information, call Amy R. Van Skiver, Regional Supervisor, GIPSA Atlanta Regional Office, at (404) 562-5840.

#

GIPSA Release #04-00
Dennis S. Murray Sr. (202) 720-7456 DSMurray@usda.gov