

Research Associate Performance Plan (FY17 Revision)

Background: The revised Research Associate performance element standards were drafted by the Associate Area Directors, reviewed by the Research Leader Advisory Council, and approved by the Area Directors. The revision was developed to provide clearly defined performance element standards specific to the Research Associates.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
PERFORMANCE PLAN, PROGRESS REVIEW AND APPRAISAL WORKSHEET
FOR NON-SUPERVISORY POSITIONS (CAT 2)

1. EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

Name (Last, First, M.I.)	Pay Plan, Series, Grade	Agency/Division	APPRAISAL PERIOD	
<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	USDA-ARS	From	To
Position Title			<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 95%;" type="text"/>
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE				

2. USDA AND AGENCY OR STAFF OFFICE STRATEGIC GOALS AND MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES

(List the current Strategic Goals and Management Initiatives)

Alignment to Strategic Plan Alignment to Strategic Plan:

3. MISSION RESULTS-ORIENTED PERFORMANCE ELEMENT

No. 1 (Describe below the element title and the duty or responsibility for which the employee is accountable and responsible)

Critical

Element 1. PLANS AND CONDUCTS PERSONAL AND TEAM RESEARCH

4. ALIGNMENT, STANDARDS AND MEASURES

<p>LINKAGE (List the Goal or Initiative with which the Results-Oriented Performance Element will align, and any specific Strategies and Objectives.)</p>	<p>STANDARDS AND MEASURES (Describe the level expected for "Fully Successful" performance. Include appropriate measures of quality, quantity, cost effectiveness or timeliness.)</p>
<p>Goal/Initiative:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducts personal and team research aligned with the approved Project Plan. Executes research protocols so that the investigations generate timely, reliable and valid data that will yield meaningful contributions to knowledge or technology suitable for publication of original full-length articles in refereed journals or as other documentable evidence of accomplishment (patents, variety releases, model releases, etc.). • In consultation with the supervisor, develops personal annual research plans. This includes planning research and publications to meet ARS Guidelines on Authorship requirements [ARS P&P 152.1 and 152.2] for participation in conception or design of experiments, and/or analysis and interpretation of data. • Promotes effective communication and cooperation with colleagues in team research. Keeps supervisor informed of progress in meeting research goals. <p>SPECIFIC GOALS FOR THE RATING PERIOD:</p>
<p>Strategies and Objectives:</p>	

5. ELEMENT RATING (At the end of the rating period, compare the employee's performance with standards, and assign an element rating.)

EXCEEDS
FULLY SUCCESSFUL
DOES NOT MEET

6. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

7a. PERFORMANCE ELEMENT

No. (Describe below the duty or responsibility for which the employee is accountable and responsible. Indicate if the element is critical or noncritical.)

X	CRITICAL
	NONCRITICAL

Element 2. REPORTS RESEARCH RESULTS**7b. STANDARD** (Describe the level expected for "Fully Successful" performance. Include measures indicators of quality, quantity, cost effectiveness, or timeliness.)

- As requested, contributes materials for annual reports (ARS-421) that accurately document progress towards meeting Project Plan research objectives, milestones, outcomes and accomplishments, following Agency instructions for format, style, and content.
- Completes manuscripts that reflect original research and valid interpretations for publication in refereed journals. Consults with the supervisor to assure entry of all publications, including manuscripts (scientific journal articles, semi-technical or trade journal articles, book chapters, reviews, popular articles, workshop reports, symposium proceedings, etc.), books, monographs, electronic publications, and abstracts into the Agricultural Research Information System (ARIS) via form ARS-115 for approval by the Research Leader prior to submission.
- The minimum requirement for reporting research results can be met by authorship on one manuscript of original research for refereed journals. Manuscript must be submitted to journal and/or other outlet and documented in ARIS within the rating period.
- A patent application, approved germplasm release/registration submitted to a refereed journal and documented in ARIS within the rating period, or a peer-reviewed model may provide equivalency credit for reporting original research in a refereed journal.
- Minimum reporting requirements may be modified for new hires during the first two rating periods (e.g., when incumbent has not been on duty for sufficient time to publish research results; or in case of personal or medical hardship). (Requires supervisor and 2nd line supervisor approval.)
- Makes diligent efforts to pursue publication of manuscripts by submitting revisions within journal editorial guidelines. Revises and resubmits any rejected manuscript to an appropriate journal within one year of the rejection notice date. Continuously updates the status of unpublished manuscripts in ARIS. Justification for not resubmitting a rejected manuscript is subject to supervisory review and approval. Resubmission of a rejected manuscript approved in a prior performance period does not count toward fulfilling the minimum requirement for reporting research in the current rating period.

