Bridges to the Future:

FY 2005 Annual Report of the Participation of Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers in USDA Programs

The Section 10708 Report

The U.S. Department of Agriculture

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

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NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

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June 2007

I am pleased to announce the publication of the fiscal year (FY) 2005 report—Bridges to the Future: FY 2005 Annual Report of the Participation of Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers in USDA Programs. This is the third such report; the others represent FY 2003 and FY 2004. As with the prior reports, it is in two parts. The first part is a narrative and the second part is comprised of maps and tables.

I am indebted to the USDA staff involved in compiling this report. Their commitment to its completion and integrity is a testament to our establishment and maintenance of effective tools and systems that will help ensure all our constituents are served efficiently and fairly. The results of this report not only will inform the public but also will enhance our programming and service delivery to all USDA constituents.

Mike Johanns
Secretary

This third annual report of Section 10708 (a) of the 2002 Farm Security and Rural Investment Act continues the Department's momentum initiated by the first report published in December 2004 and the second report published in April 2006. The intent of this report, like those of the past, is to continue sending a clear, bold, and strong message to the public, Congress, and farmers and ranchers that USDA is committed to the establishment of—and accountability for—fair and equitable service to all customers in all of the Department's programmatic operations, including that provided by our State and county/parish partners. We recognize that farmers and ranchers need positive action, not just promises and recommendations. This report is an important component in the Department's continuing commitment to change and represents action beneficial to all constituents.

I share the Secretary's goal—that every constituent be treated fairly, with dignity, respect, and cultural appreciation. New outreach strategies are being designed and implemented to help ensure a level playing field for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to have access to accurate, up-to-date information about USDA programs and services. Among them are: (1) the coordination of outreach throughout all USDA agencies; (2) an improved conference coordination initiative to leverage outreach resources; and (3) full compliance with equal employment opportunities and civil rights policies. We are also partnering with our sister Department—U.S. Department of Health and Human Services—to ensure that refugees with an agrarian background who desire to continue in the farm enterprise have an opportunity to do so. We are working with our community-based organizations and mutual assistance partners to ensure their success. Additionally, the Department has helped develop the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project, a partnership effort designed to help recent immigrants, including Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders with backgrounds in agriculture, to establish themselves as commercial farmers in New England.

By continuing to work with farmers and ranchers, community-based organizations, minority-serving educational institutions, and State and local partners, we can more quickly identify and eliminate barriers to the Secretary's goal, thereby fostering the critical task of improving participation. Consequently, underserved and socially disadvantaged populations can expect greater access to financial opportunities, along with improved services, educational programs, and research activities that reflect their needs.

The status and well-being of American agricultural enterprises are inextricably intertwined with the future of our Nation. Accordingly, each sector of American agricultural enterprises, especially minority, underserved, small and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, is a vital contributor to that future and to sustaining American agriculture.

Margo McKay
Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

Acknowledgements

This report reflects the involvement of many individuals committed to the elimination of discrimination in the programs of the Department. Thus, the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights is pleased to acknowledge the contributions of the following USDA staff in the development and publication of this third report of the participation of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in programs of the Department, as required by Section 10708 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-171).

Interagency Working Group

The listing of USDA agencies can be found in Appendix D beginning on page 117.

The USDA Interagency Working Group was comprised of Gary Batko and Chuck Martin (AMS); Steve Shelor (APHIS); Robert Hedberg and Nancy Valentine (CSREES); Edwin Louis (FAS); Dan Dager and Steve Carlson (FNS); Cheryl Bailey and Larry Payne (FS); Ed Rall (FSA); Sylvia Bourn (FSIS); Terri Henry and Thomas Hearon (GIPSA); Chuck Lambert (MRP); Jay Johnson and Douglas G. Kleweno (NASS); Wytona Jackson and Al Roberts (NRCS); Tami Trost (OGC); Carlton Lewis, Mark Sanborn, Michael Leach, Rodney Brown, Michael Foore, Carl Muhlbauer, Michael Thieman, and Jay Fletcher (Rural Development); Bill Buchanan and Iris Snowden (RMA); and Jim Staiert (OBPA). Charles Smith, in tandem with Gladys Gary Vaughn (both with ASCR), is staff leader for the group. Phillip Elder and Carol Peake, formerly of FSA and OBPA, respectively, were members of the Working Group before leaving USDA.

Data Analysis and Management Group

A major dimension of this report is the data analysis and management and the preparation of the reports by county and State participation levels. This mammoth effort was led by Gayle Doss (Rural Development), who served as Project Leader. Her team in Washington, D.C., and St. Louis, Missouri, included Peggy Stroud and Linda Hamel – managers; Andrew Shamburger – report developer; Wayne D. Van Sluys – map developer; Hussain Al-Sriefi – Web developer; Suzie Maxwell – tabular data warehouse administrator; and Dwana Davis –geospatial data warehouse administrator.

Editing and Posting Group

Staff who assisted with editing, preparing the report for clearance, and posting of the final report and the data was Debbie Hamilton, Sherie Henry, Josie Woodley-Jones, Lauretta Miles, Jennifer Peagler, Charles Smith, and Gladys Gary Vaughn, all of ASCR.

PART I

PROGRAM

PARTICIPATION

Introduction

To assist USDA in ensuring nondiscrimination in its programs, Congress has provided additional tools and direction as part of the *Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002, P.L. 107-171, 7 U.S.C. §2279-1 (2002 Farm Bill)*. Section 10708 of the 2002 Farm Bill conveys Congress's intent for the collection and reporting of participation data on an annual basis for all programs of USDA designed for farmers and ranchers. Additionally, the *Act* requires a report to Congress following each Census of Agriculture detailing the gain or loss in participation by socially disadvantaged (SDA) groups. SDA farmers and ranchers are defined as farmers and ranchers who belong to a group "whose members have been subjected to racial and ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities." [See 7 U.S.C. § 2279(e)(1) and (2)]. USDA has, by regulation, further defined the term "socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers" to include groups subjected to gender prejudice. Thus, socially disadvantaged groups include women, African Americans, Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders [See 7 C.F.R. § 1943.104].

Section 10708 mandates both transparency and accountability in the participation of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in the programs of USDA. The inclusion of both transparency and accountability in this section provides important evidence as to how Congress intends the provision to be implemented. Transparency in program delivery requires the collection of demographic data for program participants and it requires USDA to make such participation data available to the public. Moreover, transparency requires USDA to provide expanded opportunities for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to participate in USDA programs for which they are eligible. Accountability requires USDA to maintain programs that are discrimination free.

This full 10708 report for FY 2005 is published in two parts: a narrative and a data set of more than 1,373 tables and 146 maps indicating the participation by farmers and ranchers in USDA programs.

The narrative report has two components, *Program Participation* and *Outreach Highlights.* The first, *Program Participation*, describes the public and program reporting requirements, the data limitations of the report, how the data is presented and can be accessed, and steps being taken to improve the data collection process. In this component are examples of the tables and maps showing participation demographics for specific USDA programs, by county and State.

The second component, *Outreach Highlights*, discusses outreach efforts at the departmental and agency levels. Reports for (FY) 2003 and 2004 included outreach efforts for those agencies required to report data under Section 10708. In order to put forth the total outreach efforts of the Department, and as the report is improved with each publication, this report for FY 2005 marks a significant change as outreach highlights are expanded to include the outreach efforts of agencies not required to report, along with those required to report under Section 10708. Thus, the number of agencies reporting has increased almost threefold, from 5 to 14.

Since the passage of the 2002 Farm Bill, the Department and its agencies have increased outreach activities dramatically. The agencies have also increased outreach to socially disadvantaged participants and potential participants who are eligible for specific programs. Including outreach efforts of those agencies not required to report is another indication of the Department's commitment to ensure equal and timely access for all customers. Looking forward, as demographic data on program participants are improved, outreach efforts are expected to become even more efficient, effective, and culturally sensitive.

Public Reporting Requirements

The statute requires the Secretary to "maintain and make readily available to the public, via Web site and otherwise in electronic and paper form," all participation data collected annually since the most recent Census of Agriculture. The most recent Census of Agriculture was conducted in 2002. Thereafter, FY 2003 data participation was the first data available for public access. It was made available in December 2004 via publication of the signal 10708 Report. Participation data for FY 2004 was published in April 2006. Publication of annual participation data will continue with a targeted release date of the end of the first quarter of the following fiscal year. The participation data, for each year published, can also be viewed, saved, and printed from the following Web site: **http://civilrightsreports.sc.eGov.USDA.gov.**

The statutory language requires that the participation data be made available in paper and electronic form. However, due to the large number of programs that are required to report, and the requirement that the data be collected on a county-by-county, program-by-program basis, it is not feasible to publish the entire data set in paper form. The narrative is available in paper form and electronically. The data set is available only on CD-ROM or via the Internet. Individuals without Internet access will be afforded the opportunity to obtain up to 10 pages of tabular data by contacting a USDA Service Center office in their area.

Program Reporting Requirements

In preparing the first annual report, i.e., the 2003 Report, it was necessary to determine which USDA programs that serve farmers and ranchers were required to report. The office of the ASCR, in coordination with the agencies of the Department, has assembled extensive information regarding the demographic data collection efforts of each program. As of this date, USDA operates over 300 programs. Each of these programs is potentially required to report on the participation rates of socially disadvantaged groups under four separate reporting requirements: *Section 10708 of the 2002 Farm Bill; Section 2501(c) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990; Executive Order 12250, Leadership and Coordination of Nondiscrimination Laws; and USDA civil rights regulations.*

After carefully reviewing the statutory requirements, 71 programs required to report demographic data under Section 10708 were identified by the Office of the General Counsel for FY 2003. In FY 2004, there were 60 programs required to report. In FY 2005, there were 54 programs required to report. Naturally, as changes occur in USDA's program portfolio, change follows in the number of programs required to report. There are various reasons for these changes, i.e., (1) policy changes, (2) program lifespan, and (3) appropriations. Each agency provides specific reason(s) for its program changes.

Agencies Reporting Data

Farm Service Agency (FSA) Programs

Changes in programs administered by FSA are notable from year to year. In 2003, FSA administered 65 programs required to report. There were 65 programs required to report in FY 2004. For FY 2005, 31 FSA programs were required to report. Several programs were included that were not in the FY 2004 report. To that end, the following chart conveys FSA's program changes for FY 2004 and 2005.

Chart 1: FSA Program Changes

New Programs: Programs Required to Report in FY 2005 That Were Not Required in FY 2004	Programs Deleted: Programs Required to Report in FY 2004 That Were Not Required in FY 2005
1. 2004 Dairy Disaster Assistance Payment Program	1. Burley Tobacco Program
2. 2004 Ewe Lamb Replacement and Retention Payment Program	2. Cattle Feed Assistance Program
3. Florida Citrus Disaster Program	3. Flue-cured Tobacco Program
4. Florida Nursery Disaster Program	4. Idaho Oust Program
5. Florida Vegetable, Fruit and Tropical Fruit Disaster Program	5. Karnal Bunt Program
6. 2003 and 2004 Livestock Assistance Program and Tobacco Transition Payment Program	6. Lamb Meat Adjustment Assistance Program
	7. Livestock Assistance Program
	8. Livestock Compensation Program
	9. Livestock Indemnity Payment Program
	10. New Mexico Tebuthiuron Program
	11. Non Fat Dry Milk Emergency Program
	12. Other Tobacco Program
	13. Sugar Beet Disaster Assistance Program
	14. Sugarcane Disaster Assistance Program

Data on the demographics of farmers and ranchers participating in the 2004 Dairy Disaster Assistance Payment Program were not captured and, therefore, are not included in this report. The Beginning Farmer and Rancher Land Contract Guarantee Pilot Program has only six active contract holders; therefore, data on program participants are not included in this report. Data are included in the FY 2005 report on the Tobacco Transition Payment Program (TTPP). However, all USDA tobacco programs were terminated during FY 2004 by Title VI of the *American Jobs Creation Act of 2004 (Pub. L. 108-357),* which instituted the TTPP for farmers who were previously in the Tobacco Program.

Information is provided in this FY 2005 report as was provided in the FY 2004 report on Direct Loan Servicing, Direct Loan Disaster Debt Set-Aside, and Guaranteed Loan Servicing. These three areas are not separate programs. However, FSA felt that inclusion of the demographic data on its loan program participants who have benefited from loan serving actions was valuable to disclose. As with all programs in this report, duplication occurs between the borrowers who received a loan servicing action and those in other programs. However, the number of borrowers who required and received a loan servicing action may be the result of regional weather or economic factors. Thus, although the potential universe of participants in loan servicing programs is the same as the participants in all farm loan programs, a comparison of the demographics between groups is not statistically valid as any measure of performance.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Programs

The Natural Resources Conservation Service's portfolio for FY 2005 is the same as for FY 2004. Data from the Agricultural Management Assistance Program, Conservation Security Program, and Environmental Quality Incentives Programs are included in this report.

Rural Development Programs

Rural Development's Rural Housing Service continued its operation of the Farm Labor Housing Loan and Grant Programs (Section 514/516).

Summary of Agencies Reporting Data

In summary, for 2005, 54 programs were required to report. Data for 34 programs are included in this report (see Table 1). Because of data collection limitations, data were not collected for the remaining 20 programs.

A copy of Section 10708 of the 2002 Farm Bill and a summary of reporting requirements are provided in Appendix A. A chart of the programs with information about whether or not they were able to provide race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, disability status, and age data (collectively referred to as "demographic data") for participating socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers is provided in Appendix B. Appendix C includes a description of all programs included in this report, and Appendix D lists the agencies and offices of the Department.

Section 10708 does not mandate the collection or reporting of participation based on disability status or age. Nondiscriminatory treatment, based on disability status and age, is generally required under other civil rights legislation and is being included in this discussion for completeness. However, none of the programs required to report under Section 10708 currently collect disability or age data on program participants.

[1]*For the purposes of this report, the terms "ethnicity" and "national origin" are used interchangeably to refer to individuals of Hispanic origin or individuals not of Hispanic origin in accordance with OMB data collection requirements. See 62 Fed. Reg. 58782 (October 30, 1997).*

Table 1

Programs Required to Report Participation Data

Agency	Number of Programs Required to Report	Number of Programs Reporting	Amount of Information Provided
Farm Service Agency (FSA)	31	30	**Varies; partial or complete information provided for most programs.**
Risk Management Agency (RMA)	6	0	No authority to collect information.
National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)	3	3	Full information.
Rural Development			
Rural Business and Cooperative Service (RBS)	7	0	No authority to collect information.
Rural Housing Service (RHS)	2	1	Full information.
Cooperative State Research, **Education, and Extension Service (CSREES)**	5	0	No authority to collect information.
Total	**54**	**34**	

Data Limitations

The Interagency Working Group realizes that the data set is not statistically reliable. However, it continues to seek appropriate remedies to render empirical data. The collection of demographic data from program participants is strictly regulated. Without specific permission, Federal agencies are prohibited from collecting such data; agencies must have a compelling reason to collect the data and must provide the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) with assurances concerning its protection and use. The juxtaposition of various statutes, authorities, and clearances governing USDA agencies cause demographic data collection to vary widely within the Department.

Many USDA programs do not collect demographic data because they lack appropriate authorities or clearances to do so. At the same time, some agencies have approval to collect demographic data; however, that approval is specific to individual programs. Other agencies are attempting to collect what demographic data they can, usually through visual observation of the applicant. However, visual observation is unreliable because traits, such as ethnicity, disability, and age, may not be readily evident to the observer. In addition, for some FSA programs, a database error resulted in a default value of "white male" whenever an applicant chose not to self-identify and an observation value was not entered. While this erroneous programming has been corrected effective with the 2004 data, there has been no way to retroactively correct the errors. Consequently, this mixture of voluntary self-reporting, visual observation, and erroneous programming means that the demographic data currently maintained by the Department are statistically unreliable. Attention is called to the fact that in order to preserve program participant confidentiality, participation rates below 3% are grouped and simply reported as "<3%." This convention is widely observed in USDA. Participation rates of zero are reported as such.

A discussion of departmental plans to improve demographic data collection appears on page 16.

Agency Modes of Collecting Data

Service Center Agencies

Like the data in the 2003 and 2004 editions of the 10708 Report, the 2005 data used for this report are largely based on reports from the Service Center Information Management System (SCIMS). Accordingly, data for these agencies, FSA and NRCS and Rural Development mission area, were extracted from SCIMS. The SCIMS database was implemented in February 2002 as a source of information on the race, ethnicity, gender, and national origin of each individual or entity participating in any program offered by one of the Service Center Agencies.

While SCIMS may eventually provide comprehensive, reliable information on participation rates for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, much of the current SCIMS data is not statistically reliable. For example, because FSA does not currently have authority to request demographic data (e.g., race and/or ethnicity) from the majority of program participants, demographic information may only be collected through the observations of FSA employees. As previously noted, observation and categorization by FSA employees may lead to incorrect entries, especially for ethnicity. In addition, until February 2002, ethnicity was not recorded, resulting in significant under-counting of Hispanics. There are currently no procedures in place to update or correct demographic data entries in SCIMS.

Currently, reliable and complete information on the participation of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers is only available for farm loan program participants. FSA is authorized to collect data from loan program applicants. Consequently, SCIMS includes complete data for those who have applied for, or received, FSA direct or guaranteed loans. Statutory participation target rates are in place for FSA loans to beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers. It is important to note that while demographic data for farm loan program participants are reliable, that data may not be representative of all FSA program participants.

Non-Service Center Agencies

Like the Service Center Agencies, many other USDA agencies do not currently have the authority to collect demographic data from program participants. One such agency is CSREES. CSREES does not currently have authority to collect demographic information. RMA is another such agency required to report on six programs. It does not currently have authority to collect demographic data.

Data Presentation

The following tables and maps are representative of the kind of information included in the report. A few examples of the tables and maps are included to illustrate the nature of the participation data that are provided. As earlier indicated, these are available at the following Web site: http://civilrightsreports.sc.eGov.USDA.gov.

Each of the tables follows the same format, as do each of the maps. Demographic data are provided in the following categories: ethnicity (Hispanic/Latino or non-Hispanic/Latino), and racial group (White, Black, Alaskan or Native American (AIAN), Asian, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (HPI), other (those not included in one of the other groupings), Multi (those indicating more than one racial group), and Unclassified (Unclass). The Unclass includes those not included in one of the groupings, other, or Multi.

The map provides participation data for all socially disadvantaged groups. That is, the participation rate excludes White non-Hispanic program participants.

Again, Section 10708 of the 2002 Farm Bill provides for the collection and reporting of participation data on an annual basis for all programs of USDA designed for farmers and ranchers. The following tables are indicative of information contained in this report.

Table 1

Farm Service Agency

DIRECT AND COUNTER-CYCLICAL PAYMENT PROGRAM
01133- ALABAMA- Winston

	MALE			FEMALE			UNKNOWN		
	Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino	Undisclosed Ethnicity	Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino	Undisclosed Ethnicity	Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino	Undisclosed Ethnicity
	Participation Indicator	Participation Indicator	Participation Indicator	Participation Indicator	Participation Indicator	Participation Indicator	Participation Indicator	Participation Indicator	Participation Indicator
White	0%	43.33%	36.67%	0%	10%	10%	0%	0%	0%
Black	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
AIAN	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Asian	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
HPI	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Multi	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Unclass	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total	0%	43.33%	36.67%	0%	10%	10%	0%	0%	0%

Participation Indicator: Program participation indicator data are drawn from the Service Center Information Management System database which includes historical data for participants in all FSA programs and may not accurately reflect current program participants. In the tables above, the new category (undisclosed ethnicity) appears beneath the male and female gender classifications. Due to a database error, these observations were reported as “Not Hispanic or Latino” in the 2003 report. USDA anticipates that the majority of these observations are likely to be “Not Hispanic or Latino;” however, this change more accurately reflects what USDA knows about these participants at this time. This change does not impact USDA’s calculation of the participation rate for members of socially disadvantaged groups. (See narrative report for a full explanation of the database error and USDA plans to correct the collection of demographic data.)

