

Model cover letter to growers from production manager or other company official

Dear Grower:

As you may have heard, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and its Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) has put forth proposed new regulations that affect the relationship between integrators and contract growers. These proposed rules were published in the Federal Register on June 22, 2010. USDA is accepting comments on the proposed rules until November 22, 2010. The proposed rules will not go into effect until USDA reviews the comments and decides if any changes should be made.

In our view, the proposed rules will have a very negative impact on the contract growing relationship. They will hit the more progressive growers hard, taking money away from them and giving it to growers who are less progressive and have higher costs. All growers are threatened because the proposed rules would drive innovation, competition and high performance out of the system and reduce the efficiency and competitiveness of the domestic poultry industry. The rules will also open huge new opportunities for litigation that will ultimately benefit only the plaintiffs' attorneys.

There is no doubt that activist growers will speak up in support of the proposed rule, and the agency will listen to them. Unless you want this to be a totally one-sided debate, you should consider making your voice heard.

Please review the enclosed material and contact your Senators and Congressman and – most importantly – send comments to GIPSA itself. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,