SPECIFIC GOALS FOR THE RATING PERIOD:**7c. ELEMENT RATING** (At the end of the rating period, compare the employee's performance with standard and assign an element rating. Refer to documentation, as necessary.)

EXCEEDS
FULLY SUCCESSFUL
DOES NOT MEET

7d. ACCOMPLISHMENTS**8a. PERFORMANCE ELEMENT**

CRITICAL

No. **3** (Describe below the duty or responsibility for which the employee is accountable and responsible. Indicate if the element is critical or noncritical.)

X NONCRITICAL

Element 3. TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER, PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY, & CONSULTING ACTIVITIES

8b. STANDARD (Describe the level expected for "Fully Successful" performance. Include measures indicators of quality, quantity, cost effectiveness, or timeliness.)

- Responds promptly, accurately, and in accordance with established procedures to both internal and external customers to meet their needs for information. Communicates with the customer in a courteous, respectful and professional manner and ensures that the given information is clear, accurate and provided within agreed upon time frames. Examples of ways that information may be disseminated include oral or poster presentations, practical demonstrations, seminars, workshops, or one-on-one information exchange.
- As approved by supervisor participates in technology transfer activities in compliance with ARS P&P 141.2 that foster implementation and application of research results; examples include:(1) cooperates in research with industry, Federal, state, and university laboratories; (2) develops patent applications; (3) plays a role in organizing and conducting technology transfer workshops, events, and demonstration projects; (4) develops and releases technology or research data to other scientists and action or regulatory agencies; and (5) communicates research findings and potential impacts with trade associations, commodity or producer organizations and other stakeholders.
- Provides timely, complete and accurate reports and other documents when requested or directed according to Agency policy. Provides technical information, advice or counsel to the agricultural community and other public sectors in a professional and timely manner.
- Participates in professional advisory and consulting activities, as approved by the supervisor. This may include presenting research, serving on committees, or technical advisory groups.

SPECIFIC GOALS FOR THE RATING PERIOD:

8c. ELEMENT RATING (At the end of the rating period, compare the employee's performance with standard and assign an element rating. Refer to documentation, as necessary.)

EXCEEDS

FULLY SUCCESSFUL

DOES NOT MEET

8d. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

9a. PERFORMANCE ELEMENT No. <input type="text" value="4"/> (Describe below the duty or responsibility for which the employee is accountable and responsible. Indicate if the element is critical or noncritical.)	x	CRITICAL
		NONCRITICAL

Element 4. PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATIONS & EEO/CR

9b. STANDARD (Describe the level expected for "Fully Successful" performance. Include measures indicators of quality, quantity, cost effectiveness, or timeliness.)

