

AMS Specialty Crops Inspection Division Embraces New Technology

The USDA AMS [Specialty Crops Program](#) is excited to be in the middle of the second of three phases to build the Specialty Crops Integrated Operating Network (**SCION**), which will replace the [Specialty Crops Inspection \(SCI\)](#) Division's aging legacy systems, including FEIRS and BIIS. AMS is partnering with Deloitte Consulting LLP to define, design, and build the new system. The new system, **SCION** will provide exciting capabilities and improve efficiencies for all users, both internal and external.

SCION will be a holistic system, providing customer-centric service abilities starting from submitting service requests and updating account information to receiving certificates and reports, as well as paying account statements. **SCION** will enable customers access to their data in new and different ways, providing data to make strategic business decisions.

AMS supports the [inspection and certification](#) of more than 60 billion pounds of fresh and processed fruit and vegetables. This includes 1.2 billion pounds of fresh and processed fruit and vegetable items for domestic feeding programs (school lunches) and 7,183 lots (or 410 million servings) of military combat rations. **SCION** will have thousands of customer touchpoints throughout the country, leveraging innovative commercial capabilities to enable digital transformation.



The name **SCION** was chosen through an employee naming contest. Joanna Small, one of our administrative staff in the SCI Division's Standardization Branch submitted the winning name. In her submission, Ms. Small noted the beginning of the acronym is the same as the Specialty Crops Inspection (SCI) Division, which was a great connection. Even better, however, was the description of a scion. A "scion" relates to botany as "a young shoot or twig of a plant, especially one cut for grafting or rooting." As SCI Division transforms itself and develops a new modernized system, it grafts its two former systems together into a brand-new system. We are excited about the possibilities and outcomes from this important work!

Heather Farber-Lau leads our efforts in rolling out **SCION**. She is available at heather.farber-lau@usda.gov for more information.