For the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program in FY 2005 in Winston County, Alabama, 43.33% of program participants were White non-Hispanic males and 36.67% were White males with undisclosed ethnicity. Twenty percent of the participants in the program were female; 10% were non-Hispanic female and the other 10% of the females did not disclose their ethnicity.

Table 2

Farm Service Agency

DIRECT FARM OPERATING LOAN PROGRAM
05041- ARKANSAS- Desha

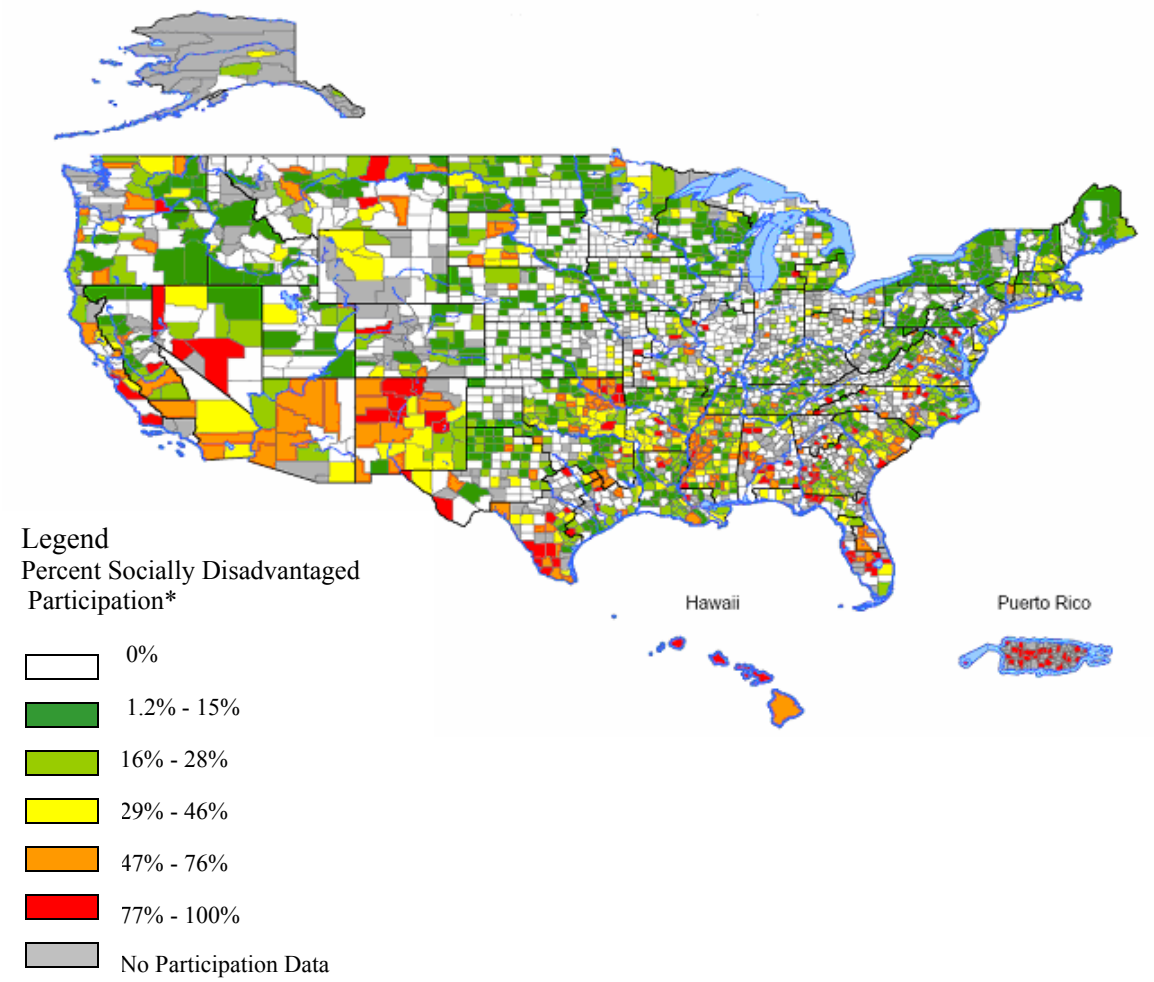
	MALE			FEMALE			UNKNOWN		
	Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino	Undisclosed Ethnicity	Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino	Undisclosed Ethnicity	Hispanic or Latino	Not Hispanic or Latino	Undisclosed Ethnicity
	Participation Indicator	Participation Indicator	Participation Indicator	Participation Indicator	Participation Indicator	Participation Indicator	Participation Indicator	Participation Indicator	Participation Indicator
White	0%	41.67%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	16.67%	0%
Black	0%	29.17%	0%	0%	4.17%	0%	0%	0%	0%
AIAN	0%	4.17%	0%	0%	4.17%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Asian	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
HPI	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Multi	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Unclass	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Total	0%	75%	0%	0%	8.34%	0%	0%	16.67%	0%

Participation Indicator: Program participation indicator data are drawn from the Service Center Information Management System database which includes historical data for participants in all FSA programs and may not accurately reflect current program participants. In the tables above, the new category (undisclosed ethnicity) appears beneath the male and female gender classifications. Due to a database error, these observations were reported as "Not Hispanic or Latino" in the 2003 report. USDA anticipates that the majority of these observations are likely to be "Not Hispanic or Latino;" however, this change more accurately reflects what USDA knows about these participants at this time. This change does not impact USDA's calculation of the participation rate for members of socially disadvantaged groups. (See narrative report for a full explanation of the database error and USDA plans to correct the collection of demographic data.)

For the Direct Farm Operating Loan Program in FY 2005 in Desha County, Arkansas, 41.67% of the program participants were White non-Hispanic male, 29.17% were Black, and 4.17% were American Indian and Alaskan Native males. Females also participated in the program. The percentage distribution of females was 4.17% Black and 4.17% American Indian and Alaskan Native; totaling 8.34% of the total participants. Missing data appears in the "Unknown" column for this county; there were 16.67% White participants with unknown gender because disclosure of demographic data is voluntary.

MAP1

USDA Program Participation Rates
Farm Service Agency - Direct Farm Operating Loan Program
Fiscal Year - 2005



*Participation rates exclude White, Male, Non-Hispanic, Unknown Gender, Undisclosed Ethnicity individuals. Program participation indicator data are drawn from the Service Center Information Management Systems database which includes historical data for participants in all FSA programs and may not accurately reflect current program participants. For further discussion of data limitations, see part one of the narrative report.

The rates are the total participation for all socially disadvantaged groups in the Direct Farm Operating Loan Program (FSA) for FY 2005. Counties that are gray in color are those for which there were no program participants. Counties that are white in color are those for which there were no socially disadvantaged program participants. Each of the maps associated with this report follows this format.

Toward Improved Information Collection and Use

USDA continues its development of a standardized vehicle for Department-wide information collection of demographic data. These efforts to improve demographic data collection began on June 23, 2004, with the publication of a 60-day notice in the *Federal Register*, which requested comments on USDA's intentions to establish a standardized Department-wide demographic data collection. After receipt of OMB approval, all programs in the Department will, for the first time, have the authority to ask their applicants and participants about their racial and ethnic background. A standardized collection will lead to better quality data, enhanced targeting by outreach programs and more accurate demographic reporting.

Standardized demographic data will allow USDA to determine if programs and services are reaching eligible recipients, partners, and other stakeholders. The data will allow USDA to administer programs from both proactive and reactive positions. The data will also allow USDA to better assess the accomplishment of program delivery mandates and objectives. Moreover, when allegations of discrimination in program participation arise, more definitive data will exist to assist in evaluating program participation rates and the validity of the discrimination allegations.

Specifically, demographic data can be used to:

(1) perform analyses as one dimension of a civil rights complaint investigation to help determine if discrimination has occurred;
(2) conduct mandated civil rights compliance reviews that help to ensure programs and activities are operated in a nondiscriminatory manner and in compliance with Federal laws and departmental regulations;
(3) make comparisons to other demographic measures, such as the Agriculture Census and the decennial census, to suggest if there are groups or communities that are underserved by USDA's programs;
(4) determine areas to target for product development, marketing, and outreach;
(5) customize communication for improved customer service;
(6) determine if the participation of traditionally underserved groups, such as racial/ethnic minorities, women, older farmers, and persons with disabilities, is improving or declining and make adjustments in product development and/or program delivery; and
(7) improve coordination of outreach activities throughout the Department.

The data can also be used as a management tool to measure performance of USDA personnel.

By using the demographic data to identify eligible program participants, program managers and outreach coordinators will be able to plan for and target resources to improve the participation of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in USDA programs.

Information Technology Infrastructure

USDA's new information technology infrastructure will make centralized tracking of demographic data possible. USDA is in the process of establishing a centralized demographic data collection that is built upon the common customer database. Phase 1 of the common customer database was launched in March 2004 with the USDA Customer Statement. The online report presents customers with a single document that is a compilation of information from databases from several agencies. Currently the system allows program participants to receive a single statement detailing all their business dealings with the Service Center Agencies. This statement will eventually be tied to all USDA programs. In Phase 2, the collection of demographic data will be incorporated into the common customer database. The common customer database will be used to generate demographic data reports as required by various statutes, including annual production of the Section 10708 participant data transmitted in this report.

PART I I

OUTREACH

HIGHLIGHTS

Outreach Highlights

USDA has active departmental and agency outreach programs. The demographic data collected in support of the Section 10708 reporting requirements will facilitate and strengthen outreach improvements. Staff engaged in outreach activities can use the demographic data to identify specific socially disadvantaged groups or geographic areas for targeted efforts.

This section of the report highlights some of the many outreach efforts USDA has undertaken during the reporting period. Many of these efforts, some completed and others ongoing, have enabled the Department to provide valuable information and assistance to farmers and ranchers and other rural constituents.

Outreach highlights are presented in three categories. They are: 1) the Office of Outreach; 2) data reporting agencies—those agencies required to report, and reported, data for this report; and 3) those agencies not required to report data, but that also conduct outreach activities.

Office of Outreach

Created in 1997, the Office of Outreach serves as the authority, and key information source, for coordinating, planning, recommending, and implementing USDA outreach-related activities and policies. The Office of Outreach also serves as the authority for evaluation of the progress of mission areas, as well as the integration and leveraging of efforts and resources dedicated to departmental outreach.

Outreach Mission

USDA's Office of Outreach is committed to innovatively leading all USDA outreach efforts. This includes providing leadership, coordination, facilitation, and expertise to internal and external partners to ensure equal and timely access to USDA programs and services for all constituents, with emphasis on the underserved.

Outreach Initiatives

The Office of Outreach also serves as a catalyst for an effective outreach enterprise for the Department through which it provides meaningful access and service to the populace, especially the underserved and those not being served. As the Department's "bridge to the people," interagency outreach efforts are coordinated to result in leveraged, strengthened, and collective strategies that, by design, attend to the critical needs of limited-resource farmers and ranchers, and customers who are underserved.

Farm Bill Forums – In 2005, the Department held many 2007 Farm Bill Forums. These events, generally lasting 3 hours or more, held in communities where large numbers of farmers, ranchers, and landowners resided, served as critical opportunities for those with an interest in agricultural enterprises to contribute to the development of the upcoming 2007 Farm Bill. These forums are important because they provided an increased opportunity for USDA agencies to reach out to all current and potential constituents to ensure that their views and voices are heard.

Annual Partners Meeting – This is an ongoing, annual activity that culminates with the gathering of representatives from community-based organizations to interact and engage in meaningful dialogue with Department officials regarding issues germane to the limited-resource and minority farm and ranch communities. This outreach initiative has included every sector of organizations providing services to underserved farmers and ranchers. Future meetings will continue the partnerships with organizations providing services to these groups and explore innovative assistance strategies to further advance the delivery of USDA programs and services.

USDA/Marriott Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) – This 3-year agreement enhances USDA's and Marriott's outreach efforts to minority farmers to improve their business capacity and to provide expanded sales outlets for their products. The objectives of the MOU are to increase opportunities for minority farmers to establish

alternative business enterprises and to provide produce to the hospitality industry through the combined efforts and resources of Marriott and USDA. This is to be accomplished by providing training, technical assistance, and mentoring, which will lead to enhanced production and marketing to the hospitality industry and others.

Partnerships and Audience Expansion – Opportunities to enter into new partnerships that extend outreach efforts are always in the forefront for the Department. In line with new partnerships, audience expansion is equally important. This reporting period experienced increased partnerships and the audience population was expanded to include new non-traditional audiences, (e.g., Hmong poultry producers).

Tobacco Buyout Program – The Tobacco Transition Payment Program (TTPP), also known as the Tobacco Buyout Program, ended Federal tobacco marketing quota and price support loan programs—programs that began in the 1930s—effective with the 2005 crop. Beginning with the 2005 tobacco crop, there were no planting restrictions, no marketing cards, and no price support loans. Thus, tobacco quota holders and producers no longer received payments for tobacco production. The Office of Outreach participated in the design of communication strategies to help ensure small and limited-resource producers received accurate information about the buyout in a timely manner. The Office also called attention to the need to promote financial investment planning and transitioning to alternative crops.

The Center for Minority Farmers – This initiative continues from previous reporting periods. The Center's mission is to serve the small and limited-resource farm community and increase opportunities for minority farmers to establish alternative business enterprises.

Section 10708 Reporting Requirements – Section 10708 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 established two major new reporting requirements for the Department of Agriculture: (1) compilation of program participation data on farmers and ranchers and (2) public disclosure requirements for county committee elections. The Section, in its entirety, requires the compilation and public disclosure of data to allow access and hold the Department of Agriculture accountable for the nondiscriminatory participation of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in programs of the Department. ASCR is the lead agency for implementing part one of this legislative mandate, including the preparation and issuance of the annual report; the Farm Service Agency is the lead agency for part two.

The ASCR delegated the responsibility of Section 10708 Reporting Requirements to the Office of Outreach. The Office of Outreach, working with the Interagency Working Group for Section 10708—comprised of representative from each agency—is the lead office responsible for coordination of USDA's efforts and activities needed to compile the Section 10708 Reporting Requirements.

Accomplishments

The Office of Outreach's accomplishments are the results of an aggressive set of outreach initiatives. Each results-oriented initiative has led to accomplishments that the Office is proud to report. For this section of the outreach narrative report, the initiatives will be followed by the resulting accomplishment.

Farm Bill Forums – In anticipation of the 2007 Farm Bill, the Office of Outreach assisted with planning and implementation of listening sessions in locales (Tuskegee, Alabama; Las Cruces, New Mexico; Fresno, California; Reno, Nevada; and Greensboro, North Carolina) with large minority farm and ranch populations. Attendees were African American, European American, Hispanic American, Native American, and Asian American. The attendees also included beginning and long-time farmers, males and females.

Second Annual Partners Meeting – The planning and coordinating of the Second Annual Partners Meeting, held in August 2005, was a major accomplishment. The meeting facilitated opportunities for more than 125 representatives of community-based organizations for farmers and ranchers to engage in meaningful dialogue—with the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Under Secretaries, and Agency Administrators—about critical perennial and emerging issues that affect the continued well-being of the minority and small farm and ranch community, including their ability to continue in the farm enterprise. Approximately 200 individuals participated in the meeting. The topics of discussion included (1) equitable access to USDA programs and services; (2) enhancing resources and land access for small farmers, ranchers, farm workers, and small towns in rural areas; (3) risk management, marketing and food safety; (4) community food security and nutrition assistance; (5) implications of animal identification for small-scale producers; (6) farm workers, USDA and agriculture in the U.S.; (7) traditional conservation, land stewardship and cooperative conservation; (8) grants, cooperative agreements and partnerships; (9) disaster preparedness and policy; (10) foreclosures, accelerations, and land fractionation; (11) new entry, young, and women farmers; and (12) county committee election process.

USDA/Marriott Memorandum of Understanding – Two training and technical conferences were planned and implemented for producers interested in participating in the USDA/Marriott Memorandum of Understanding. The events were held at 1890 land-grant institutions (North Carolina A & T State University and Tennessee State University) and involved more than small/minority farmers, representatives of 1890 institutions and community-based organizations. A third session of shorter duration was held at South Carolina State University, also an 1890 institution.

Partnership and Audience Expansion – The inaugural meeting of the National Association of Hispanic/Latino Farmers and Ranchers, held in Las Cruces, New Mexico, established an additional avenue of access into the Department for the Hispanic/Latino community. The conceptualization, financial resources, and staff hours dedicated to this

event proved not only beneficial to the Hispanic/Latino community, but provided much needed lines of communication for the Department to disseminate information about its programs and services, thereby increasing the awareness of USDA's programs and services to the Hispanic/Latino community.

The Office of Outreach staff attended numerous meetings and conferences and made presentations to new audiences during the reporting period. During the meeting and presentations, staff engaged new and non-traditional audiences, including members of the Lumbee Indian Tribe in Pembroke, North Carolina; an African American sorority in Chattanooga, Tennessee; a National Human Sciences Honor Society in Chicago, Illinois; members of a trade union in Phoenix, Arizona; secondary school students in Denton, Texas; and refugee farmers in Columbus, Ohio.

The Tobacco Buyout Program – An intensive, comprehensive, and widespread multi-media campaign was conducted to inform tobacco quota holders and producers of the buyout program, and to encourage them to sign up for the buyout. The development and implementation of the communications outreach plans for the Tobacco Buyout Program helped ensure that minority producers and quota-holders received accurate and timely information regarding program sign-up, benefits, and the transition to alternative crops.

The Center for Minority Farmers – Activities associated with the USDA/Marriott MOU and the outreach tools are housed in the Center. Accomplishments with the MOU were aforementioned. The Center also promoted the Minority Farm Register, assisted with the distribution of Federal surplus equipment (e.g., computers) to small towns and community-based organizations, and facilitated ease of access to USDA agencies.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) gave emergency approval to the Farm Assessment Form, a new outreach tool. The form was designed to assess a farmer's capacity to participate in new markets. New markets include those such as the hospitality industry and school lunch and military purchase programs.

Section 10708 Reporting Requirements – Work towards meeting the requirements of Section 10708 continued during the reporting period. Data collection, a crucial component of compiling accurate date, is taking on a more urgent stature in the Department. Establishing a data collecting system, with approval from OMB, which will provide consistent data collecting authority on a Department-wide basis, is an important component to producing future reports based on valid, creditable data.

The 10708 Working Group, convened by staff of the Office of Outreach, continued to work toward completing the report for FY 2005 and establish a project plan to begin the FY 2006 report immediately after the end of the year. This strategy will enable the Department to close the gap between publishing the report and fiscal year end.

Impact

The awareness of, and interest in, the Department's programs and services, as well as educational and employment opportunities, are steadily increasing as a result of the efforts led by the Office of Outreach. More customers and potential customers have expressed a greater appreciation for outreach, and thereby, exhibiting an attitude toward USDA much more favorable than in times past.