- Keeps the supervisor informed of research and related activities. Develops and maintains contacts and positive interactions with team members, supervisors, cooperators, cooperating institutions, customers, and administrative personnel in a cooperative manner that ensures the mission and objectives of the research are fully communicated and provide appropriate access to information associated with the project.
- In coordination with supervisor, develops work plans so that the project is recognized by responsible officials as fully productive. Provides guidance and support to cooperating scientists, students, and workers to enhance effective collaboration and productivity.
- Performs all duties in a manner that consistently demonstrates fairness, cooperation, and respect toward coworkers, office visitors, and all internal and external customers in the performance of official business. Demonstrates an awareness of Equal Employment Opportunity and Civil Rights (EEO/CR) policies and responsibilities.
- Through personal action, demonstrates support to Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights principles and policies in accomplishing assigned duties.
- Ensures written and oral communications are free of discriminatory bias. Refrains from making and discourages inappropriate comments, jokes, gestures, etc. regarding an individual's race, religion, color, age, sex, national origin, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation when on duty or representing the Agency in any capacity.
- Maintains an atmosphere of equal treatment in the work unit by discouraging discrimination of any form. Attempts to discourage unlawful discrimination by maintaining an unbiased atmosphere.
- Displays a helpful attitude and willingness to assist persons to become a part of the workforce without regard to their race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability or handicapping condition, marital status, or sexual orientation. Reviews and adheres to the Agency/Departmental policy on the prevention of sexual harassment in the work place.
- In coordination with supervisor, considers internal and external stakeholder needs and expectations in making decisions, devising solutions, and resolving conflicts. Includes those that are consistent with Agency priorities in plans and commitments, and monitors for success in achieving results.

SPECIFIC GOALS FOR THE RATING PERIOD:

9c. ELEMENT RATING (At the end of the rating period, compare the employee's performance with standard and assign an element rating. Refer to documentation, as necessary.)		EXCEEDS
		FULLY SUCCESSFUL
		DOES NOT MEET

9d. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

10a. PERFORMANCE ELEMENT No. <input type="text" value="5"/> (Describe below the duty or responsibility for which the employee is accountable and responsible. Indicate if the element is critical or noncritical.)	x	CRITICAL
		NONCRITICAL

Element 5. RESOURCE, SECURITY, ANIMAL CARE, SAFETY, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

10b. STANDARD (Describe the level expected for "Fully Successful" performance. Include measures indicators of quality, quantity, cost effectiveness, or timeliness.)

In fulfilling the duties of this element the incumbent is responsible for maintaining a safe work environment for themselves, other employees and their workspaces. Due diligence to accomplish this duty includes but is not limited to the following four items: 1) communicating the importance, rationale, and necessity of Safety, Health, and Environmental Management (SHEM) responsibilities, 2) ensuring the development of required SHEM plans and other materials, 3) ensuring the documentation of SHEM compliance through required reports, and 4) taking steps for SHEM abatement projects or remedial measures as required for functionality or compliance with statutes and regulations.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- Contributes to judicious management of fiscal resources according to Agency procedures. Ensures that resources used and research efforts have program and fiscal accountability that are in line with one or more project objectives.
- Assists in maintaining federal property including facilities, vehicles and equipment in functional and safe condition following appropriate policies, procedures and ethical guidelines.
- Supports ARS and USDA programs governing engineering, real property management (USDA-REE 245.1) and personal property management (USDA-REE 221.1M).
- Promotes synergistic sharing of equipment and facilities within and outside the Management Unit.

SAFETY, HEALTH & ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT (SHEM); ANIMAL CARE Supports applicable ARS and USDA SHEM Programs as provided in USDA-REE Manual 230.0. Conducts all activities in compliance with those programs and applicable state and local requirements and standards.

- Supports applicable animal use and care programs as provided in Directive 130.4 and USDA-REE 635.1 and any applicable Federal regulations. Animals will be handled humanely and according to IACUC guidance and approval. Supports applicable ARS Biosafety and Biosecurity programs as provided by ARS and other relevant agencies.

SECURITY

- Supports ARS Homeland Security programs relating to physical and cyber security and hosting visiting scientists or foreign workers. Maintains security and integrity of research information and protects and appropriately records research activities and outcomes.
- Supports USDA and ARS security policies, procedures, and guidelines related to the physical security and protection of employees, experimental materials, organisms, and facilities. Promptly reports any security breaches and malfunctioning security equipment to the responsible Security Officer. Participates in security awareness programs and actively supports the promotion of a secure work environment.
- Supports ARS and USDA Information Systems Security Programs as outlined in 253.3-ARS and other issuances provided by the ARS Office of the Chief Information Officer (ARS-OCIO).

