

As Prepared

**Chairman Robert Aderholt**  
**Office of the Inspector General Hearing for FY 2015**  
**Opening Statement**  
**March 5, 2014**

The Subcommittee will come to order.

Good morning. Welcome to the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee's first hearing for fiscal year 2015. I'm sure my colleagues will agree that it is good to be kicking off our hearings this week.

I plan to approach our fiscal year 2015 bill with three things in mind. They are: 1) Ensuring the Proper Use of Funds through Robust Oversight; 2) Ensuring the Appropriate Level of Regulation to Protect Producers and the Public; and 3) Ensuring Funding is Targeted to Vital Programs.

The audits and investigations conducted by the Office of the Inspector General are key to this Subcommittee's efforts to ensure the proper use of funds; detect and reduce waste, fraud and abuse; and strengthen the management of USDA's agencies and programs. Your work also is vital to us as we make decisions on how to allocate funds and our oversight work to ensure the funding we provide is properly utilized.

At this time, I am pleased that USDA Inspector General Phyllis Fong, Assistant Inspector General for Investigations Karen Ellis and Assistant Inspector General for Audits Gil Harden are here with us for our first hearing.

Ms. Fong, I would like to congratulate you on receiving the Distinguished Federal Leadership Award from the Association of Government Accountants last month. The award recognizes federal officials who "exemplify and promote excellence in enhancing sound financial management legislation, regulations, practices, policies, and systems." We are fortunate to have you at USDA. Thank you for your service.