Participation data from the 10708 Report will be used to help ensure that USDA's agricultural programs and services serve the Nation's citizenry well. Future participation data, facts on constituent demographics including new constituents and the changing needs of all constituents, will be used to drive the coordinated design and delivery of outreach services. Where applicable, the Office of Outreach will (1) coordinate the provision of outreach and technical assistance; (2) facilitate links between land-grant and/or minority serving educational institutions, faith- and/or community-based organizations, and USDA agencies; (3) provide timely and accurate access to appropriate information about USDA programs and services; (4) safeguard the integrity of data collected on farm and ranch customers; and (5) foster the continuation of the farm legacy.

Moving Forward

The long-term goal of the Office of Outreach is to establish a data collection and analysis framework that will allow USDA agencies to develop strategies to monitor and evaluate their program areas with the goals of ensuring that participating agencies (1) provide benefits effectively and efficiently to their intended recipients; (2) provide comparable access to programs and services over time to recipients; (3) distribute benefits equitably among recipient groups, and (4) be accountable for the actions of USDA employees.

The Office of Outreach will assist agencies in not only identifying specifically where underserved populations exist for one program but for multiple programs and even multiple agencies. The analysis of the program data will lead to the effective and efficient targeting of outreach resources by first identifying and quantifying the underserved by program, ensuring that the responsible agency incorporates those needs into their plans, and, most importantly, following up to see where goals are met and taking additional actions where they are not.

Over time, by continually analyzing data and developing trends, the Office of Outreach will be able to establish best practices for various geographical, demographic, and cultural groups. These best practices can then be shared with other programs or agencies that need to improve program delivery to such groups. One other outgrowth from the demographic data collection is its use as a management tool for the Civil Rights Compliance Division. The Division will be able to look at program data and trends to assist in identifying which offices might be a higher priority for compliance reviews. To be clear, a variance in the demographic data does not automatically mean there is a

problem, but helps identify where the Department's other tools of both Outreach and Compliance might be needed.

In ensuring that all USDA constituents, including minorities and the underserved, have the same opportunity to participate in USDA's programs and services, the Office of Outreach will continue to:

1) Strengthen USDA outreach efforts;

2) Coordinate procedures to ensure that USDA programs and services are provided;

3) Coordinate program delivery;

4) Assist underserved constituent groups in collaboration with the Agency Outreach Coordinators, Environmental Justice Coordinators, and State and Field Outreach Councils;

5) Develop policy for building relationships with community-based organizations;

6) Participate in the development of initiatives for farm workers with other Federal agencies and non-government organizations;

7) Monitor, analyze, and evaluate trends related to USDA programs and activities through review of mission area outreach plans and the work of agency liaisons and State outreach councils;

8) Develop and provide training and education on outreach function models, best practices, policies, strategic plans and goals for USDA employees and stakeholders;

9) Create a database which will document the actual data utilized by each agency to establish a baseline for the number of underserved customers each agency currently serves and the mechanisms needed to address problematic situations; and

10) Receive semi-annual reports on outreach efforts and progress in attaining participation goals, and use the results to determine procedures for improving access and enhancing service.

Highlights of Agency Outreach Efforts

The outreach narrative is a crucial part of the Section 10708 Report. It shows the Secretary's sincere dedication and intent to implement strategies leading to improved customer service, program participation, and equal and timely access to all USDA programs and services for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. Individually and collectively, the agency outreach efforts add value to the outreach narrative. The outreach narratives for the first two Section 10708 reports, i.e., FY 2003 and FY 2004, have been provided by the five agencies required to report. Beginning with this report, FY 2005, a new standard is being established to include outreach narratives from agencies not required to report under the statute. More importantly, this strategy provides an opportunity to convey a much broader and more comprehensive picture of USDA's outreach efforts.

Outreach Highlights of Agencies Required To Report

Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service

The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), in partnership with land-grant universities (over 130 institutions with one or more located in every State and territory) and other public and private organizations, provides the focus to advance a global system of extramural research, extension, and higher education programs in the food and agricultural sciences and related environmental, social, and human sciences. In FY 2005, CSREES administered a Federal budget of approximately $1.1 billion, allocated through competitive grant processes and formula funds, in support of about 53 line-item programs. Within this broad portfolio, the following three programs, with FY 2005 appropriations (rounded), focused specifically on outreach to farmers and ranchers: (1) Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (SARE), $12,400,000; (2) Risk Management Education (RME) Program, $5,000,000; and (3) Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Competitive Grant Program (OASDFR or 2501 Program), $5,935,000. Program allocations for FY 2005 are listed respectively in Appendixes E, F, and G.

The Farm Safety Outreach (FSO) Program, reported in the past, was not funded in FY 2005. This program has not been in the President's Budget Request for several years, and it is not anticipated that Congress will restore funding.

Outreach Mission

CSREES advances knowledge for agriculture, the environment, human health and well-being, and communities through national program leadership and Federal assistance. While only a few of the programs managed by CSREES are actually covered by the requirements of Section 10708, the agency manages many programs that place a specific emphasis on minority and socially disadvantaged populations. For example, the agency administers a broad portfolio of programs designed specifically to enhance the research, extension and teaching capacity of the Historically Black Land-Grant Universities (1890), the Tribal Land-Grant Colleges (1994), the Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and the Alaska and Hawaii-native Serving Institutions. CSREES also supports workshops to strengthen the ability of minority-serving institutions to manage Federal funds and to strengthen their capacity to compete for grant funding.

Outreach Initiatives

CSREES has three programs that emphasize improving services to historically underserved farmers and ranchers. SARE provides Research and Education Grants and Producer Grants to advance knowledge and help farmers and ranchers adopt practices that enhance profits, environmental stewardship, and quality of life. RME grants support

development of risk management educational programs and materials to help producers (particularly those who are underserved or relatively new to farming) mitigate and adjust to risk. The 2501 Program provides grants to public and private organizations to train and assist socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to own and operate farms and ranches and to participate equitably in the full range of agricultural programs offered by USDA (See Appendix C, pages 99 – 116 for these programs).

Accomplishments

Through the three programs outlined above, a total of $23.335 million was awarded to 302 projects and was disbursed to all States and territories through formula funds (See Chart A below) in FY 2005.

CHART A

2005 CSREES Funding Section 10708 Covered Programs		
Programs	**Number of Projects**	**Total Funding**
SARE	180	12,400,000
2501	22	5,935,000
RME	100	5,000,000
Totals	302	23,335,000

Examples of SARE's 180 projects include the development of production and marketing alternatives for limited-resource and minority farmers. SARE also provides support for a regional SARE Office of Minority Outreach located at an 1890 institution and educational travel opportunities for minority farmers.

The RME program places a priority on funding programs targeted to underserved audiences and minority-serving institutions, such as 1890 institutions. The more than 100 RME projects funded in FY 2005 served Hmongs, Hispanics, Native Americans, African Americans, women in agriculture, and operators of small farms.

The 2501 Program funded 22 projects. All of the projects targeted African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Asians.

Impact

As a result of the 2501 Program, increased participation in USDA programs has occurred. Six States reported a direct economic impact of $13,483,291 to socially disadvantaged producers. States generally reported increases of an average of 10-15% in household incomes, and two States reported reductions in delinquencies and/or foreclosure rates within the Farm Service Agency. For $1 million in grant money received, four projects documented a $15 million return for their participants through loans and cost share opportunities. Income generation increased through diversification of farms and ranches

and development of new marketing opportunities. Farming cooperatives are assisting producers to reach broader, more lucrative markets. In general, those farmers who participated in this program farm longer, acquire loans sooner, and are less likely to go out of business.

Moving Forward

Future CSREES outreach plans seek to (a) ensure that underserved and disadvantaged populations are beneficiaries of competitively funded projects and formula-funded programs; (b) continue funding minority-serving institutions; (c) simplify grant applications and processes; (d) provide training and technical assistance to write and submit grants, and administer and evaluate programs; and (e) ensure representation from underserved and disadvantaged populations on committees, boards, review committees, and training staff.

The underserved and disadvantaged populations can expect increased financial benefits, along with improved services, educational programs, and research projects geared toward their needs. Thereby, CSREES will continue to demonstrate its sincere commitment to provide outreach and assistance to underserved and disadvantaged populations, especially farmers and ranchers.

Farm Service Agency

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) is dedicated to the well-being of U.S. agriculture through efficient and equitable administration of farm commodity, farm loan, conservation, emergency assistance, and domestic and international food assistance programs. These programs are major components of USDA's farm safety net, which helps producers maintain viable operations, effectively compete for sales of export commodities, and contributes to the year-round availability of low-cost, safe, and nutritious foods.

Outreach Mission

The FSA outreach mission is to assist the agency in reducing inequalities in program participation by increasing the participation of small or limited-resource farmers and ranchers, and providing all family farmers and ranchers equal access to the programs to achieve and maintain economic viability. The substance of this mission is to provide appropriate and timely information, training, and technical assistance in advance to maximize the probability that complaints of discrimination will rarely occur.

Outreach Initiatives

FSA makes special efforts to bring its programs to new customers and to groups that may not have participated in the past. FSA outreach programming identifies and works with partner organizations and customers to overcome such barriers to participation as language and cultural differences, transportation challenges in remote areas, and challenges in comprehension of program requirements and procedures. The program places special emphasis on reaching socially disadvantaged and limited-resource farmers and members of racial and ethnic minority groups. Each State and Puerto Rico has an Outreach Coordinator to assist customers at local levels.

FSA also offers special lending programs to new and underserved farmers and ranchers unable to secure financing from commercial sources. FSA reserves direct and guaranteed loan funds each year to help socially disadvantaged applicants buy and operate family-sized farms and ranches. Direct loans for both ownership and operating purposes are made at reduced interest rates to low-income farmers and ranchers.

Examples of outreach initiatives implemented include: a training and technical assistance program for Hispanic farmers and ranchers in Texas and New Mexico; a Plasticulture Entrepreneurship Program in the Mississippi Delta for African American, limited-resource farmers; training in agricultural production and marketing to youth in the Mississippi Delta, which resulted in an increase of loans to socially disadvantaged African American youth; the continuation of the National FSA American Indian Credit Outreach Initiative (AICOI); and the development of the Inner City Gardens Outreach Initiative for Asian American small and limited-resource farmers in Fresno, California.

Due to the implementation of the Tobacco Transition Payment Program (TTPP) and the termination of all USDA tobacco programs, FSA had an unprecedented increase in outreach activities. Signed into law in the fall of 2004, the TTPP ended the Federal tobacco marketing quota system that had been a fixture in American agriculture since the Great Depression.

From January to June 2005, the FSA Office of External Affairs played a lead role in managing a massive outreach and communications campaign to educate approximately 500,000 tobacco quota holders and producers about the new TTPP, commonly referred to as the "tobacco buyout," and encourage them to enroll in the program. There was a special effort to inform minority tobacco quota holders and producers about the TTPP.

Accomplishments

Accomplishments resulting from the FSA Outreach Initiatives include:

- The number of loans to socially disadvantaged applicants as a percentage of all loans increased by 7 percent (from 4,201 in FY 04 to 4,477 in FY 05);

- Funds loaned as a percentage of all loans increased by 2 percent (from $376 million in FY 04 to $382 million in FY 05);

- The number of loans to beginning farmers and ranchers increased by 12 percent in FY 05;

- Funds loaned to socially disadvantaged applicants as a percentage of all loans increased by 19 percent (from $867 million, 8,572 loans in FY 04 to $1 billion, 9,592 loans in FY 05);

- The average processing time for direct loan applications for Hispanic farmers decreased from 22 to 20 days, Black/African American farmers stayed the same at 13 days, Asian American/Pacific Islanders increased from 15 to 16 days (after decreasing from 22 days in 2004), and Native Americans increased from 15 to 16 days (after decreasing from 16 days in 2004);

- Updated the FSA official Web site to include a Spanish language Web site, providing up-to-date Spanish language assistance to all State Executive Directors, State Outreach Coordinators, small and limited-resource farmers and ranchers, and community-based organizations;

- Enhanced efforts to increase the participation of underserved minority farmers and ranchers participating on the county committee nomination and election process using outreach initiatives in partnership with community-based organizations. Nationwide, 300 counties were identified for additional efforts to increase participation by socially disadvantaged producers in county committee

elections during FY 2005. Prior to 2005, 440 counties were identified for special outreach efforts. Results include one entire county committee in Texas now composed of all Hispanic producers and one county committee in Kansas composed of all female producers;

- Developed the FSA Multilingual Initiative (MLI) to meet the increasing demand for translated information including Web content, expanded and improved the communications in languages other than English, and took steps to provide access to Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals in compliance with Executive Order 13166 dated August 11, 2000, Improving Access to Services for Persons with LEP;

- Managed the annual certification of 32 State agricultural mediation programs including Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Maine, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. Maine and Virginia were new States certified for the mediation program in FY 2005. Administered matching mediation grants totaling $3,968,000; and

- FSA helped in the development of the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project, a partnership effort designed to help recent immigrants, including Asian Americans/ Pacific Islanders (AAPI) with backgrounds in agriculture, to establish themselves as commercial farmers in New England.

Specific accomplishments resulting from the FSA tobacco programs outreach activities and oversight include the following activities undertaken by FSA, Wachovia, and Hilsoft Notifications:

- FSA oversaw the development of all communications materials (newspaper and magazine ads, radio and television ads, news releases, fact sheets, brochures, posters, etc.) and ensured that all were distributed in a timely fashion to more than 430,000 tobacco quota holders and producers:
    - 170,000 brochures were distributed by tobacco-producing States, at town hall meetings, and by the national office,
    - more than 3,000 posters to promote the program were distributed to tobacco-producing States at State and county offices and town hall meetings,
    - 1,500 copies of a 20-minute video were shipped to the national and State FSA offices in tobacco-producing States,
    - a 60-second television ad ran on AgDay television, and
    - three different commercial radio spots were produced and translated to Spanish to air in March, April, and May of 2005;

- FSA coordinated 48 town hall meetings in 17 States to inform tobacco quota holders and producers about the TTPP. In States with 1890 educational institutions, cooperative town hall meetings were held, and 6 additional meetings were held with members of the National Black Farmers of America;

- FSA issued 12 news releases that addressed a number of topics ranging from kick off of the sign-up period to assessments for tobacco manufacturers and importers. They were distributed at the national level and in the 17 tobacco-producing States;

- FSA issued a TTPP fact sheet and TTPP Questions and Answers, which was distributed at FSA State and county offices and at town hall meetings;

- FSA initiated 2 video news releases about the TTPP sign-up and distributed them to approximately 430 local television stations and posted on the Web site of USDA's Broadcast Media and Technology Center;

- FSA drafted radio public service announcements (PSAs), oversaw production, translated them into Spanish, and distributed both versions to FSA radio contacts in tobacco-producing States;

- FSA developed a TTPP Web page on the FSA Web site, which features all informational materials including press releases, fact sheet, radio and TV ads, lump-sum payment calculator, final rules published in the *Federal Register*, and more;

- FSA drafted stories about the TTPP for inclusion in FSA State and county FSA newsletters to ensure that external stakeholders received the details they needed to make informed decisions and regularly featured stories about the TTPP in The FSA Courier (the FSA's employee e-mail newsletter), which was distributed to more than 11,000 USDA employees, to ensure that internal stakeholders received the latest information about the program;

- FSA videotaped an FSA official discussing TTPP in March, April, and May of 2005 and AgDay TV used the footage in news segments once each month;

- FSA coordinated the distribution of three letters to more than 850 tobacco manufacturers and importers;

- FSA oversaw media outreach efforts that resulted in the following coverage:
    - more than 1,350 placements in 226 newspapers (43 dailies, 183 weeklies), covering 456 counties in major tobacco States, from March through June, 2005;
    - more than 10,000 ad placements on 360 radio stations with 135 extra agricultural stations and 2 Spanish speaking stations in 35 major markets from April through June, 2005;

- 19 ads on Ag Day Television and all agricultural television stations from March 7 through March 26, 2005;
- 6 magazine ads each in (1) Tobacco Farm Quarterly, (2) Carolina Virginia Farmer, (3) Southern Farmer, (4) Farm Journal, (5) Southeast Farm Press, (6) Progressive Farmer, and (7) Jet from February through May 2005;
- Close to 400 placements in 54 African American newspapers and 12 Hispanic newspapers; and
- More than 1,000 radio ad placements in 37 African American stations in 19 markets and 2 Hispanic stations in 2 markets; and

- The following free or "bonus" media coverage was negotiated:
  - More than 2,400 free media placements for the TTPP were run in 14 States, including the top 11 tobacco-producing States, which accounted for 99.6 percent of the tobacco-planted acres;
  - 16 insertions in 13 daily and weekly newspapers in 7 States;
  - 6 insertions in 5 minority newspapers in 4 States; and
  - 2,410 radio spots, on more than 180 stations in 11 States, with 824 on African American stations; 34 on Hispanic stations; 701 on Ag stations; and 851 on statewide "news network" stations.

Impact

FSA has increased the interaction and improved the relationship with socially and economically disadvantaged farmers and ranchers seeking assistance from USDA including farm groups, community-based organizations, churches, and institutions of higher education. This has led to increased numbers of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers as a percentage of all customers and has increased the number of minorities serving on county committees.

For the changes in the tobacco programs, by coordinating with FSA's Tobacco Division, Outreach offices in FSA and USDA, contractor Wachovia and subcontractor Hilsoft Notifications, FSA successfully administered an outreach campaign that resulted in hundreds of thousands of tobacco quota holders and producers being informed about the TTPP and enrolling in the program by the June 17, 2005, sign-up deadline. By the end of June 2005, more than 574,000 requests for contracts had been submitted by potential program participants. FSA's outreach and publicity campaign for the tobacco buyout serves as a model of how one Federal agency can successfully work with multiple government divisions and private institutions to educate Americans about agricultural programs.

Moving Forward

On November 18, 2005, FSA published a "Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA)," inviting applications from qualified organizations to help underserved and limited resource farmers and ranchers become more efficient operators and more economically viable. FSA received 76 applications from eligible 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, land-grant institutions, State governments and federally recognized Indian tribal governments.

A panel of expert advisors from USDA agencies evaluated all 76 applications through a competitive process and recommended FSA fund or award 10 projects, 9 at $100,000 each and one at $95,000 for a total of $995,000. On November 3, 2006, FSA announced the 10 recipients of $995,000. The goal is for the organizations to help develop efficient operators; to offer innovative and unique ways to improve their economic viability through training, technical assistance, farming practices and more effective marketing approaches; and to improve the coordination and effectiveness of Federal programs provided in rural area.

FSA selected the following 10 recipients: Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries, Montgomery, Alabama; Community Food Security Coalition, Inc., Venice, California; Cooperative Development Institute, Inc., South Deerfield, Massachusetts; Farm to Table, Inc., Santa Fe, New Mexico; Iowa Women Agriculture, Hampton, Iowa; Michigan Food and Farming Systems, East Lansing, Michigan; Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana; North South Institute and Southwest Broward Vegetable Growers Association, Davie, Florida; Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project, Inc., Wewoka, Oklahoma; and Prairie View A&M Research Foundation, Prairie View, Texas.