SPECIFIC GOALS FOR THE RATING PERIOD:

10c. ELEMENT RATING (At the end of the rating period, compare the employee's performance with standard and assign an element rating. Refer to documentation, as necessary.)		EXCEEDS
		FULLY SUCCESSFUL
		DOES NOT MEET

10d. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
**PERFORMANCE PLAN, PROGRESS REVIEW AND APPRAISAL WORKSHEET
 FOR NON-SUPERVISORY POSITIONS**

13. CERTIFICATION OF DEVELOPMENT, EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT AND RECEIPT OF PLAN

Signatures certify employee involvement in the development of, and receipt of plan which reflects current position description

NOTE TO EMPLOYEE: You are requested to sign and date below to certify receipt of this performance plan. Your signature does not mean that you agree or disagree with the contents of the plan. However, your failure to sign does not void the contents of this plan or the performance expectations documented within.

Employee's Signature <input type="checkbox"/> I participated in the development of this performance plan. <input type="checkbox"/> I was not invited to participate in the development of this performance plan. <input type="checkbox"/> I chose not to participate in the development of this performance plan.	Date If employee did not sign, state reason:
Supervisor's Signature	Date
Reviewer's Signature	Date

Employee's Initials and Date								Supervisor's Initials and Date							
1st Quarter		2nd Quarter		3rd Quarter		4th Quarter		1st Quarter		2nd Quarter		3rd Quarter		4th Quarter	
	Date		Date		Date		Date		Date		Date		Date		Date

14. CERTIFICATION OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM TRAINING

Signature certify completion of the most recent program training, required every two years

Employee's Signature	Date
Course Title or Other Description	Date of Training
Supervisor's Signature	Date

Performance Appraisal

1. Position Number	2. Pay Plan	3. Occupational Series	4. Grade
	GS		

5. Name (Last, First, Middle Initial - No Nicknames)		6. Appraisal Period	
		From:	To:
7. Official Position Title	8. Agency, Division, Office	9. Duty Station (City, State)	

10. Performance Elements		11A Critical Element	11B Exceeds Fully Successful	11C Meets Fully Successful	11D Does Not Meet Fully Successful
1)	PLANS AND CONDUCTS PERSONAL AND TEAM RESEARCH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
2)	REPORTS RESEARCH RESULTS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
3)	TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER, PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY, & CONSULTING ACTIVITIES	<input type="checkbox"/>			
4)	PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATIONS, SUPERVISION & EEO/CR	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
5)	RESOURCE, SECURITY, ANIMAL CARE, SAFETY, HEALTH, AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
6)		<input type="checkbox"/>			
7)		<input type="checkbox"/>			
Mission-Results Element = 4 appraisal units Other Critical Elements = 2 appraisal units each Non-Critical Elements = 1 appraisal unit each		Totals	11E Exceeds	11F Meets	11G Does Not Meet
			11H Enter Total (11E + 11F + 11G = 11H)		

12. Summary Rating

Rating of **Outstanding** if 11E equals 11H.
 Rating of **Superior** if no element is rated in 11D, 11F is greater than zero, and 11E is greater than 11F.
 Rating of **Minimally Satisfactory** if any non-critical element, but no critical element, is related in 11D.
 Rating of **Unacceptable** if any Critical Element is rating in 11D.
 Rating of **Fully Successful** if none of the above applies.

<input type="checkbox"/> Outstanding	<input type="checkbox"/> Superior	<input type="checkbox"/> Fully Successful	<input type="checkbox"/> Minimally Satisfactory	<input type="checkbox"/> Unacceptable
--------------------------------------	-----------------------------------	---	---	---------------------------------------

13. Employee's Signature	Employee Signature Date	If employee did not sign, state reason:

14. Rating Official Signature	Date	15. Reviewing Official Signature	Date