

Report on the External Qualitative Assessment Review

November 1, 2019

The Honorable Phyllis K. Fong
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of Inspector General
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Subject: Report on the Qualitative Assessment Review of the Investigative Operations of the Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Agriculture

Dear Inspector General Fong,

We reviewed the system of internal safeguards and management procedures for the investigative operations of the Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in effect for the period ended May 1, 2019. Our review was conducted in conformity with the Quality Standards for Investigations and the Qualitative Assessment Review Guidelines established by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency.

We reviewed compliance with U.S. Department of Agriculture's system of internal policies and procedures to the extent we considered appropriate. We conducted the review at U.S. Department of Agriculture's headquarters office in Washington, DC; the New York Regional Office; field offices in Beltsville, MD, and Kansas City, MO; and the Technical Crimes Division in Kansas City, MO. Additionally, we sampled 40 case files for investigations closed during the period ending on May 1, 2019, and reviewed 10 reports from the Technical Crimes Division.

In performing our review, we also considered the prerequisites of 7 U.S.C. § 2270, which authorizes law enforcement powers for eligible personnel of the Office of Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Those powers may be exercised only for activities authorized by the Inspector General Act of 1978.

In our opinion, the system of internal safeguards and management procedures for the investigative function of U.S. Department of Agriculture, in effect for the year ending on May 1, 2019, is in **compliance** with the quality standards established by Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and the other applicable guidelines and statutes cited above. These safeguards and procedures provide reasonable assurance

of conforming to professional standards in the planning, execution, and reporting of its investigations, and the use of law enforcement powers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Dahl". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter being a large, stylized capital 'S'.

Scott S. Dahl
Inspector General