The FSA's Strategic Plan Framework contains six internal outcomes under the Budget and Performance Management System (BPMS) Scorecard, one of which is specifically tied to outreach. These goals were established in an effort to hold FSA employees accountable for outreach. State Executive Directors are now responsible for establishing goals to increase the percentage of program participation by racial and ethnic minorities and women farmers, and to increase the percentage of agricultural awareness performed through effective partnerships.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides national leadership in a partnership effort to help the Nation's people conserve, maintain, and improve America's natural resources and environment. NRCS provides leadership for conservation activities on the Nation's 1.6 billion acres of private and other non-Federal land. The agency provides technical assistance and information to individuals, communities, tribal governments, Federal, State and local agencies, and others; and partners with the staff of local conservation districts and State agencies, and with volunteers. NRCS also offers surveys of the Nation's soils, inventories natural resources and records their conditions and use, provides water supply forecasts for western States, and develops technical guidance for conservation planning. The benefits of these activities include not only sustained and improved agricultural productivity, but also cleaner, safer, and more dependable water supplies; reduced damage from floods and other natural disasters; and an enhanced resource base to support continued economic development, recreation, and other purposes.

Outreach Mission

NRCS' Outreach Division provides leadership in a partnership effort to ensure that NRCS programs and services are made accessible to all customers, with emphasis on the underserved.

Outreach Initiatives

NRCS has a long history of working with all people to protect and conserve our natural resources. The agency has used innovative outreach strategies to reach historically underserved land users, owners, and managers, and sought new authorities to enhance outreach activity. Internal structures, such as Civil Rights Compliance Reviews, monitor program delivery efforts in the agency to ensure outreach to minorities and other historically underserved customers.

As a result of an analysis of historical trends and recent changes in authorizing legislation, NRCS has implemented program policy and procedural changes to mitigate potential negative impacts for protected group members. NRCS successfully implemented the limited-resources farmer and rancher provisions of the 2002 Farm Bill. In FY 2005, NRCS funded 1,601 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contracts on farm and ranch lands for limited-resource farmers for a total of $29.9 million as compared to FY 2004, where only 1,156 contracts for $18.3 million were funded. EQIP funded nearly one out of every two limited-resource producer applications, as compared with only one out of every four applications for "non-underserved" applications. Limited-resource and beginning farmers received 15.4 percent of the total EQIP funds in FY 2005; this is an increase of 6.3 percent from FY 2004 to assist limited-resource and beginning farmers and ranchers nationwide to implement conservation practices on their land. The Conservation Security Program (CSP) contracts funded in

FY 2005 totaled 12,787 for $146,433,309 in 220 watersheds. This translated into more than $1 billion long-term commitment to conservation over the next 10 years. Seven hundred thirty-one contracts totaling over $6 million were awarded to underserved producers. Also in 2005, 149 contracts were funded totaling $1,149,133 for limited-resource producers and beginning farmers. Limited-resource producers and beginning farmers are offered 65 percent cost share rates for implementation of new practices, rather than the 50 percent rate for other program participants.

Accomplishments

The Agency's Performance Results System is used to capture a variety of outreach efforts and achievements. It is monitored on a monthly basis through teleconferences held with Outreach Coordinators throughout the agency.

NRCS provided $20,000 to the Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe for enrolling a riparian easement into the Wetlands Reserve Program. The easement is one of the first of its kind to occur on Indian Trust Land. The easement is being used as an outreach mechanism by the Tribe to demonstrate the water quality benefits of conservation practices to the community.

Other notable accomplishments include the following:

- Created a CSP funding strategy for the 2005 sign-up period that maximized program participation for the small and limited-resource producers;

- Participated in the multi-agency 2005 USDA Small Farms Conference, held in Greensboro, NC, where there were more than 300 people in attendance, many of whom were minority producers;

- Conducted a listening session for the national Resource Conservation and Development Program with American Indian Conservation Districts at the Indian Nations Conservation Alliance meeting that attracted over 34 tribal representatives;

- Provided outreach and technical assistance to the United Farmers USDA cooperative for minority farmers;

- Partnered with Florida A&M University regarding animal waste treatment and utilization;

- Provided planning and coordination, and participated in the "Growing Opportunities" Workshop at Columbia, South Carolina;

- Partnered with and provided technical expertise to Alcorn State University, which benefited limited-resource and small farmers; provided on-site assistance and demonstrations on selected Mississippi farms;

- Provided 200 farmers and educators with information and procedures for soil quality/agronomy conservation and agroforestry and their adaptation to small farm practices; and no-till and irrigation procedures for small-scale vegetables farmers; and

- Provided $6 million for the new Small-Scale/Limited-Resource Farmers Initiatives to help farmers implement conservation practices on their land. NRCS offices in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and the Caribbean Area dedicated up to $500,000 in program funds for the initiative, which will help increase participation in USDA voluntary conservation programs through improved outreach efforts to limited-resource farmers. The funds will help farmers with 100 acres or less of cropland implement conservation practices.

Impact

NRCS field employees are expected to continuously reach out to potential conservation customers on a daily basis. This has enabled NRCS to increase its partnership efforts from the Department level to the field level, and to build inter-agency outreach alliances, thus increasing conservation program knowledge and understanding.

NRCS has effectively collaborated with land-grant colleges and universities, resulting in an increase in program technical assistance, program awareness, and conservation employment opportunities. The NRCS Outreach Division participated and provided staff support in the distribution of 500 agency program packages, including program fact sheets, employment information and outreach coordination. This effort provided agency awareness to over 500 conference participants. Outreach efforts by NRCS to increase American Indian conservation program participation in Montana have paid off on the Blackfeet Reservation, where program participation has increased from 8 contracts and $143,937 in FY 2004 to 19 contracts and $453, 670 in FY 2005.

Moving Forward

NRCS has established an overall performance goal that by FY 2008, 467,000 members of minority, underserved, and non-traditional groups will receive NRCS conservation assistance annually to help them plan and apply conservation techniques on their lands and the lands that they manage. Also, by FY 2008, 150,000 women who are primary operators of a farm or ranch are expected to receive technical assistance in planning or applying conservation on their land. The high numbers in NRCS performance goals are just one indication of its commitment to proactive outreach targeting traditionally underserved farmers and ranchers.

NRCS policy mandates, through its General Manual, that all federally conducted and assisted programs are accessible equally to all individuals, regardless of their national origin or their ability to speak and understand the English language. Communication strategies include contracting for interpreter services and producing multi-language information brochures and videos. NRCS staff is positioned throughout the agency to address and distribute information in various languages, through a variety of print and electronic media.

Rural Development Housing Programs

Rural Development housing programs help ensure convenient, safe and affordable farm labor housing near local farmers in rural communities. Access to this multi-family housing gives farmers access to a nearby labor pool from which to recruit farm workers as farming operations require it. Farm labor housing represents only a portion of the housing and community facilities financed by programs within Rural Development. Funding, through loans, loan guarantees, and grants, is also made available for single family homes, apartments for low-income persons and the elderly, childcare centers, fire and police stations, hospitals, libraries, nursing homes, schools, and many other uses. A complete description of Rural Development programs can be found at http://www.teamrd.usda.gov.

The Farm Labor Housing Loan and Grant (Section 514/516) Program provides funds to buy, build, improve, or repair housing for farm laborers, including persons whose income is earned in aquaculture (fish and oyster farms) and those engaged in on-farm processing.

The program makes loans to farmers, associations of farmers, family farm corporations, Indian tribes, non-profit organizations, public agencies, and associations of farm workers. Typically, Rural Development loan applicants are unable to obtain credit elsewhere, but in some instances, farmers able to get credit elsewhere may obtain loans at a rate of interest based on the cost of Federal borrowing. Grants are made to farm worker associations, non-profit organizations, Indian tribes, and public agencies.

Farm Labor Housing loans and grants are provided to buy, build, improve, or repair housing for farm laborers, including persons whose income is earned in aquaculture and those engaged in on-farm processing.

Outreach Mission

Rural Development's housing programs support its mission of increasing economic opportunity and improving the quality of life of **all** rural Americans. By providing decent, safe and affordable housing to typically low-income and socially disadvantaged farm workers, Rural Development is able to meet the economic needs not only of its tenants but also the farmers that need their service.

In partnership with non-profits, Indian tribes, State and Federal Government agencies, and local communities, Rural Development continues to create packages of technical assistance and loan and grant funds to assist rural communities and individuals.

Outreach Initiatives

With only indirect control over the leasing of its farm labor housing, achieving a diverse tenant base is a challenge. Rural Development has two primary ways of affecting this characteristic of its portfolio: (1) offering rental assistance to its prospective or existing

tenants and (2) monitoring diversity through the use of the compliance review process and Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan. Management of Rural Development multi-family housing rental projects is under the direct control of the borrowers.

Accomplishments

Rural Development provided farm labor housing to 20,206 tenants during FY 2005, a modest increase over its total of 19,935 tenants during FY 2004. Approximately 80 percent of its FY 2005 tenants were Hispanic, significantly greater than the 6 percent Hispanic eligible population. A complete profile of the racial and ethnic composition of farm labor housing tenants is provided in the accompanying suite of Web site charts and maps noted earlier in this report. Highlights of that profile are charted below and compared to the composition of the eligible rural U.S. population. The first chart shows the racial characteristics of all the farm labor housing tenants. The second chart shows those characteristics of the significant Hispanic tenant representation reported.

Rural Development Farm Labor Housing
FY 2005 Tenant Diversity

Race	Number of Tenants	Percent	Eligible Population	Percent
White	15,735	77.9	68,898,460	87.0
Black or African American	2,051	10.2	5,303,370	6.7
American Indian or Alaska Native	1,443	7.1	1,233,250	1.6
Asian	419	2.1	521,650	0.7
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	139	0.7	134,140	0.2
Undisclosed	371	1.8	1,786,750	2.3
Multi-Racial	48	0.2	1,209,430	1.5
Total	**20,206**	**100.0**	**79,087,050**	**100.0**

Rural Development Farm Labor Housing
FY 2005 Tenant Ethnicity

Race	Hispanic Tenants*	Non-Hispanic Tenants
White	14,415 (89.28%)	1,307 (32.97%)
Black or African American	30 (0.19%)	2,019 (50.95%)
American Indian or Alaska Native	1,363 (8.44%)	80 (2.02%)
Asian	34 (0.21%)	384 (9.69%)
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	94 (0.58%)	45 (1.14%)
Undisclosed	206 (1.28%)	83 (2.09%)
Multi-Racial	3 (0.02%)	45 (1.14%)
Total	16,145 (100.00%)	3,963 (100.00%)

*** Ethnicity data unavailable for 98 tenants.**

Rural populations eligible to rent in Rural Development farm labor housing, shown in this chart, are found outside urbanized areas and places with populations greater than 25,000 in non-Metropolitan Statistical Area counties and outside of places with populations greater than 10,000 within Metropolitan Statistical Area counties as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. Eligible rural populations are found both within the 50 U.S. States and the territories of American Samoa, Guam, Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and Virgin Islands.

The racial composition of Rural Development's FY 2005 farm labor housing tenants is proportionately very similar to that of the eligible rural population. Each of the individual percentages of non-White tenants exceeds their corresponding percentages of the total eligible population, reflecting the success of the program in meeting targeted needs.

Rural Development has been able to provide rental assistance to many of its farm labor housing tenants, most of whom are non-White and Hispanic. In addition, Rural Development is taking affirmative steps to advertise and market its farm labor housing to specific minority and underserved rural communities throughout the country. During FY 2005, for example, it sent its Native American program coordinator to a number of housing conferences, tribal meetings, and local community events to encourage potential Native American tenants to apply for occupancy in a number of Section 514/516 projects. Additionally, in FY 2005, Rural Development was a major sponsor of two national outreach efforts in partnership with the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). These two events provided information to more than 10,000 participants regarding Rural Development programs (including Section 514/516 farm labor housing).

Impact

The maps provided in the Web site mentioned earlier highlight the geospatial impact and success of the Rural Development farm labor housing program nationally. Concentrations of this housing in Florida and California attest to the program's success in reaching the largely Hispanic populations residing in those areas. In addition, we hear of many individual success stories throughout yearly operations which confirm the positive impact this housing is having on the lives of our tenants.

We have heard of many cases in which Rural Development farm labor housing managers have taken a personal interest in their projects, providing amenities far beyond the expectations of their tenants. In one project, in particular, the manager provided after-school tutoring for the school-age children living there. In another, in Florida, the manager was able to employ one of his tenants part-time in the day care facility of his project. This tenant has expressed gratitude to RD for this opportunity not only to supplement her income, but to make a difference in the lives of the young people with whom she works.

Such examples of extraordinary customer service can be found throughout the Rural Development portfolio of properties. Rural Development encourages excellence in project management by recognizing the accomplishments of its highest achieving project managers in a yearly awards ceremony.

Moving Forward

Rural Development will continue to maintain the highest standards of safe, convenient, and affordable housing for its farm labor housing tenants. It has hired an additional staff member for its outreach team to enhance its impact among Native American populations. In addition, continued use and development of geographic information systems (GIS) will allow Rural Development to target locations and populations best served by its vital housing and community services.

Risk Management Agency

The Risk Management Agency (RMA) promotes, supports, and regulates sound risk management solutions to preserve and strengthen the economic stability of America's agricultural producers. As part of that mission, RMA operates and manages the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC).

RMA manages USDA's crop insurance policies by determining the appropriate terms and conditions, premium rates, and underwriting rules. RMA also provides subsidization and reinsurance. RMA also coordinates a risk management outreach and education program to assist producers and agribusinesses in understanding and managing increased risks associated with production, marketing, financial, legal and human resources. RMA is committed to ensuring that all farmers and ranchers—including women, minorities, and others—can access and participate in all RMA programs and activities for which they are eligible.

Outreach Mission

RMA outreach programs consist of: 1) Federal Crop Insurance; 2) Community Outreach and Assistance; 3) Research and Development Partnerships; 4) Commodity Partnerships for Risk Management Education; 5) Crop Insurance Education in Targeted States; and 6) the Commodity Partnership for Small Agricultural Risk Management Sessions Programs.

RMA works to identify and address barriers to provide equal access and participation. Through partnerships with the national and State outreach councils, other Federal agencies, community-based organizations, land-grant colleges and universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Alaska and Hawaii native-Serving Institutions, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, RMA's national and regional outreach coordinators identify and address barriers and provide risk management education and assistance to traditionally underserved communities, women, minorities, and other traditionally underserved groups.

RMA's mission assures that every farmer and rancher—participants and potential participants—are treated with dignity and respect and have:

- equal access to all risk management tools and programs;
- better service through partnerships and collaborations with the public and private sector, land-grant system, and community-based organizations;
- opportunities to engage in dialog that fosters collaborative effort toward improving risk management strategies;
- opportunities to review RMA programs for compliance with the needs of American agriculture;
- an increase in awareness and effective use of risk managements tools;

- the opportunity to participate in risk management education to help better manage risk;
- access to enhanced and strengthened safety nets;
- access to informational materials and messages in formats geared to underserved customers;
- awareness of the waiver of administrative fees for limited-resource farmers and ranchers; and
- improved customer service through cultural awareness and civil rights/outreach training.

Outreach Initiatives

RMA utilizes a competitive process to fund and support a wide range of innovative and nontraditional outreach and assistance initiatives to create and enhance the service and delivery of crop insurance to underserved and socially disadvantaged populations.

Limited-resource and socially disadvantaged producers and ranchers who produce specialty crops, underserved commodities, and crops for *which crop insurance is not available* receive risk management training as well as information on opportunities and assistance necessary to understand the kinds of risks addressed by existing and emerging risk management tools. The risk management training and information features appropriate use of such tools needed to make sound risk management decisions.

The Research & Development Partnership Initiatives seek to improve the profitability of farms that produce specialty or underserved crops, or crops for which crop insurance is not available, by developing integrated, systems-based tools for successfully managing the most significant production and financial risks from a research perspective.

Risk Management Education (RME) administers the Commodity Partnership Agreements, Targeted States Cooperative Agreements, and Commodity Partnership for Small Agricultural Risk Management Sessions Programs. The Commodity Partnership Agreements Program provides risk management education to producers on financial, marketing, and production risks throughout the United States. RME targets its risk management education programs to underserved States, specialty crops, and underserved commodities including livestock and forage. The Targeted States Cooperative Agreements Program provides crop insurance education to producers in those States the Secretary has determined there is traditionally, and continues to be, low levels of participation and availability of crop insurance or the producers are underserved by the Federal crop insurance program. The Commodity Partnership Small Sessions Program delivers training and information in the management of production, marketing, and financial risks. RME partners with the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) and other public and private organizations to deliver risk management education programs to U.S. farmers and ranchers.

Accomplishments

RMA provides crop insurance, financial, marketing, and production risks training to thousands of producers. During 2005, over 450,000 farmers and ranchers received information and assistance necessary to access and make informed decisions regarding participation in RMA programs and activities. Over 1 million small and limited-resource farmers and ranchers, including the traditionally underserved, received critical information on managing risk. Farmers and ranchers received management training, success strategies, contacts, networks, and other resources useful in sustaining their farming operations and make them viable for future generations.

RMA selected 60 proposals for funding. These projects involved a broad spectrum of educational opportunities, from one-on-one training to major conferences that provided producers with risk management strategies to enable them to reduce their risk of loss. Through regional conferences, RMA provided training—train-the-trainers—to approximately 2,000 participants to train producers in their communities about the application of risk management strategies. RMA also provided civil rights training to outreach partners to increase their awareness of the agency's policies for servicing all producers.

Impact

Higher crop insurance participation rates in States with large numbers of the underserved are testament to the benefits of increased producer awareness of crop insurance resulting from RMA's outreach efforts targeted to the underserved. Through the Partnership Agreements, RMA extended its ability to reach more that 450,000 women, small, limited-resource and traditionally underserved farmers and ranchers in over 40 States. These contacts provided those individuals with some information on managing risk, applying risk management strategies, and improving the financial status of their agricultural enterprise. Producers were able to increase their production, financial, and marketing potential through the use of risk management strategies, therefore, reducing the need for other government programs to supplement their farm income. Through these contacts, RMA has raised program awareness.

U.S. producers' awareness and knowledge has been heightened due to attending training sessions funded through the Commodity Partnership Agreements and the Targeted States Cooperative Agreements Programs. Higher crop insurance participation rates in the 15 underserved States illustrate that producer awareness and knowledge regarding the importance of utilizing crop insurance has been raised.

Moving Forward

RMA will continue its ongoing outreach initiatives in FY 2006. Approximately $5 million is expected to be used to provide assistance leading to increased awareness of the importance of crop insurance in the management plans of underserved farmers and

ranchers. For FY 2006, RME is expected to award 87 new agreements throughout 40 States. RME will continue to work towards educating American farmers and ranchers on how to successfully manage their risk.

RMA will continue to increase and enhance program delivery, improve participation rates, and otherwise signal RMA's dedication to equal access and participation for all farmers and ranchers.

Outreach Highlights of Agencies Not Required To Report

Agricultural Marketing Service

The mission of the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) is to facilitate the strategic marketing of agricultural products in domestic and international markets, while ensuring fair trading practices, and promoting a competitive and efficient marketplace, to the benefit of producers, traders, and consumers of U.S. food and fiber products.

Outreach Mission

The majority of AMS' clients are fee-for-service customers, who buy services in grading, inspection, and certification, or who request assistance in industry-generated self-help programs like research and promotion, and marketing orders. Their satisfaction keeps AMS in business. Dissatisfaction results in termination of service. A limited portion of AMS clientele benefits from programs to protect and promote a level playing field in commercial markets. Licenses and fees undergird these latter programs. There are millions of individuals who benefit from the services AMS provides--for example, daily market reports and food purchases for Federal feeding programs, and expanded use of farmers markets and direct marketing efforts. AMS' services are focused on the marketing and distribution side of the farm-to-market continuum, rather than on the production side.

