



Media Calls

All media calls to USDA must go through public affairs staff at the agencies or the Office of Communications.

Media calls should be given priority and returned ASAP.

The press secretary must approve all requests for on-camera interviews.

Public affairs staff should work directly with the press secretary and communications coordinator on high profile, controversial issues for media response.

Public affairs staff should work with the press secretary and communications coordinator on all public press events.

When agencies refer media calls to the Office of Communications, they should provide the following information:

- Full name of the reporter
- Name of the media outlet
- Phone, fax, e-mail and location of the reporter
- How long the interview is expected to take
- If not obvious, description of media outlet including circulation, target audiences. If it is not a well known outlet, ask the reporter to provide copy of the publication or tapes of the show.
- What is the story line? Questions?
- What information does the reporter already have on the subject?
- What is the deadline?
- When is it best for someone to call back or when will the reporter call back?
- Has the reporter checked the USDA Web site?
- Is the request to respond to a specific event, statement or release by another party? If so, obtain a copy of the information.
- If the request is from a broadcast outlet, what is the format of the interview? One-on-one, debate, talk show, call-in, live or taped.
- Recommendation on request.