

Agency name:  Agriculture

**How well does the agency comply with the basic requirements of the Act?**

Agency homepage	Agency pl page url, if any	Linked from the homepage?	Do they name a senior official?	Do they list other contacts? List contact info	Do they have an implementation plan (give URL).
http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome	http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=PLAIN_WRITING	Yes, very bottom	Yes - Jerold Mande, Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services	Beth Gaston, Special Assistant to the Deputy Administrator, Policy and Program Development: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service	No one plan shown, but there are different parts posted on the site
(no points, just for info)	10	10	10	10	0

Table 1 – every cell is graded either 0 or 10, nothing in between.

Do they have a 2012 and 2013 compliance reports (give URL for 2013 report)	Does website provide a feedback mechanism?	Do they have a training program? Give a brief description. <sup>2</sup>	Did they respond to your email to their official contact address? <sup>3</sup>	Did they get you the information you asked for?
Yes http://www.usda.gov/documents/usda-plain-writing-act-2013-compliance-report.pdf	Yes --Maureen Wood in the Office of the Executive Secretariat at <a href="mailto:plainlanguage@osec.usda.gov">plainlanguage@osec.usda.gov</a>	There is a USDA Plain Language Training Course as well as tips and tools, reviewers' and writers' guidelines	Yes	Yes
10	10	10	25	25

Table 2 is more variable. Points are indicated in the cells

Total possible points 130

Score for this agency 120

Notes:

1. You can get almost all of the information for this table from the agency's website.
2. You will have to get this information from the official contacts. If they don't answer you, or they don't know about their training programs, they get 0. Don't go to a lot of work trying to get the real answer. This analysis is about how well the **department** is doing what the Act tells it to do. If you get some answer, you will have to use your judgement about how many points to give. Did they give all writers a 3-day course? 10 points. Did they give everyone a 2 hour course? 5 points. Do they have an on-line training program and they are tracking who takes it? Maybe 8 points. Did they give everyone a 15 minute course (one department did that) 0 points.
3. You have a separate file with a table to keep track of when you contacted them and when (if) they answered. This table is for tracking official contacts only. You will probably also be talking to unofficial contacts who will probably be more helpful; you don't need to track them.