Thus, AMS' primary outreach mission is to make its services known and available to all segments of the agricultural industry, including disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

Outreach Initiatives

AMS participates in trade and other industry meetings across the country. At these venues, AMS provides staff to answer questions about its programs and handouts of materials describing services and how to obtain them. Staff routinely visit college campuses to provide information on careers in AMS and other USDA agencies.

AMS maintains numerous Web sites where farmers and ranchers can obtain information on growing and marketing conditions, identifying market outlets, obtaining AMS services, recording proper pesticide applications, transportation of agricultural products to market, and other issues. AMS also provides many source materials in bilingual formats (e.g., Spanish/English).

AMS works to improve market access for operators of small and medium-size farms, helping them to compete effectively outside the mass supermarket system and other large wholesale market channels. AMS promotes and supports the development and continued

operation of all areas of direct-to-consumer marketing including: farmers markets, farm and roadside stands, community-supported agriculture (CSA), "pick-your-own" farms, Internet marketing, and niche markets. Further, AMS encourages and supports the development of private direct marketing and farmers market associations and State-level associations, and promotes collaboration, and coordinates regional networking among private and public organizations.

Accomplishments

AMS' user-fee-based services are available to all applicants throughout the Nation. Its market news and other agricultural sector informational reports are available to all interested parties through access to the Internet. AMS has developed a Market News Portal where interested users can identify and customize the type and frequency of reports and information they receive.

Direct marketing of farm products through farmers markets is an important sales outlet for agricultural producers nationwide. Farmers markets, now an integral part of the urban/farm linkage, have continued to rise in popularity, mostly due to the growing consumer interest in obtaining fresh products directly from the farm and locally grown producers. The number of farmers markets in the United States has grown dramatically, increasing from around 1,750 in 1994 to nearly 3,800 by the end of 2005. Similarly, community-supported agriculture, where customers purchase advance shares of a farm's production in return for weekly deliveries during the growing season, has also seen a dramatic rise in popularity, expanding from an estimated 60 operations in 1990 to approximately 1,100 operations by the end of 2005.

To facilitate the exchange of information about the growing farmers market sector, in November 2005, AMS spearheaded the creation of a "Farmers Market Consortium." Current members of the Consortium include several USDA agencies, the Office of Refugee Resettlement from the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, and several non-profit organizations, such as the Project for Public Spaces, the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and Winrock International's Wallace Center for Agricultural and Environmental Policy. As part of the Consortium's activities, AMS compiled and published the Farmers Market Resource Guide, which provides a one-stop information clearinghouse about farmers markets programs and sources of assistance.

Impact

The growth in farmers markets—and in direct farm marketing channels, in general—clearly clearly indicates that these direct-to-consumer marketing opportunities are meeting the needs of a growing number of farmers with small- to medium-size operations. Farm products sold through direct marketing include fruits, vegetables, nuts, honey, meats, eggs, flowers, plants, herbs, spices, specialty crops, Christmas trees, and value-added products such as maple sugar candies, cider, jellies, preserves, canned food,

and firewood. According to the latest Census of Agriculture, the value of direct farm sales in the United States grew 37 percent between 1997 and 2002. Direct marketing is especially beneficial to small farm operators. Nearly 1.9 million farms, or 94 percent of all farms, qualify as small farms. These farms provide an average net annual income of $23,159.

Moving Forward

AMS will continue to make its services available to all applicants in a cost-effective manner. AMS' informational products are gaining broader exposure through the Internet, and users' ability to customize the types and frequency of information they receive from AMS will continue to expand.

AMS' Direct Marketing Action Plan identified USDA's role in supporting marketing opportunities for small farmers, defined as farms with less than $250,000 in annual gross receipts. AMS will continue to derive strategies that enhance small farmers' ability to thrive in their businesses by facilitating the marketing of their agricultural products. AMS will also continue to facilitate cooperation and collaboration among agencies and organizations that promote direct marketing and help small farmers benefit from the growing consumer interest in direct marketing.

Agricultural Research Service

The Agricultural Research Service (ARS) is the principal in-house research agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). It is one of the four component agencies of the Research, Education, and Economics (REE) mission area. Congress first authorized federally supported agricultural research in the Organic Act of 1862, which established what is now USDA. That statute directed the Commissioner of Agriculture "... To acquire and preserve in his Department all information he can obtain by means of books and correspondence, and by practical and scientific experiments,..." The scope of USDA's agricultural research programs has been expanded and extended many times since the Department was created.

Outreach Mission

ARS will redouble its efforts to get information that may benefit socially disadvantaged/ limited-resource/historically underserved producers to organizations that can best reach this target population.

Outreach Initiatives

ARS is participating in the USDA-wide outreach initiative designed to better serve the special needs of historically underserved populations such as small, limited-resource, socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. ARS' research activities cover a wide range of issues involving agriculturally important plants and animals, natural resources and the environment, human nutrition, and food safety. ARS believes that its current research program covers the needs of these target groups. ARS wants to expand efforts to make the products of its research available in such a way that these underserved producers have reasonable access to the information and can benefit from its use. Additionally, ARS is leveraging its outreach towards the future by providing professional work experiences to students of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. Student internships provide professional work experience for students in laboratory settings, working with ARS scientists, who, in turn, learn from the students about their culture, including cultural approaches to science. Each student is matched with a mentor, and each student works on a research project and presents his/her findings at the end of the 8 weeks.

Accomplishments

ARS is serious about its dedication to addressing the needs of historically underserved populations. To that end, the results of ARS' outreach activities have produced the following accomplishments:

1. ARS is a collaborative partner with Prairie View A&M University (an 1890 institution in Prairie View, Texas) on the Financial Assistance, Risk Management, and Information Technology (FARM IT) Project. Through the FARM Project,

some 9,745 participants were trained in the areas of farm financial management, recordkeeping and production management. This was the result of numerous one-on-one visits and over 200 educational programs in various locations across the State of Texas.

2. ARS scientists at the Dale Bumpers Small Farms Research Center, Booneville, Arkansas, continued on-farm forage-livestock experiments through a non-funded agreement entitled "On-farm Studies to Enhance Sustainability of Livestock Production in Northeast Texas," with the Landowners Association of Texas, a community-based organization of African American small farmers and ranchers with limited resources located in eastern Texas. Data to date indicates that warm season grasses other than Bahia grass can persist in northeast Texas, but forage management practices need to be modified. Cool season forages are highly desirable with annual grasses like rye or annual ryegrass being most successful. The use of forages other than Bahia grass would increase the profitability of beef production in the region by decreasing the need and cost for supplemental feeds.

3. As the result of a non-funded cooperative agreement entitled "Methodologies for Small Production Systems" with the Landowners Association of Texas, ARS scientists of the South Central Agricultural Research Laboratory, Lane, Oklahoma, responded to a problem concerning disease on watermelon. Scientist explained specific reasons for the disease occurrence, described remedial activities, and provided reference literature to the benefit of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

4. ARS scientists in Burns, Oregon, worked with the Burns Paiute Tribe to collect data on the impacts of irrigation practices on water quality on property the tribe owns. ARS has also provided input on managing the property for both agricultural and wildlife values.

5. ARS is participating in the Organic Seed Partnership. It is aimed at developing and delivering improved varieties selected for superior performance in organic systems and at enhancing the capacity of organic growers to select and/or breed their own vegetables. This 3-year project is a continuation of an Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems funded outreach program, the Public Seed Initiative. The organic Seed Partnership provided practical learning opportunities to many traditionally underserved communities, including small-scale organic farmers. Two 1890's institutions partners are West Virginia State University and Alcorn State University. The Hispanic-serving institution for this project is New Mexico State University.

6. An ARS representative attended and presented a paper and poster on expert systems and how they can be used to benefit small and limited-resource farmers at the 4th National Small Farms Conference in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Impact

Socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers are now positioned to benefit from the many research findings coming from studies conducted by ARS and other crucial information disseminated by ARS.

In Kentucky, ARS created a win-win relationship with USDA and small minority tobacco farmers. Staff contacted the tobacco farmers and encouraged them to attend the Secretary's Farm Bill Forum in Louisville, Kentucky. The opportunity to inject this population's opinions and views into the discussion on the upcoming 2007 Farm Bill was indicative of how ARS is reaching out to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

Many socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers have become aware of ARS' research and are reaching out to seek assistance. The Burns Paiute Tribe, in conjunction with ARS, has increased youth interest in natural resource management. During the 4th National Small Farms Conference in Greensboro, North Carolina, ARS introduced a large number of target population producers to new technologies that can directly benefit their efforts to maintain profitable small farms. Additionally, ARS is extending its reach to the socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers by providing students from this community with internships.

The Native American college student internships program has opened up dialogue and collaborations between the research locations and the schools, especially United Tribes Technical College.

Moving Forward

ARS continues to conduct research, and share findings, crucial to the many needs of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. To that end, future research projects beneficial to the socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers include the following:

- ARS is partnering with the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station to promote organic vegetable farming systems for small vegetable producers in Alabama using rollers/crimpers techniques.

- ARS research scientists at the Dale Bumpers Small Farms Research Center in Booneville, Arkansas, and the South Central Agricultural Research Laboratory in Lane, Oklahoma, will continue cooperative forage, agroforestry, and methodology research with partners (i.e., farmers of the Landowners Association of Texas; Tennessee State University, an 1890 Institution in Nashville, Tennessee; and African American farmers in Millington, Tennessee) through two on-farm cooperative agreements (entitled "Methodologies for Small Production Systems" and "On-farm Studies to Enhance Sustainability of Livestock Production in Northeast Texas") and a specific cooperative agreement ("Agroforestry Research and Outreach Targeting Tennessee Farmers").

- ARS research scientists of the Grazinglands Research Laboratory of El Reno, Oklahoma, who are duty-stationed at Langston University, Langston, Oklahoma, will produce a technical fact sheet on overseeding cool-season forages for use by 2501 Program Outreach Agents and resource-limited livestock producers.

- Cooperative research and outreach activities to promote organic production methods for goats and sheep in the southeast United States will be conducted through a partnership between ARS research scientists of the Dale Bumpers Small Farms Research Center, Booneville, Arkansas, Fort Valley State University, and several land-grant institutions.

- ARS, in Burns, Oregon, will continue to provide support to the Burns Paiute Tribe and is in the process of publishing data collected on tribal property.

- An ARS scientist attended the USDA/Black Farmers Association meeting in Nicodemus, Kansas, in late July 2006. It is anticipated that further collaborations between ARS and the Black Farmers Association will result in continued discussions/collaborations.

- The Native American college student internship program will be expanded in the summer of 2006 to include 10 students—six from United Tribes Technical College and four from the University of Arizona. Students will intern at the Grand Forks, Fargo, and Mandan, North Dakota, locations and in Brookings, South Dakota.

- ARS plans to meet with 60 small minority farmers and conduct an informational workshop on small farm land management and alternative crops in Alabama.

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is an action-oriented agency that works with other Federal agencies, Congress, States, tribes, foreign governments, agricultural interests, and the general public to carry out its mission to protect the health and value of American agriculture and natural resources.

Several APHIS programs and offices are involved in outreach. The first is Animal Care (AC). This program provides leadership in establishing acceptable standards of humane animal care and treatment and to monitor and achieve compliance with the Animal Welfare Act through inspections, education, and cooperative efforts.

A second program, Biotechnology Regulatory Services (BRS), regulates the field-testing, movement, and importation of genetically engineered (GE) organisms that are known to be or could be plant pests. BRS issues various types of permits for each of these activities. The BRS compliance program inspects, audits, and oversees activities under the permit process. BRS also evaluates petitions for deregulation to ensure that products being considered for removal from regulation do not pose a threat to U.S. agricultural or environmental health.

Third, the International Services (IS) Program provides internationally based animal and plant health expertise that enhances USDA's capacity to safeguard American agricultural health and promote agricultural trade.

The Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA) Office works to achieve understanding and support for APHIS programs and policies by establishing and maintaining mutual lines of communication with people who are interested in or need to know about these programs and policies.

The Marketing and Regulatory Programs-Business Services (MRPBS) Office plans and provides resource management and administrative services to support APHIS objectives in the areas of budget, finance, human resources, information technology, procurement, property management and related administrative services. Primary responsibilities include developing administrative management policies and procedures, implementing and operating administrative servicing systems, providing administrative support to agency units and programs, and evaluating agency administrative systems.

The Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) Program safeguards agriculture and natural resources from the risks associated with the entry, establishment, and spread of animal and plant pests and noxious weeds. Fulfillment of its safeguarding role ensures an abundant, high-quality, and varied food supply, strengthens the marketability of U.S. agriculture in domestic and international commerce, and contributes to the preservation of the global environment.

Veterinary Services (VS) Office protects and improves the health, quality, and marketability of our Nation's animal products and veterinary biologics by preventing, controlling and/or eliminating animal diseases, and by monitoring and promoting animal health productivity.

The Wildlife Services (WS) Office provides Federal leadership in managing problems caused by wildlife. WS recognizes that wildlife is an important public resource greatly valued by the American people. By its very nature, however, wildlife is a highly dynamic and mobile resource that can damage agricultural and industrial resources, pose risk to human health and safety, and affect other natural resources. The WS program carries out the Federal responsibility for helping to solve problems that occur when human activity and wildlife are in conflict.

Outreach Mission

Outreach is a critical part of the APHIS civil rights program. Departmental regulations require that APHIS reach out in proactive ways to persons who have not traditionally participated in its programs and activities. APHIS conducts outreach activities at the local, State, regional, and national levels to ensure that information on its programs and activities is widely disseminated.

Outreach Initiatives

APHIS's outreach initiatives are succinct and address the needs of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. They are:

- Improve the delivery of programs and services to existing customers;
- Develop and increase program delivery outreach efforts to underserved customers;
- Ensure that internal policies, practices, and systems support fair and equitable delivery of programs and services; and
- Ensure managers, supervisors, and employees are held accountable for program delivery outreach.

Accomplishments

Highlights of APHIS' FY 2005 outreach activities follow closely to its outreach initiatives. Each initiative has led to a set of accomplishments that the agency is proud to report. Accordingly, the outreach initiatives are used below as headings and followed by the respective accomplishments.

Improve the delivery of programs and services to existing customers: APHIS employees responded to the recent hurricanes in a variety of ways, among them: (a) supported the livestock recovery efforts that were ongoing in Louisiana and Mississippi; (b) provided extensive contacts and technical assistance to existing customers through presentations, detail of personnel, and media events in radio, television, and public

service announcements; and (c) interacted with the general public, local, State, Federal, and industry groups to provide information and materials on the overall mission and responsibilities for specific animal and plant health issues. APHIS employees also constantly worked to develop a viable and consistent approach for marketing and delivering APHIS programs and services to the global community by improving outreach efforts and activities within individual States, territories and, when requested, abroad. Further, APHIS developed a national emergency response plan through the formation of the National Animal Health Emergency Management System.

Develop and increase program delivery outreach efforts to underserved customers: APHIS continues to work directly with Native American tribes to address local issues via memoranda of understanding (MOUs) and cooperative agreements. A cooperative agreement was continued with the Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC), National Tribal Development Association (NTDA), and Montana/Wyoming Indian Stock Growers Association (MWISGA) to complete new MOUs with 123 tribes and to assist with development of Emergency Response Plans. APHIS also entered into cooperative agreements with several tribes and their partners for developing an animal ID system as part of a $16.4 million national program. In conjunction with a 6-hour credit course at American University in Washington, D.C., APHIS continues its association with the Washington Internships for Native American Students (WINS) program to provide work experience and mentoring with selected individuals from Native American tribes.

Ensure that internal policies, practices, and systems support fair and equitable delivery of programs and services: APHIS On-Line Outreach, a catalog of official APHIS press releases, fact sheets, brochures, industry reports, and other publications, is located on the APHIS Web Page at *www.aphis.usda.gov*. Agency policies and operating practices are reviewed annually to ensure that criteria and regulatory terminology/language are developed based on thorough analysis and are administered in a fair and equitable manner.

Ensure managers, supervisors, and other employees are accountable for program delivery outreach: The Administrator communicated the agency's civil rights expectations in his agency civil rights policy statement. The policy was issued to all APHIS employees via a biweekly pay statement. All APHIS supervisors and managers GS-13, GS-14, GS-15, and senior executives are required to implement the same civil rights performance measures assigned to the Administrator. APHIS developed a comprehensive data base system designed to document, monitor, and report the civil rights accomplishments of more than 300 managers and supervisors in grades GS-13 through senior executive levels.

Impact

The APHIS mission is an integral part of USDA's efforts to provide the Nation with safe and affordable food. Without protecting America's animal and plant resources from agricultural pests and diseases, threats to our food supply and to our Nation's economy

would be enormous. For example, if Mediterranean fruit fly and Asian long-horned beetle, two major agricultural pests, were left unchecked, production and marketing losses of several billions of dollars would occur annually in this country. And, if APHIS was not on the job as the first line of defense, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, animal diseases like foot-and-mouth disease and bovine spongiform encephalopathy (mad cow disease) could devastate our livestock industry and our food supply. All these plant and animal pests and disease threats could cost billions of dollars in lost domestic and international markets and have a huge impact on U.S. consumers, but APHIS has aggressively and successfully worked to prevent and respond to these situations in the socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers sector, as well as limited-resource farmers and ranchers.

Moving Forward

APHIS will continue its agency-wide efforts to reach all potential customers and beneficiaries of its programs and activities and fulfill its mission to protect the health and value of American agriculture and natural resources.

Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion

The mission of the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP) is to improve the health of Americans by developing and promoting dietary guidance that links scientific research to the nutrition needs of consumers. CNPP believes in producing "Real Results for Real People." Thus, to achieve its vision of improved nutrition and well-being of Americans, CNPP develops and promotes personalized nutrition-based consumer messages that help Americans improve their nutritional status and well-being. CNPP's Nutrition Promotion division works to advance and promote food and nutrition guidance for all Americans, and CNPP's Nutrition Policy and Analysis division works to use policy-focused analyses to advance nutrition and consumer economic knowledge.

Outreach Mission

CNPP continues its long history of helping Americans (2 years old and older) develop and maintain a nutritious diet and active lifestyle. CNPP is building upon its traditional outreach efforts with enhancements in two areas: (1) increasing outreach by expanding electronic access to nutrition educational materials and interactive tools and (2) developing a customer outreach and marketing program. CNPP's outreach mission is to meet the nutrition needs of Americans by promoting educational tools and materials that communicate the science of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the MyPyramid Food Guidance System.

Outreach Initiatives

CNPP participates in professional conferences across the United States. At these conferences, CNPP uses exhibit booths to distribute materials and answer questions. Additionally, CNPP staff present research and programming information via plenary, research, and educational sessions.

CNPP maintains two Web sites (www.cnpp.usda.gov and www.mypyramid.gov) where Americans can obtain information about dietary guidance, consumer and food economics, and food trends. CNPP's overall Web site (cnpp.usda.gov) provides information about MyPyramid educational tools, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, Healthy Eating Index, nutrient content of the U.S. food supply, USDA food plans and cost of food at home, expenditures on children by families, and other projects. CNPP's MyPyramid Web site encourages Americans to use a number of interactive tools to plan and track their diet and physical activity. Americans can use the following tools to do so: Inside MyPyramid, MyPyramid Plan, MyPyramid Tracker, MyPyramid for Kids, MyPyramid Blast-off Game, and Tips and Resources. Professionals can also use the "For Professionals" section of the Web site to enhance their educational interventions with clients/students.

