MENU

Sign the petition to Stop the USDA "Reorganization"! Urge that USDA Secretary Rollins and Deputy Secretary Vaden Protect Federal Workers, Our Food System, and the Public

An open letter to:

The Honorable Brooke L. Rollins, Secretary of Agriculture
The Honorable Stephen A. Vaden, Deputy Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave SW, Washington, DC 20250

Our Urgent Requests:

We, the undersigned organizations and individuals, call on Secretary Rollins and Deputy Secretary Vaden to immediately halt the USDA's reorganization: a plan that uses the false language of efficiency to disguise the forced removal of tens of thousands of public servants, the sell-off of public assets, and the hollowing out of the food safety, anti-hunger, public science, and land stewardship infrastructure that working people depend on.

The reorganization threatens the food safety systems, wildfire response, drinking water, and nutrition assistance that rural and farming communities, as well as working families across the country depend on every day, putting lives, livelihoods, and local markets at risk long before any savings materialize.

The Facts:

SIGN THE PETITION TO DEMAND A STOP TO THE DISMANTLING OF USDA!

First Name *

Last Name *

Email *

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How would you like to sign on? *

- ○ I am signing on behalf of an organization, and I have the authority to do so.
- ○ I am signing as an individual. (Reminder: if signing as a federal worker, you can do so anonymously, and should only sign on a personal

Since being announced in July 2025, USDA's reorganization has been billed by leadership as a routine modernization effort moving staff "closer to farmers" and cutting a "bloated" bureaucracy. *The reality on the ground tells a different story*:

- *Nutrition programs that feed 1 in 4 Americans are at immense risk*. The Food and Nutrition Administration workers, who administer SNAP, WIC, and 14 other food assistance programs, are facing mass relocation alongside the rest of the department, even as USDA insists there will be "no disruption" - a claim workers and advocates say is impossible to square with the scale of staff turnover underway.

- *Irreplaceable scientific capacity is on the chopping block*. The Research, Education, and Economics mission area - home to the Agricultural Research Service, the Economic Research Service, and the National Agricultural Statistics Service - is being broken up and relocated, threatening decades of public agricultural science, crop and market data, and the statistics farmers, policymakers, and markets rely on.

- *Closing the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC) means weakening our ability to prevent future food, agriculture, and biosecurity crises*. BARC is a national piece of scientific infrastructure whose work underpins food safety, agricultural productivity, public health, and national biosecurity. Research and prevention tools on foodborne pathogens, crop health, and agricultural production helps reduce risks long before harmful impacts reach our grocery store shelves.

- *The Forest Service is being gutted and its headquarters relocated to Salt Lake City, with Regional Offices shuttered and dozens of Research & Development facilities on the chopping block*. Expected staff losses from these relocations weaken the ability to predict, respond to, and contain catastrophic wildfires; compromise watershed

device outside of work hours.)

Why does defending the USDA matter to you?

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management that supplies clean drinking water to communities; manage timber and other forest products; and provide safe recreational opportunities for the public. Loss of technical expertise and staff capacity threatens not only the National Forest System but also land management by states, counties, tribes, and private landowners.

- *Weakening Rural Development will slow, reduce, and potentially bring critical services to a complete halt in communities that often have few, if any, alternatives*. Essential funding and technical assistance for drinking water infrastructure, resilient electrical grids, high-speed internet access, small-business growth and job creation, and keeping rural families in their homes are all at serious risk.

- *Tens of thousands of employees have already been pushed out.* More than 20,000 USDA employees have left the department through deferred resignation programs and relocation ultimatums, gutting institutional knowledge built up over decades.

- *The reorganization is really a mass Reduction in Force in disguise*. USDA's own internal planning documents, submitted to the Office of Management and Budget and Office of Personnel Management, acknowledge that the department expects a "significant number" of employees to refuse relocation and leave rather than move. Therefore, the plan's design predicts and depends on mass departures.

- *Employees who do not relocate lose their jobs by default.* Internal USDA guidance confirms that employees who decline or fail to complete a relocation will effectively be forced to resign or retire.

- *Unions and nonprofits have sued to halt the reorganization, arguing that if the reorganization goes through, the damage from losing staff - and associated public services - will already be done*. The reorganization runs contrary to the congressional prohibition against reorganizations and relocations that was established in the FFY 2026 appropriations bill.

Let's not mince words: **this is a dismantling, piece by piece, of the People's Department**. Americans rely on the USDA to keep food safe, support farmers and rural communities, protect forests from wildfire and pests, sustain outdoor recreation economies, feed hungry children, and produce the independent data and science that our entire food and forest systems depend on.

The public sees this so-called reorganization for what it is, and agency leadership will be held accountable. USDA cannot substantiate this plan on efficiency grounds nor with any public cost-benefit analysis or accounting. And the fallout for workers, communities, and irreplaceable public assets will be disastrous. The reorganization is a transfer of public capacity, public science, and public accountability away from working people and toward austerity, privatization, and corporate profit-making.

What We're Urging:

1. Immediately halt all relocation and management directed reassignment notices, forced attrition, and facility sell-offs pending a full public accounting of who benefits and who pays, including an objective analysis - ideally by an independent third party - of costs, benefits, impacts to public services, and alternative scenarios to prevent staff loss.
2. Guarantee the continuity of irreplaceable scientific and statistical functions, including (but not limited to) the Agricultural Research Service, Economic Research Service, National Agricultural Statistics Service, the Foreign Agricultural Service, and Forest Service Research

& Development, with a firm commitment against outsourcing these functions to private industry, as well as public reporting on staffing and capacity before and after any restructuring.

3. Guarantee Forest Service land management, firefighting (including all “red card” certified support positions), Research & Development, and State Private & Tribal Forestry programs remain fully public, fully staffed, and keep public lands in public hands.
4. Protect nutrition assistance programs, including SNAP and WIC, from any disruption, with clear, public benchmarks proving sufficient staffing and expertise to maintain continuity of service to the families who depend on these programs.
5. Negotiate in good faith and in the open with unions, farmworkers, farmers, tribal nations, rural communities, and Congress before any further action.
6. Commit to keeping USDA's core functions within the public workforce, rejecting any further shift toward private contractors, consultants, or corporate partners.
7. End the use of relocation as a backdoor layoff mechanism; commit publicly to no further job losses through relocations and reassignments.
8. Stop the disposal of public buildings and facilities pending full Congressional and public review of the long-term costs and consequences.

Signed,
National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE)

National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE), Forest Service Council

National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU), Chapter 226

National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU), Chapter 227

National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU), Chapter 255

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 1126

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 1657

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 2735

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 3147

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 3403

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Local 948

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 3976

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 3870

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 52

Iowa State AFL-CIO

Tennessee State AFL-CIO

New York State AFL-CIO

Colorado State AFL-CIO

Maine State AFL-CIO

National WIC Association

New York State Public Employees Federation

Nonprofit Professional Employees Union (NPEU), IFPTE Local 70

Alliance to End Hunger

Rural Organizing

Food Research and Action Center (FRAC)

MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger

Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI)

Wild Montana

Iowa Food System Coalition

Poetry X Hunger

Federal Unionists Network (FUN)

PWC Hunger Free

NoVA Community Action Team

27 UNIHTED

Lakenia Magee

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