



United States Department of Agriculture
Research, Education and Economics
Agricultural Research Service

July 20, 2006

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

SUBJECT: Example of an Informal Letter

TO: Will Blackburn, Area Director, NPA

THROUGH: Jeff Lewis, Laboratory Director, NCGRP
Berry Reynolds, Research Leader, NCGRP

FROM: Sean Smith, Soil Scientist, NCGRP

This is an example of an informal letter showing the use of "For Official Use Only" markings and the Approval/Disapproval Line. "For Official Use Only" markings are used on materials that are not for immediate public use; the markings are shown at both the top and bottom of each page. The top caption is typed two lines below the date, flush with the left margin; the bottom caption is typed two lines below the last line of each page. If the caption falls above the middle of the page, place it below the middle of the page flush with the left margin.

The "THROUGH" line is used in this example because officials need to concur before it is received by the addressee. Remember the "THROUGH:" line is typed in ascending order.

Concurrent and/or Approval Lines are typed at the bottom of the page. Type the caption "CONCUR:" or "APPROVED/DISAPPROVED:," a signature line and a "DATE:" line, as shown in this sample.

If the correspondence will be signed outside the originating office, omit the date. The letter will be dated after signature and before mailing.

A paragraph is begun near the end of the page only if there is space for two or more lines on that page. A paragraph is continued on the following page only if two or more lines can be carried over to that page.

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On the second and succeeding pages, make side margins the same as page one. Allow a bottom margin of at least one inch. Starting with the second page, type the name of the addressee exactly as it is shown on the first page (excluding title). On the same line, type the page number flush with the right margin. Continue the text lines below the name of the addressee.

In this example, the “cc:” addressees are receiving a copy of the enclosures as well as a copy of the letter.

If an acting official is to sign the letter for the regular signing official, the signer signs his/her name in a signature block and the word “for” before the regular signing official’s name and should be indicated on all copies.

APPROVED/DISAPPROVED: _____
Area Director, NPA Date

2 Enclosures:
ARS Correspondence Manual
NPA Secretarial Handbook

cc: w/encl.
A. Brown, HRD
J. Wayne, NPS

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