Accomplishments

CNPP staff worked diligently during FY 2005 to disseminate program information and provide outreach services to all Americans. As a result of the many outstanding efforts, the agency's accomplishments are representative of staff commitment to effectively implementing outreach initiatives and related activities. Among the accomplishments are:

- Released the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the consumer bulletin *Finding Your Way to a Healthier You,* in collaboration with the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services.

- Released, on April 19, 2005, MyPyramid.gov and print materials.

- Added MyPyramid for Kids and MiPirámide (Spanish language) to MyPyramid.gov and distributed print materials (Anatomy of MyPyramid, MyPyramid mini-poster, and MyPyramid poster).

- Created a Customer Outreach and Marketing focus in the Nutrition Promotion division of CNPP.

- Obtained contractual services of two customer service specialists (one is bi-lingual) to provide effective and efficient customer support, ensuring that CNPP's customers continue to receive accurate and up-to-date information and materials about nutrition guidance and CNPP's programs, priorities, and projects.

- Initiated plans for a Nutrition Education and Promotion Program whereby CNPP and public/private partners could work cooperatively to reach targeted audiences with science-based nutrition information.

- Contracted with the Society for Nutrition Education to publish a special issue of the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* to inform professionals of the research underlying the development of the MyPyramid Food Guidance System.

- Obtained services to measure customer reaction to various aspects of www.mypyramid.gov: site features, satisfaction with the site, whether site users would return, whether they would recommend the site, and whether the site served as their primary source of nutrition information. Additionally, the on-line survey was designed to measure motivational factors and impact. For example, consumers were to be asked why they chose to come to the site and whether the information at the site prompted them to take any action regarding their health.

Impact

MyPyramid.gov has become a highly effective means for enlarging CNPP's outreach to more and more segments of the population. Within the first 6 hours of release, there were 15 million hits to MyPyramid.gov; by the end of 2005, MyPyramid.gov had over 1 billion hits. MyPyramid Tracker had over 1 million registered accounts.

Moving Forward

CNPP expects to continue making enhancements to www.cnpp.usda.gov and www.mypyramid.gov to better serve the American public. The success of MyPyramid.gov has created greater impetus to continue meeting the needs and expectations of the American public. As CNPP continues to enhance MyPyramid interactive tools, every effort will be made to ensure that MyPyramid.gov motivates users to return to the site, recommend it, and use it as a primary source of nutrition information. CNPP will use the results of the on-line survey to increase customer satisfaction with, and use of, MyPyramid.gov. CNPP will use the Nutrition Education and Promotion Program to increase the level of resources devoted to consistent, multi-channel strategies to promote the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the MyPyramid Food Guidance System.

Economic Research Service

The Economic Research Service (ERS) is the main source of economic information and research from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. ERS' mission is to inform and enhance public and private decision-making on economic and policy issues related to agriculture, food, natural resources, and rural development. To accomplish this mission, highly trained economists and social scientists develop and distribute a broad range of economic and other social science information and analysis.
Unlike its sister agencies whose primary mission is to provide program and service delivery outreach to the public, the primary role of the Economic Research Service is to conduct data collection and analyses on issues that affect the U.S. agriculture sector, including *small and limited-resource farmers and ranchers*. Thus, ERS' outreach is structured to conduct research on farm structure and farm household income and well-being and report results in Web-based and other publications, data products, and services.

Outreach Mission

ERS provides objective, relevant, and timely economic data and analysis on critical issues involving agriculture, food, natural resources, and rural affairs. ERS staff develops summary economic information on small farms for use by policy makers, program managers, and the general public.

Outreach Initiatives

The economic information and research, provided by ERS, represents its outreach efforts. To that end, the agency pursues an ongoing research program, with relevance to small farms, including:

- **Tracing the Emergence of Viable Businesses From Startup Small Farms –** The U. S. Census of Agriculture Longitudinal file identifies 800 farms, with a specialization in high-value commodities, which had sales below $10,000 in 1982 and exceeding $100,000 in 1997. Over 300 of those farms had 1997 sales in excess of $250,000. This project tracked the development of these farms over the 15-year period, with an emphasis on their locations, and on the operators' commodity and occupational choices over the period. The project explores the factors associated with the growth of successful small farm businesses.

- **Entry and Exit of Farms –** This project measures entry and exit in farming and identifies the effects of farm size, farm financial performance, farm business experience, and operator personal characteristics on the likelihood of exit. The analysis is used to better understand the sources of demographic change among farm households (such as the decline in the share of farmers who are Black, or changes in the age distribution of farm operators), and the net effects of commodity price shocks on decisions to leave farming.

- **The Family Farm Report: A Comprehensive Statistical Report on U.S. Farms, Including Small Farms –** This regularly published report updates key indicators of agricultural structure and farm performance using the ERS farm typology. It discusses topics that impact the economic well-being of small farm households such as off-farm income. The report also includes chapters on a series of rotating special topics including contracting and other forms of vertical coordination, the effect of urbanization on productive efficiency in farming, factors distinguishing top-performing farms, women in farming, and the linkages between off-farm income and changes in farm structure.

- **The Extent of Contracting in U.S. Agriculture –** Over the past 40 years, farmers have become less dependent on terminal markets and spot pricing to market their goods, and more reliant on production and marketing contracts. Agency research documented the importance of contracting in the production and sale of agricultural products; identified variations in the incidence of contract use among commodity types and farm sizes; estimated the growth of contract usage over time; and summarized farmers' use of contracts in other contexts, such as land rentals and input purchases; summarized the ways in which contracts can be designed to limit the price and yield risks faced by farmers, and details what we know about the actual risk reductions accomplished through contracts. Also, the research focuses on the assertion that contracts allow processors to exercise market power by reducing prices paid to farmers. The research identifies environments under which contracts are more likely to create market power, as well as particular contract features that may be troublesome.

- **Effects of Shifts in Farm Production on the Distribution of Government Payments –** Agricultural production is shifting to large farms. Government commodity payments, which follow production, are therefore also shifting to large farms. Because operators of large farms have higher incomes than other farm operators, payments are also shifting to high-income households.

Accomplishments

In 2005, ERS staff was involved in collaborative efforts with USDA-CSREES Small Farms Program and small farms professionals throughout the United States in planning the 4th National Small Farms Conference. This conference was held October 16-19 in Greensboro, NC. The staff interacted directly with community-based organization leaders, farmers, and research and extension professionals who work with small-scale and minority farmers. The staff identified issues that affect small farm viability. The staff also helped promote the small farm research efforts of ERS by presenting ERS data, data products, and other research output to this new audience. This effort has the potential to help ERS researchers anticipate emerging issues that may affect this small farm segment of the agriculture sector and could assist improvement in survey design and questions, data collection, and analyses.

ERS staff also provided data and analyses to other agencies to assist them in serving small farms. As another example, ERS staff provided current background information on small farms to update the departmental regulation that sets forth USDA small farm policy.

ERS also responds to public information requests about small farms. For example, in 2005 agency staff responded to outside requests for information underlying the April 2005 *Amber Waves Finding* article, "Small Farms Can Grow Into Large Enterprises." ERS responded to an inquiry regarding changes in the number of small farms. The ERS Web site showing changes in the number of small farms from 1982 to 1997 by constant dollar sales classes was instrumental in addressing this and comparable requests for information.

Public access to ERS' ARMS extranet delivery tool was made easier during FY 2005. ERS has invested resources in its annual farm survey to create an interactive data delivery product http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/ARMS/ that the public can use to get information, create charts and tables, and do some analyses. According to Web site information, "The annual Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS) is USDA's primary source of information on the financial condition, production practices, resource use, and the economic well-being of America's farm households. Sponsored jointly by ERS and the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), ARMS is the only national survey that provides observations of field-level farm practices, the economics of the farm business, and the characteristics of the American farm household—all collected in a representative sample. Information about farm production, business, and households includes data for 15 selected States, as well as for the Nation as a whole."

Impact

The economic information and research provided by ERS are critical to the future of socially disadvantaged farmers. The results of various studies can arm policy makers and socially disadvantaged farmers with a wealth of information and data to effect change in agricultural programs that directly affect the small farm community. At the same time, those who work with socially disadvantage farmers can employ ERS's research and information as benchmarks for farm financial performance.

The impact of ERS' research depends on its use by decision-makers. We provide information, sometimes confidential, to others whose actions affect an impact.

Moving Forward

As the Department's main source of economic information and research, ERS' mission to inform and enhance public and private decision-making on economic and policy issues related to agriculture, food, natural resources, and rural development will continue its emphasis on small farm issues. In the coming year, ERS' highly trained economists and social scientists plan to develop and distribute a broad range of economic and other social

science information and analysis that will be directly related to the socially disadvantaged and small farm communities. Examples of forth coming projects are:

1. **Structure in the Dairy Industry** – Future research will also examine changes in the structure in the dairy industry and its effect on small and minority farmers.

2. **Economic and Environmental Performance of Organic and Conventional Dairy Farms** – This project, currently underway, is examining differences in the economic and environmental performance of organic and conventional dairy farms in the United States. Organic dairy farms are smaller than their conventional counterparts in most States, and ERS over-sampled organic dairy farmers in its annual producer survey administered in 2006, partly to explore the implications of these structural differences.

Food and Nutrition Service

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is responsible for managing the domestic nutrition assistance programs. Its mission is to increase food security and reduce hunger in partnership with cooperating organizations by providing children and low-income people access to food, a healthful diet, and nutrition education in a manner that supports American agriculture and inspires public confidence. The programs administered by FNS – including the Food Stamp Program, Child Nutrition Programs, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and Commodity Assistance Programs – touch the lives of one in five Americans over the course of a year.

Outreach Mission

The Food and Nutrition Service seeks to continue a long history of helping families and individuals secure a nutritious diet and build on this success with targeted improvements in three areas: increasing program access, promoting better eating habits, and strengthening stewardship of the taxpayer investment. Outreach efforts are designed to encourage greater use of the nutrition assistance programs by those eligible to participate, especially in the Food Stamp and Summer Food Service Programs.

Outreach Initiatives

The Food Stamp Program is the foundation of the national nutrition safety net, serving over 25 million low-income people every month during fiscal year 2005. Yet millions more are eligible for benefits and do not receive them. In fiscal year 2004 – the last year for which data are available – the program served about 60 percent of those eligible while providing 71 percent of the benefits that could be issued. Similarly, although more than 30 million children eat a lunch provided by the National School Lunch Program, and nearly 10 million children eat a breakfast provided by the School Breakfast Program, fewer than 2 million children participated in the Summer Food Service Program when school was out in 2005.

FNS has addressed this issue through a variety of policy initiatives to improve program access and information campaigns to improve awareness. The goal is to ensure that program services are readily available and that low-income families and individuals have the information they need to make informed choices about participation.

Accomplishments

- Promoted the nutrition benefits of food stamps through a national media campaign to support our commitment to ensure that all eligible people can receive benefits with dignity and respect. The campaign placed radio spots in 35 markets, including 10 markets that aired in both Spanish and English.

- Awarded $5 million in grants to improve program access and streamline State operations and $1 million in grants for food stamp outreach by faith- and community-based organizations.

- Managed the Food Stamp Outreach Coalition to bring together national and local organizations and encourage them to strengthen food stamp outreach through new initiatives and the sharing of promising practices.

- Offered food stamp informational materials for download in 35 different languages. Brochures, flyers, posters, and other materials are available for order free in bulk quantities via a Web-based system. More than 2.5 million pieces of informational materials were distributed.

- Managed a national toll-free information number (1-800-221-5689) in both English and Spanish for people to learn more about the Food Stamp Program and how to apply for benefits. Distributed more than 48,700 information packets to callers who requested more information by mail, a 100-percent increase from the previous year.

- Developed "*Community Hunger Champions: Helping People Eat Right When Money's Tight*," an informational video demonstrating how eligibility workers and community partners can work together to enroll eligible people in the Food Stamp Program.

- Inaugurated a Hunger Champions award program to highlight outstanding local program offices for access efforts.

- Awarded $48 million to States that demonstrate high or improved food stamp administrative performance, including payment accuracy and customer service-related outcomes.

- Continued a nationwide initiative to promote children's access to nutritious meals and snacks when school is not in session through workshops and informational exhibits at State and national meetings and conferences. FNS also collaborated with national organizations, such as the National Recreation and Parks Association and the Food Research and Action Center, to reach larger audiences of potential new local sponsoring organizations. Finally, FNS identified and carried out media opportunities to communicate the program's availability through national publications, public service announcements, and Summer Food Service Week events.

- Awarded $4 million in multi-year grant funds to Mississippi, New York, Oregon, Texas, and West Virginia for innovative approaches in the Summer Food Service Program to overcome limited transportation resources in rural areas.

- Worked as supporter, enabler, catalyst, and collaborator with faith- and community-based organizations to promote access to the Nation's nutrition assistance programs.

FNS developed and implemented nearly 1,400 activities and events to reach out to faith- and community-based organizations in fiscal year 2005, and developed a range of actions to promote a "Federal friendly" environment, and to make funding more accessible, in order to improve program access and participation.

Impact

The major nutrition assistance programs served more participants in fiscal year 2005 than in the previous year, including 1.8 million more food stamp participants, nearly 600,000 more school lunch recipients, and nearly 120,000 more WIC participants. While program participation is the result of many factors, these trends are consistent with the goal of improving program access.

Increasing food stamp participation among those eligible for benefits has several positive consequences. The Food Stamp Program offers the opportunity for improved nutrition and progress toward self-sufficiency for participants. The benefits issued stimulate additional economic activity in communities and States. And the program helps relieve pressure on emergency food providers, enabling them to reach others who do not qualify for food stamp benefits. Increased participation in the Summer Food Service Program can fill a critical gap in child nutrition during those months when school is out of session.

Moving Forward

FNS expects to continue and expand on these activities in fiscal year 2006, including:

- the third year of a campaign to raise awareness of the nutrition benefits of food stamps. Radio advertisements from the campaign will be heard during March, April, July, and August;

- outreach tool kits – all-in-one information packets that can help initiate or expand a food stamp outreach program–for State and local food stamp agencies and for community partners;

- continued efforts to recognize the hard work and accomplishments of local food stamp offices as *Hunger Champions* award program recognizes outstanding local food stamp offices for their efforts in assisting eligible clients access the Food Stamp Program.

Food Safety and Inspection Service

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is the public health agency in the U.S. Department of Agriculture responsible for ensuring that the Nation's commercial supply of meat, poultry, and egg products is safe, wholesome, and correctly labeled and packaged, as required by the Federal Meat Inspection Act, the Poultry Products Inspection Act, and the Egg Products Inspection Act.

Outreach Mission

The FSIS outreach mission is two-pronged, to: (a) conduct outreach activities that ensure equal access for all customers to programs, activities, services and employment opportunities; and (b) ensure nondiscrimination in the delivery of programs, services provided, and employment opportunities for the American public.

In 2005, the FSIS Office of Management, Civil Rights Division, designed a plan that embraces the following outreach tenets:

- Educate and increase public awareness
- Promote diversity in employment
- Ensure program compliance
- Increase information and service delivery
- Develop relationships with other internal and external entities

Outreach Initiatives

The primary goals of FSIS outreach initiatives are to increase and improve service delivery to underserved populations. The agency has developed State partnerships and educational outreach activities for underserved and under-represented communities by entering into various State animal production partnerships. Furthermore, these partnerships have been established for the purpose of encouraging the adoption of industry quality assurance programs by producers. Additionally, FSIS is collaborating with 1890 historically black land-grant universities, 1994 tribal colleges and universities, and the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities to educate difficult-to-reach producers regarding food safety concerns affecting markets for their products.

The agency posts *Federal Register* notices, regulations, and supporting directives, notices, and compliance guidelines on the FSIS Web site and the www.erulemaking.gov Web site. Yet another public source of information regarding news and issuances is *The FSIS Constituent Update*, a weekly publication sent to all interested constituents, including trade associations. The publication is available via the Internet at: www.fsis.usda.gov/news_&_events/2006_Constituent_Update/index.asp

A series of workshops have been conducted throughout the country to share information with owners and operators of small and very small plants, States, and other partners in food safety and public health. Web cast technology has been used at various workshop locations in an effort to reach a wider audience. Questions and answers from public meetings have been transcribed and posted on the FSIS Web site.

Other examples of service delivery to the public include the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline toll-free number 1-888-674-6854, or 1-800-256-7072 (TTY) for the hearing impaired. Food safety specialists answer questions about meat, poultry, and egg products, in English or Spanish, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., ET, Monday through Friday. Recorded food safety messages are available 24 hours a day. *"Ask Karen,"* a Web-based automated response system can provide food safety information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The USDA Food Safety Mobile, a grassroots education outreach effort begun in March 2003, continued traveling across the Nation in 2005 with food safety education reaching millions of people where they live. All food safety education materials, in English and Spanish, are posted on the FSIS Web site.

Accomplishments

FSIS has partnered with State veterinarians to undertake on-farm food safety education in their respective States. These Federal-State partnerships recognize the close nexus between animal health and public health.

The agency has also developed a Web site specifically designed for small and very small plant outreach. This allows the FSIS to post up-to-date information regarding policies, guidance, directories, available resources, and workshops.

Through its collaborations with the 1890, 1994, and Hispanic colleges and universities, FSIS multiplied its reach to producers. Additionally, the agency has established a wide range of cooperative agreements awarding grants for such projects as the *"Meat Goat Industry Handbook and Web-based Training Program"* to Langston University (a historically black institution), *"Beef Quality Assurance-Feedlot"* to Kansas State University, and "*Pork Hazard Reduction*" to Ohio State University. The goat project at Langston University is designed to create curriculum and training modules and a Web-based training program for certification in goat production technology. The beef project at Kansas State University facilitates the development of bilingual training modules for diverse first-level feedlot workers and provides opportunities for food safety training via regional seminars in major feedlot States. Ohio State University's pork project initiated a multi-year program for literature review to determine best hazard-reduction production practices, measure producer attitudes toward adoption of food-safe practices, develop appropriate educational materials for pork producers, and deliver producer education through the National Pork Board.

In 2005, FSIS established additional recruitment-based partnerships with three 1890 universities: University of Arkansas – Pine Bluff; Virginia State University, and the University of Maryland – Eastern Shore. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was also signed with a Hispanic-serving institution, New Mexico State University. The MOUs underscore the agency's commitment to recruit and hire students from universities with high concentrations of under-represented and underserved communities, through student employment programs, and by using other hiring flexibilities.

Impact

Based on some of its outreach initiatives such as cooperative agreements, the agency is demonstrating its commitment to educate and meet the needs of owners and operators of small plants, States, and other partners in food safety and public health. The impact of such initiatives has the potential to identify best hazard-reduction production practices; create curriculum, training modules and Web-based training program for certification in goat production technology; determine costs of food-safety practices; support State-mandated slaughter certification; and develop bilingual training modules for diverse first-level feedlot workers.

In terms of outreach in education and employment, the agency is intent on implementing strategies to effect the long-term recruitment and outreach partnerships. The benefits anticipated from entering into MOUs with colleges and universities, and by participating in outreach activities sponsored by such entities as Fort Valley State University and the Society of American Indians Government Employees (SAIGE), are to increasingly diversify the FSIS workforce, and further expand outreach efforts in underserved communities.

