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JAMES E. LINK NAMED ADMINISTRATOR OF AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

WASHINGTON, Oct. 31, 2008 – Agriculture Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Bruce Knight today announced the appointment of James E. Link as Administrator of the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS), an agency within the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"Jim Link's experience as a rancher, businessman and educator will be an asset in his new role at AMS, where he will help to market U.S. agricultural products in domestic and international markets," said Knight. "His background and service make Jim well suited to continue to enhance the economic opportunities available to U.S. agricultural producers."

Link will direct several marketing programs that facilitate the efficient marketing of U.S. agricultural products, including food, fiber and specialty crops. He also will be responsible for procuring commodities, including fruits and vegetables, meat, poultry, fish and egg products, for the national school lunch and other federal food and nutrition programs. AMS is part of USDA's Marketing and Regulatory Programs, which works to ensure a productive and competitive global marketplace for U.S. agricultural products.

Link will assume the role of Administrator on Monday, Nov. 3, 2008. Prior to this appointment, he served as administrator of USDA's Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) since 2005. As GIPSA administrator, he successfully led the Agency through reforms mandated by Congress and directed a variety of programs to facilitate the marketing of agricultural products and promote fair and competitive trading practices for the overall benefit of consumers and American agriculture.

Link has a bachelor's degree in business administration from Emporia State University and an MBA from Texas Christian University. Link and his wife, Karin, have been in the cattle business for most of their adult lives, most recently as owners of the Link Cattle Company of Crowley, Texas. He and his wife have two sons and four grandchildren.

Link replaces former AMS Administrator Lloyd Day, who had held the position since August 2005.

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