Moving Forward

FSIS is bound by the requirements of the Federal Meat Inspection Act, as amended, and the Poultry Products Inspection Act. Accordingly, FSIS will continue its role to protect the consuming public from adulterated and misbranded meat, meat food products, poultry, and poultry products, through its meat and poultry inspection programs. FSIS is dedicated to continuing its efforts to reduce foodborne illness by providing consumers with the food safety information they need to handle meat, poultry, and egg products safely. FSIS will continue to target at-risk, underserved, and Spanish- speaking populations through its educational outreach efforts.

Educational programs and outreach designed to foster safe food handling will continue to be based on science, social marketing principles, and delivered through partnerships, in order to affect a positive impact on consumer behaviors. Future campaigns will continue to focus on public education and rely on traditional and non-traditional avenues for dissemination across the Nation.

Foreign Agricultural Service

The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) works to improve foreign market access for U.S. products, build new markets, improve the competitive position of U.S. agriculture in the global marketplace, and provide food aid and technical assistance to foreign countries.

FAS has the primary responsibility for USDA's international activities—market development, trade agreements and negotiations, and the collection and analysis of statistics and market information. It also administers USDA's export credit guarantee and food aid programs and helps increase income and food availability in developing nations by mobilizing expertise for agriculturally led economic growth.

FAS also enhances U.S. agriculture's competitiveness by providing linkages to global resources and international organizations.

Outreach Mission

FAS' outreach mission is to create partnerships, facilitate communication and education, and enhance outreach coordination among all customers and constituents to create knowledge of, and support for, USDA export programs, trade policies, and food security initiatives. Special emphasis is placed on increasing the participation of underserved populations in FAS programs and services.

Outreach Initiatives

FAS administers Export Credit Guarantee Programs for commercial financing of U.S. agricultural exports. The agency recognized the need to disseminate information about the credit guarantee programs and how they support the export of U.S. agricultural products to countries where credit sales are necessary to maintain or increase U.S. sales, but financing is limited without such guarantees. The strategy is to educate as many potential users of the programs as possible by addressing groups of exporters and bankers, as well as by educating contacts at the regional and State levels.

Through the FAS International Cooperation and Development (ICD) Program, FAS reached out to Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) to increase their knowledge of FAS programs and to help them participate equitably in the full range of international research and technical assistance programs offered by the agency.

The FAS Office of Legislative Affairs provided operational support for the Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee for Trade (APAC) and six Agricultural Technical Advisory Committees for Trade (ATACs). The committees were re-chartered and new members reappointed in fiscal year 2005. FAS coordinated efforts with USDA's Office of Outreach, the FAS Civil Rights Staff, and the FAS Office of Outreach to ensure that the

call for nominations for the advisory committees reached a very large and diverse audience. Particular emphasis was placed on reaching traditionally under-represented groups.

The FAS Commodity and Marketing Program worked closely with U.S. agricultural commodity organizations to provide assistance on market access issues, education and updates on market development programs and services, and assistance in expanding United States agricultural export opportunities.

FAS provided funding to four State and regional trade groups to conduct Export Readiness Training (ERT), which targets small to medium-sized, new-to-export agricultural growers and processors. The ERT program prepares participants for their first export experience (i.e., a trade show, a trade mission, an international sale) and helps them develop an international business plan.

FAS created a more effective outreach network of State, legislative, and government partners and expanded the State legislator outreach program to increase trade mission participation by key State legislators.

The FAS Small Farms Coordinator collaborated with FAS program areas and other USDA Small Farm Coordinators to ensure equal access to USDA export programs/services for current and potential customers. The Coordinator worked with other agencies to participate in USDA outreach activities, developed Department policies supporting small farms/minority groups, and established partnerships with farmer/agri-business service providers.

FAS participated in a variety of activities to reach underserved populations to ensure that information on FAS programs was reaching all populations.

Accomplishments

In FY 2005, outreach activities of the Export Credit Guarantee Program consisted of formal presentations and information dissemination via print media at 37 conferences, trade shows, and meetings, both domestic and abroad.

Outreach to the HBCUs, HSIs, and TCUs (collectively known as minority-serving institutions [MSI]) included activities such as:

- Collaborating with other USDA agencies and MSI staff to develop presentations and resources for seminars and workshops that promoted MSI participation in FAS and other international programs.

- Participating in a conference of the 1890 Land Grant Universities' Association of Extension Administrators and Research Directors in June 2005 and the American Indian Science and Engineering Society meetings to brief faculty, research

scientists, extension specialists and administrators from HBCUs on FAS program opportunities and requirements.

- Facilitating the participation of TCUs in nine, mutually beneficial projects with Russia, China, Japan, India, Mexico, and New Zealand under the FAS Scientific Cooperation Research Program was highlighted in the Summer 2005 issue of the *Tribal College Journal of American Indian Higher Education.*

- Having a senior FAS official serve on the Agricultural and Environmental Science Advisory Board at Tuskegee University.

FAS' Office of Legislative Affairs solicited nominations for FAS advisory committees from hundreds of traditionally under-represented groups utilizing the contact lists for organizations and universities maintained by USDA's Office of Outreach, the FAS Civil Rights Staff, and the FAS Office of Outreach.

The FAS Commodity and Marketing Program staff participated in approximately 80 meetings with U.S. commodity groups during which they presented information on FAS programs and resources and offered advice on market development and export strategies.

FAS outreach to State legislators included participation in the 3rd Annual Legislative Agriculture Committee Chairs Summit held in Memphis, Tennessee. The event brought together over 70 State agricultural legislative leaders to learn more about pressing issues facing agriculture including food safety, trade, and rural development. FAS was one of 40 financial sponsors for this event. FAS Legislative Affairs staff also participated in the 2005 Annual Conference of the National Conference of State Legislators (NCSL), held August 16 - 19 in Seattle, Washington. Approximately 150 State legislators, legislative staff, and industry representatives attended the event.

FAS outreach to small farmers in FY 2005 included participation in conferences and meetings such as:

- Federation of Southern Cooperatives Annual Meeting
- Rural Coalition Annual Meeting
- Women Involved in Farm Economics (WIFE) National Convention
- 63rd Professional Agricultural Workers Conference
- USDA Small Farmer Workshop
- The First National Hispanic Farmers and Ranchers Conference
- 4th National Small Farms Conference

FAS outreach to underserved populations included participation in over 20 events, which were used to communicate information about FAS programs and services. For example:

- Business Women's Network "Women and Diversity Facts 2005"
- Intertribal Agricultural Council Meetings
- Federal Asian Pacific American 20th Annual Congressional Seminar

- League of United Latin American Citizens Annual Meeting
- National Congress of American Indians Annual Meeting
- Teaching Educators Agriculture and Conservation Holistically Annual Meeting
- The 18th Annual Hispanic Association of College and Universities (HACU) Conference
- 2nd National Tribal Districts and Tribal Conservation Advisory Councils Conference
- Urban Agricultural High School Conference

Impact

FAS outreach efforts to HBCUs, HSIs, and TCUs have been very productive. Examples of impact include:

- Hispanic-Serving Institutions participated in three, international research projects in FY 2005, and one new project was selected for future initiation. New Mexico State University also received $1,115,000 in its cost-reimbursable ICD and USAID agreement for international development collaboration.

- FAS/ICD efforts have helped increase HBCU submission of successful, competitive proposals for international cooperation. In FY 2005, HBCUs participated in eight research projects. In addition, three new projects were selected for future initiation.

- Tribal colleges participated in four activities in FY 2005. ICD engaged the White Earth Tribal and Community College, for example, in an international development project entitled, *School Gardens: Keeping Children in School and Learning Life Skills in the Republic of the Congo.* The project was funded by the President's African Education Initiative under a USDA agreement with the U.S. Agency for International Development.

As a result of the outreach by FAS' Office of Legislative Affairs, the goal of appointing a significant number of new members to FAS advisory committee seats was achieved. Approximately one-third of the over 200 advisors are new members. New members represent all areas of the country and have technical knowledge of trade issues impacting the entire spectrum of U.S. agricultural products. Membership reflects the diversity of the applicants that chose to apply for seats on the advisory committees.

Moving Forward

In FY 2006, FAS planned to continue to create partnerships, facilitate communication and education, and enhance outreach coordination to all partners and potential customers. Greater emphasis will continue to be placed on increasing the participation of the underserved population in FAS programs and services.

Forest Service

The Forest Service (FS) sustains the health, diversity, and productivity of the 192 million acres of national forests and grasslands. These areas provide multiple benefits to the country, from traditional commodities such as timber, range, forage, and minerals, to opportunities for recreation. Through the land and resource management planning process, this agency addresses the sustainability of ecosystems by restoring and maintaining species diversity and ecological productivity to provide for recreation, range, water, timber, fish, and wildlife. Through technical and financial help, the FS also assists States and private landowners in promoting rural economic development, improving the natural environment of cities and communities, and practicing good stewardship on the Nation's 472 million acres of private forestland. The agency uses the best available scientific data to achieve its goals. Domestic and international activities are directed at values, products, and services that maintain ecosystem health.

Outreach Mission

Effective outreach ensures that all customers have equal access to, participate in, and receive benefits of FS programs and services and that the programs and services are delivered equitably.

Outreach Initiatives

The FS implements hundreds of programs nationally, through its regions, research stations and areas, to reach underserved populations. These programs are invaluable at providing technical assistance to private landowners and customers; limited-resource and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers; tribal governments; and underserved communities. The FS also establishes partnership grants and agreements with protected groups and institutions serving protected groups.

The FS developed a Strategic Public Outreach Plan in April 2000, available at: www.fs.fed.us/cr/national_programs/correspondence/spop/fsspop.pdf. The Plan includes service-wide strategies and actions designed to improve outreach, partnership, and service to underserved populations.

In the Washington Office, Cooperative Forestry (CF) staff developed a 5-year National CF Outreach Strategy in 2004. The CF National Outreach Strategy tiers to the FS Strategic Public Outreach Plan, and is used as a tool to reach limited-resource landowners, farmers, ranchers, communities, and tribes, and build partnerships and new relations. In implementing the Outreach Strategy, the FS works together with many partners, among them State forestry organizations, other Federal agencies, community-based organizations, tribal governments, State agencies, territories, and local entities.

CF's mission is "connecting people to resources, ideas, and one another so they can care for forests and sustain their communities." As part of State and Private Forestry, CF programs bring forest management assistance and expertise to a diverse group of landowners (small woodlot, farmers, ranchers, tribes, State, Federal) through cost-effective, non-regulatory partnerships.

Accomplishments

Forests are critical to America's environmental, social, and economic vitality. Many of the goods and services that Americans depend upon have their beginnings in forests. Consequently, the FY 2005 accomplishments convey the important roles forests play in America.

Accomplishments for FY 2005 include the following:

- In implementing the CF National Outreach Strategy, the FS provided financial support for conferences, materials and resources, and educated and informed low-income and underserved populations from protected groups about Cooperative Forestry and FS programs.

- Provided $600,000 for training workshops to southern minority landowners with assistance from black colleges and universities, students and staff.

- Redesigned the Community Forestry Web site with the new Outreach Calendar, USDA Toolkit for Equal Participation, and Title VI Compliance. See Web site: www.fs.fed.us/cooperativeforestry/outreach. This effort provides equal participation of programs and services to the public.

- Allocated $20,000 to the Tuskegee Institute Partnership, which resulted in increased awareness of FS programs.

- Administered the Tribal Watershed Forestry Assistance Program under the Healthy Forest Act. The CF staff, FS Tribal Relations staff, and representatives from the Intertribal Timber Council drafted guidelines for the program.

- Awarded a $100,000 grant to continue a successful partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts. The result of this effort increased outreach and the number of proposals to underserved and protected groups and tribes. Outreach was conducted through the traveling exhibit, "Inspirations from the Forest," to many FS Interpretive Centers, community centers, and schools.

Impact

The FS continues to strengthen its leadership role by maintaining and expanding service, access, information, and program delivery to underserved communities across the country. Leadership during FY 2005 has facilitated:

- Capacity building with underserved educational institutions by providing financial, educational, and technical assistance to customers through workshops and meetings;

- Partnerships and Memoranda of Understanding with Tribal Governments to work collaboratively on national and local programs and projects; and

- Outreach programs, such as the Urban Connections, Central California Consortium, Fire Diversity Initiative Haskell Indian Nation, and other programs and initiatives that help increase program participation.

Moving Forward

The mission of the FS is "to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations."

During FY 2005, the FS celebrated a centennial of service in conservation, stewardship, restoration, and outreach. The centennial celebration provided an opportunity to reflect on the past and plan for the future. The FS will continue "caring for the land and serving the people."

FS outreach efforts and activities are conducted to ensure that all customers, including individuals, groups, populations, and communities, throughout the United States and its territories are made aware of, understand, and have a working knowledge of FS programs and services.

The FS continues to strengthen relations and build partnerships; increase economic opportunities; and, conduct outreach to reach limited-resource landowners, farmers, ranchers, tribes, and communities.

Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

The Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) is an agency that consists of two distinct program areas: (1) the Federal Grain Inspection Service and (2) the Packers and Stockyards Program.

The agency's Federal Grain Inspection Service (FGIS) facilitates the marketing of U.S. grain and related agricultural products by establishing standards for quality assessments, regulating handling practices, and managing a network of Federal, State, and private laboratories that provide impartial, user fee-funded official inspection and weighing services.

The agency's Packers and Stockyards Program (P&SP) promotes fair business practices and a competitive environment to market livestock, meat, and poultry. P&SP's work protects consumers and members of the livestock, meat, and poultry industry.

Mission

GIPSA's mission facilitates the marketing of livestock, poultry, meat, cereals, oilseeds, and related agricultural products, and promotes fair and competitive trading practices for the overall benefit of consumers and American agriculture.

Initiatives

GIPSA maintains an active dialogue with industry participants, including small and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, to sustain current knowledge of issues and concerns. The agency makes available to the public a variety of educational and outreach materials on its Web site.

Moreover, GIPSA maintains a toll-free hotline (1-800-998-3447) for farmers and ranchers to voice their concerns and record their complaints about unfair trade practices, grain quality/quantity disputes, deceptive practices, financial issues, etc., that may warrant investigations. GIPSA's hotline is available to small and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, and callers can remain anonymous.

GIPSA strives toward improving its outreach efforts to producers of all sizes with emphasis on small and medium-sized farmers and ranchers through the hosting of town hall meetings and forums, and by participating in industry-sponsored conferences and events. These activities provide GIPSA personnel the opportunity to seek input from all facets of the marketplace and to learn more about the challenges facing today's grain, livestock, and poultry producers.

GIPSA works closely with its Grain Inspection Advisory Committee. This committee is comprised of 15 members and 15 alternate members, appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture, who represent all segments of the grain industry (e.g., producers, processors, merchandisers, handlers, exporters, consumers, and scientists). The advisory committee gives advice to GIPSA concerning the implementation of programs and services it offers in accordance with the United States Grain Standards Act and the Agricultural Marketing Act. Recommendations by the committee help GIPSA to better meet the needs of its customers, which can serve to benefit socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

Accomplishments

GIPSA increased and enhanced service delivery to underserved groups through targeted outreach efforts with Native American farmers in Oklahoma and surrounding States. GIPSA received no complaints related to program delivery from under-represented groups in FY 2005. Furthermore, GIPSA received recognition from the Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs for outstanding service to Native Americans.

During January 2005, GIPSA employees interviewed 24 students at the 2005 College Student Career Program. These students came from various colleges located in Minnesota, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, and Alabama. GIPSA employees used this opportunity to educate students concerning the kind of work the agency performs, how it affects the public and the economy, and career opportunities that exist in the agency. It is GIPSA's intent to further its outreach efforts through interactions with student from under-represented groups who can share information about the agency programs and services with their respective communities.

GIPSA provided support and funding for field/regional offices to participate in outreach activities at trade shows, fairs, and community events. GIPSA personnel used these occasions to explain program activities, employment opportunities, and distribute informational pamphlets about the agency to participants.

GIPSA personnel conducted impact analyses of agency policies and programs to assess the effect such activities may have on women and minorities. During 2005, no adverse impacts or issues existed in administering agency programs.

GIPSA cooperated with and assisted other USDA agency offices in implementing and conducting outreach programs to make the public aware of the services available within GIPSA. The agency's outreach programs targeted and reached groups with limited economic resources, especially minority groups.

A GIPSA employee served as the Agency's Outreach Coordinator, which is charged with reaching out to small disadvantaged minority farmers and ranchers. In addition, GIPSA encouraged its FGIS managers to meet with minority customers to explain the inspection and weighing programs.

Impact

FGIS activities promoted fair and transparent markets for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. Through the maintenance of official standards for grain, FGIS activities served to increase crop value for such entities by aligning crop quality with specific consumer demands. Furthermore, FGIS activities may be viewed as reducing trade disputes resulting from conflicting descriptions of crop quality/quantity between buyers and sellers of grain.

P&SP activities fostered fair competition for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, provided payment protection, and guarded against deceptive and fraudulent trade practices that affect movement and price of meat animals and their products.

Moving Forward

GIPSA plans to improve its outreach activities to reduce trade disputes resulting from conflicting descriptions of crop quality and value. To accomplish this, GIPSA will work with producers, trade associations, technology providers, processors, exporters, and importers. GIPSA will capitalize on available technology, resources, and information to bring new and innovative services/tests to the marketplace to benefit socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers as well as the entire grain industry. GIPSA will promote open markets for U.S. agricultural products by supporting USDA outreach efforts, and by ensuring the integrity of the official inspection system.

Also, GIPSA will promote fair and competitive marketing of livestock, meat, and poultry. To accomplish this, GIPSA will continue its aggressive investigation of potentially willful, fraudulent, and/or repeated violators of the Packers and Stockyards Act. In addition, GIPSA will place major emphasis on encouraging market participants to engage in lawful behavior, and on collaborating with industry participants and others to deter violations of the Packers and Stockyards Act. GIPSA will promote fair and competitive marketing by developing and implementing more tailored education and outreach strategies and by more proactively enforcing regulatory requirements to identify and correct technical violations before any market participants are harmed.

National Agricultural Statistics Service

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) administers the Department's program for collecting and publishing national, State, and county agricultural statistics. Data provided by NASS are essential to both the public and private sectors of the agriculture industry and are used in making effective policy, production, and marketing decisions in a wide range of agricultural areas.

NASS is also responsible for conducting the Census of Agriculture program that provides comprehensive, county-level information about the Nation's agriculture every 5 years. NASS' responsibility to conduct the census of agriculture is authorized under Public Law 105-113, the Census of Agriculture Act of 1997 (Title 7 U.S.C. 2204g). Internally, the statistics are used across the Department and are provided to other agencies in their analyses of programs, policy development, etc., and are also used in the development and monitoring of annual performance measures. Externally, NASS provides the basic agricultural and rural data needs of the people of the United States, those working in agriculture and those living in rural communities, by objectively providing important, usable, and accurate statistical information and services required to make informed decisions.

NASS' current annual statistics program and the Census of Agriculture program are complemented by its statistical research and service program. This component works to improve statistical survey and census methods and to test advanced technology for timely and cost-efficient production of high-quality agricultural statistics. The performance of NASS research is reflected in the same performance goals and indicators used to evaluate the outcomes of the statistical program for annual agricultural statistics and the Census of Agriculture.

Outreach Mission

NASS' mission is to provide timely, accurate, and useful statistics in service to U. S. agriculture. This includes the outreach mission which is to target all farmers and ranchers in its statistical program. Efforts are made to ensure that operations of all sizes, types, and demographics are included in official statistics. NASS' statistics keep those involved with agriculture well-informed, provide the basic information necessary to keep agricultural markets stable and efficient, and help maintain a level playing field for all users of agricultural and rural statistics. NASS also performs important reimbursable survey work for other Federal, State, and private organizations as well as provides technical assistance for agricultural statistics programs in both developed and developing countries.

NASS' unique field office structure enables the agency to have "grass roots" connections and contacts with local data users and data providers in the States. Through these contacts, coupled with the industry meetings, conferences, and participation in

agricultural exhibitions, the agency keeps up-to-date with the ever-changing and increasing need for statistical information regarding agriculture and related issues.

U.S. Minority Operated Farms – The Census Mail List (CML) for the 2002 Census of Agriculture contained 68 percent of the minority operated farms, including female, Hispanic, and all non-White racial groups, based on an independent survey of over 13,000 land segments selected from the NASS area frame. Enumerators visited all segments, identified all farms operating land in each segment, and obtained basic data about those farms. The names and addresses of farms were matched to the CML. Farms that did not match were used to estimate the number of farms not represented on the CML for various types, sizes, and demographic groups. These data were used to calculate coverage adjustments so that the Census published data represent all farms. NASS established a long-term strategic goal of 73 percent coverage of minority-operated farms for the 2007 Census of Agriculture.

During 2005, NASS field offices developed list building plans, including plans targeted at improving list frame coverage of minority farms. Headquarters units have proactively engaged with Federal agencies, other USDA agencies and Office of Outreach, land-grant institutions and minority faith- and community-based organizations to promote Census list building and response. Some minority lists were obtained and processed during 2005. The next CML minority farm coverage measurement will not be available until FY 2008, based on the 2007 Census of Agriculture data.

Outreach Initiatives

Small Farms and Minority Farmer Issues – NASS has worked closely with the USDA Office of Small Farms Coordination to look for alternative ways to communicate and build relationships with minority, faith- and community-based organizations. The primary objective is to help these groups understand the importance of small and minority producers' participation in NASS' Census of Agriculture and demographic surveys.

To help achieve this objective, the Director of the USDA Office of Small Farms Coordination, NASS managers, and NASS field office staff engaged in collaborative activities with other USDA and Federal agencies, the Office of Outreach, land-grant institutions, and faith- and community-based organizations to promote the NASS Census of Agriculture and demographic surveys. The Census of Agriculture and NASS' annual surveys were promoted at various small farms and outreach conferences and workshops. Emphasis was directed toward increasing the list coverage and survey response rate of small farms and ranches and minority operators of farms and ranches. This effort has been highly successful and has significantly increased small, minority, and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers' awareness of the Census of Agriculture and the importance of being counted.

Accomplishments

During FY 2005, NASS continued to move aggressively to address the undercounting of small and minority farmers and ranchers in the Census of Agriculture. Because the NASS list frame serves as the foundation for the Census of Agriculture and the annual survey program, small and minority farm and ranch operations are targeted for list coverage improvement. Some of the major activities are:

(a) The Director of the USDA Office of Small Farms Coordination established a subcommittee of small farms' coordinators and collaborated with NASS and Hispanic community-based organizations to identify alternative methods that will be effective in reaching out to Hispanic/Latino farm and ranch operators. As a result of this effort, NASS has received more than 15,000 names;

(b) The Office of Small Farms Coordination and NASS worked together to develop brochures to address the difficulties of adding minority farm and ranch operators to its sampling frame. These brochures are designed to target minority and small farmers and ranchers across America to increase their coverage on the Census of Agriculture and other NASS surveys. These brochures, some in both English and Spanish, are being distributed to faith- and community-based organizations across America;

(c) NASS Research and Development Division and the Office of Small Farms Coordination and the Office of Outreach worked together on a pilot project to identify Black/African American farm and ranch operators through faith-based organizations. The pilot project in the State of Louisiana has been highly successful and is well received by the small farms and faith-based communities;

(d) NASS is consulting closely with the Office of Small Farms Coordination to identify outreach opportunities at minority conferences and to address the difficulties of adding Black or African American, Asian, and Hmong farm operators to the list frame in those States with a significant number of farm operators;

(e) NASS established an American Indian Liaison position in Albuquerque, New Mexico, to improve communication with American Indian tribes; and

(f) NASS tested area frame data collection procedures on reservations in New Mexico to improve coverage measurements of American Indian-operated farms for the 2007 Census.

Table 1 shows percentage increases in the Census Mail List (CML) for all minority groups due to list-building activities during FY 2005.

Table 1: Counts of Minority Records Eligible for the 2007 Census Mail List (CML)

Minority Category	January 2005	November 2005	Increase	Percentage Increase
American Indian or Alaska Native	10,993	11,579	586	5.3
Asian	5,148	5,407	259	5.0
Black or African American	14,770	16,539	1,769	12.0
Native Hawaiian	1,481	1,527	46	3.1
More than one race	7,394	8,279	885	12.0
Spanish, Hispanic, Latino	21,914	23,653	1,739	7.9
Female	163,755	169,354	5,599	3.4

Impact

The activities mentioned above will strengthen NASS' efforts to better represent all small, minority and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in the 2007 Census of Agriculture, thus providing them an equal opportunity to participate in USDA's programs and services.

Moving Forward

In FY 2006, NASS will continue to be aggressive in improving the list coverage of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers for inclusion in the 2007 Census of Agriculture. This will be done by expanding the current outreach activities and developing a data collection plan to ensure maximum reporting by these sectors of American agriculture.

Appendix A: Legal Background

Section 10708 of the 2002 Farm Bill, P.L. 107-171, added Section 2501A to the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, 7 U.S.C. § 2279-1, [is designed] to ensure transparency and accountability for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in USDA programs established for farmers and ranchers. Socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers are defined as farmers and ranchers who belong to a group "whose members have been subjected to racial and ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities." See 7 U.S.C. § 2279(e)(1) and (2). USDA has by regulation further defined the term "socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher" to include groups subjected to gender prejudice as well. Thus, socially disadvantaged groups include women, African Americans, Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. See 7 C.F.R. § 1943.104.

Specifically, Section 2501A requires the Secretary to compile and publicly disclose the participation rates for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in the covered programs. This provision is designed to further ensure nondiscrimination in USDA programs. As Congress did not specifically define or identify the programs covered by the Section 2501A requirement, USDA has determined that the requirement covers only those programs established specifically for the benefit of farmers and ranchers. The requirement does not apply to those programs in which farmers and ranchers may participate along with other members of the general public. However, there are other reporting requirements, discussed below, which do apply to the broader category of USDA programs and help to ensure nondiscrimination in all of USDA's programs. Section 2501A amends and improves upon the reporting requirements established in Section 2501(c) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, 7 U.S.C. § 2279(c) (hereafter "Section 2501(c)"). Section 2501(c) contains a separate reporting requirement based on the participation of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in all "agriculture programs." Section 2501(e)(3) of the Act defines "agriculture programs" as those programs established by five specific statutes, as well as programs established by any other statute "the Secretary deems appropriate." See 7 U.S.C. § 2279(e)(3). Thus, the reporting requirements of Section 2501(c) apply to a significantly broader array of USDA programs than those covered by Section 2501A.

A copy of section 10708 is provided here:

> SEC. 10708. TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS AND RANCHERS; PUBLIC DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS FOR COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTIONS.
>
> (a) TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS AND RANCHERS.—The Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 is amended by inserting after section 2501 (7 U.S.C. 2279) the following: ''SEC. 2501A. TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS AND RANCHERS.

‘‘(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to ensure compilation and public disclosure of data to assess and hold the Department of Agriculture accountable for the nondiscriminatory participation of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in programs of the Department.
‘‘(b) DEFINITION OF SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMER OR RANCHER.—In this section, the term ‘socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher’ has the meaning given the term in section 355(e) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2003(e)).
‘‘(c) COMPILATION OF PROGRAM PARTICIPATION DATA.—
‘‘(1) ANNUAL REQUIREMENT.—For each county and State in the United States, the Secretary shall compute annually the participation rate of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers as a percentage of the total participation of all farmers and ranchers for each program of the Department of Agriculture established for farmers or ranchers.
‘‘(2) REPORTING PARTICIPATION.—In reporting the rates of participation under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall report the participation rate of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers according to race, ethnicity, and gender.’’
(b) PUBLIC DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS FOR COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTIONS.—Section 8(b)(5) of the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act (16 U.S.C. 590h(b)(5)) is amended by striking subparagraph (B) and inserting the following:
‘‘(B) ESTABLISHMENT AND ELECTIONS FOR COUNTY, AREA, OR LOCAL COMMITTEES.—
‘‘(i) ESTABLISHMENT.—
‘‘(I) IN GENERAL.—In each county or area in which activities are carried out under this section, the Secretary shall establish a county or area committee.
‘‘(II) LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE AREAS.—The Secretary may designate local administrative areas within a county or a larger area under the jurisdiction of a committee established under subclause (I).
‘‘(ii) COMPOSITION OF COUNTY, AREA, OR LOCAL COMMITTEES.—A committee established under clause (i) shall consist of not fewer than 3 nor more than 5 members that—
‘‘(I) are fairly representative of the agricultural producers within the area covered by the county, area, or local committee; and
‘‘(II) are elected by the agricultural producers that participate or cooperate in programs administered within the area under the jurisdiction of the county, area, or local committee.
‘‘(iii) ELECTIONS.—
‘‘(I) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subclauses (II) through (V), the Secretary shall establish procedures for nominations and elections to county, area, or local committees.
‘‘(II) NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT.—Each solicitation of nominations for, and notice of elections of, a county, area, or local committee shall include the nondiscrimination statement used by the Secretary.
‘‘(III) NOMINATIONS.—

‘‘(aa) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible for nomination and election to the applicable county, area, or local committee, as determined by the Secretary, an agricultural producer shall be located within the area under the jurisdiction of a county, area, or local committee, and participate or cooperate in programs administered within that area.
‘‘(bb) OUTREACH.—In addition to such nominating procedures as the Secretary may prescribe, the Secretary shall solicit and accept nominations from organizations representing the interests of socially disadvantaged groups (as defined in section 355(e)(1) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2003(e)(1)).
‘‘(IV) OPENING OF BALLOTS.—
‘‘(aa) PUBLIC NOTICE.—At least 10 days before the date on which ballots are to be opened and counted, a county, area, or local committee shall announce the date, time, and place at which election ballots will be opened and counted.
‘‘(bb) OPENING OF BALLOTS.—Election ballots shall not be opened until the date and time announced under item (aa).
‘‘(cc) OBSERVATION.—Any person may observe the opening and counting of the election ballots.
‘‘(V) REPORT OF ELECTION.—Not later than 20 days after the date on which an election is held, a county, area, or local committee shall file an election report with the Secretary and the State office of the Farm Service Agency that includes—
‘‘(aa) the number of eligible voters in the area covered by the county, area, or local committee;
‘‘(bb) the number of ballots cast in the election by eligible voters (including the percentage)
‘‘(cc) the number of ballots disqualified in the election;
‘‘(dd) the percentage that the number of ballots disqualified is of the number of ballots received;
‘‘(ee) the number of nominees for each seat up for election;
‘‘(ff) the race, ethnicity, and gender of each nominee, as provided through the voluntary self-identification of each nominee; and
‘‘(gg) the final election results (including the number of ballots received by each nominee).
‘‘(VI) NATIONAL REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date on which the first election of a county, area, or local committee that occurs after the date of enactment of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 is held, the Secretary shall complete a report that consolidates all the election data reported to the Secretary under subclause (V).
‘‘(VII) ELECTION REFORM.—
‘‘(aa) ANALYSIS.—If determined necessary by the Secretary after analyzing the data contained in the report under subclause (VI), the Secretary shall promulgate and publish in the *Federal Register* proposed uniform guidelines for conducting elections for members and alternate members of county, area, and local committees not later than 1 year after the date of completion of the report.

‘‘(bb) INCLUSION.—The procedures promulgated by the Secretary under item (aa) shall ensure fair representation of socially disadvantaged groups described in subclause (III)(bb) in an area covered by the county, area, or local committee, in cases in which those groups are underrepresented on the county, area, or local committee for that area.
‘‘(cc) METHODS OF INCLUSION.—Notwithstanding clause (ii), the Secretary may ensure inclusion of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers through provisions allowing for appointment of 1 additional voting member to a county, area, or local committee or through other methods.
‘‘(iv) TERM OF OFFICE.—The term of office for a member of a county, area, or local committee shall not exceed 3 years.
‘‘(v) PUBLIC AVAILABILITY AND REPORT TO CONGRESS.—
‘‘(I) PUBLIC DISCLOSURE.—The Secretary shall maintain and make readily available to the public, via website and otherwise in electronic and paper form, all data required to be collected and computed under section 2501A(c) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990 and clause (iii)(V) collected annually since the most recent Census of Agriculture.
‘‘(II) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—After each Census of Agriculture, the Secretary shall report to Congress the rate of loss or gain in participation by each socially disadvantaged group, by race, ethnicity, and gender, since the previous Census.’’

In addition to the programmatic statutory reporting requirements, USDA is required to report on the rate of participation of its customers by race, national origin, gender, and disability under its long-standing civil rights responsibilities. These responsibilities apply to virtually every USDA agency and program. For purposes of the civil rights requirements, the more than 300 programs for which USDA is responsible are divided into two categories: 1) federally assisted programs and activities funded by USDA but operated by other entities including State and local governments, universities and colleges, and private enterprises; and 2) federally conducted programs and activities funded and operated by USDA.

Federally Assisted Programs and Activities

The federally assisted programs and activities are those programs where assistance (generally financial) is provided to a third party which in turn delivers a benefit to the ultimate recipient. The federally assisted programs and activities are governed by the following statutes: (1) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq.; (2) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, 20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq. (applies only to federally assisted education and training programs and activities); (3) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, 29 U.S.C. § 794 et seq.; and (4) Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended 42 U.S.C. § 6101 et seq. Together, these acts prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and age in any program receiving Federal financial assistance [2]. These statutes are designed to ensure that Federal dollars are not spent by third parties in a discriminatory manner and that the intended beneficiaries of the program dollars do not face discrimination in the access to or benefits of these programs or activities. One method for ensuring compliance with these statutes is the proper collection and reporting of demographic data on applicants for and participants in these programs.

Although the assisted program statutes differ in the kinds of discrimination prohibited, the courts and the Federal Government apply similar compliance and enforcement procedures to all four statutes, including data collection and reporting requirements. The Supreme Court has held repeatedly that Congress intended to establish a consistent prohibition against discrimination on the basis of race, national origin, color, sex, disability, and age in federally assisted programs. See, e.g., *National Collegiate Athletic Association v. Smith*, 525 U.S. 459, 470, n.3 (1999); *U.S. Department of Transportation v. Paralyzed Veterans*, 477 U.S. 597, 600, n.4 (1986); *Cannon v. University of Chicago*, 441 U.S. 677, 694 (1979).

Congress furthered the principle of a consistent enforcement structure by amending the four statutes uniformly in two subsequent statutes. See Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1986, 100 Stat. 1845 (abrogating States' Eleventh Amendment immunity under Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, and the Age Discrimination Act); Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, Pub. L. No. 100-259, 102 Stat. 28 (clarifying the definition of "programs or activities" under Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, and the Age Discrimination Act).

[2] *The Food Stamp Act of 1964 includes its own nondiscrimination provisions that prevent discrimination in the Food Stamp program on the bases of race, sex, religious creed, national origin, or political beliefs.*

Executive Order 12250, Leadership and Coordination of Nondiscrimination Laws

The President, under Executive Order 12250, issued November 2, 1980, has vested in the Attorney General leadership in implementing the various laws prohibiting discriminatory practices in programs receiving Federal financial assistance. See Executive Order No. 12250, § 1-101, reprinted in 42 U.S.C. § 2000d-1. This Executive Order covers the following nondiscrimination laws: Title VI; Title IX; and Section 504. Although Executive Order 12250 does not explicitly include the Age Discrimination Act, in practice the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) incorporates age discrimination in its administrative structure to coordinate all of the prohibitions against discrimination in federally assisted programs.

Specifically, DOJ's regulation coordinating the implementation and enforcement of Executive Order 12250 requires Federal agencies to "provide for the collection of data and information from applicants for and recipients of Federal assistance sufficient to permit effective enforcement of Title VI." See 28 C.F.R. § 42.406(a). DOJ's coordination regulation also allows Federal agencies to collect additional data that is readily available and can be compiled with reasonable effort. See 28 C.F.R. § 42.406(c). USDA's own nondiscrimination regulations require compliance with and enforcement of the statutes listed above. See 7 C.F.R. Part 15.

Federally Conducted Programs

Federally conducted programs are those programs where a benefit is delivered to an individual directly by a Federal agency. There are two primary statutory provisions that apply certain nondiscrimination provisions to federally conducted programs and activities: 1) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, 29 U.S.C. § 794 (nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in all federally conducted programs and activities); 2) Equal Credit Opportunity Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1691 (nondiscrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex or marital status, or age (provided the applicant has the capacity to contract) in all credit transactions).

In addition to the above statutory requirements, USDA voluntarily established its own nondiscrimination regulations shortly after the passage of Title VI, in order to ensure nondiscrimination in its federally conducted programs. USDA's policy, adopting Title VI's principles of nondiscrimination for programs and activities conducted by USDA, was first established in 1964 (See 29 Fed. Reg. 16966) (creating 7 C.F.R. Part 15, Subpart b, referring to nondiscrimination in direct USDA programs and activities, now found at 7 C.F.R. § 15d).

The foundation and need for a data collection policy to support the nondiscrimination provisions is supported by USDA’s long-standing efforts to treat its customers equitably and assess its progress in serving all customers, regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, or disability.

Executive Order 13160, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex, Color, National Origin, Disability, Religion, Age, Sexual Orientation, and Status as a Parent in Federally Conducted Education and Training Programs

USDA's voluntary efforts to ensure nondiscrimination in its conducted programs and activities have been further supported by Executive Order 13160, issued on June 23, 2000, and applying additional nondiscrimination requirements on all federally conducted education and training programs and activities throughout the Government. This Executive Order was issued to ensure that the Federal Government holds itself "to at least the same principles of nondiscrimination in educational opportunities as it applies to the education programs and activities of State and local governments, and to private institutions receiving Federal financial assistance." See Executive Order No. 13160, § 1-101, reprinted in 42 U.S.C. § 2000d. Through this executive order, discrimination on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, and status as a parent is prohibited in federally conducted education and training programs and activities.

History of Collecting and Reporting Data

The first USDA policy for collecting and reporting race, ethnicity, sex, and disability data was established through a 1969 Secretary's Memorandum and was subsequently expanded in Secretary's Memorandum No. 1662, on July 27, 1970. In September 1993, the provisions of the Secretary's 1969 Memorandum were updated and expanded by Departmental Regulation 4300-4, Civil Rights Impact Analysis (CRIA). This internal regulation requires all USDA agencies to collect program participant and employment data by race, sex, national origin, disability, and age.

The CRIA is a tool for agencies and USDA to assess the impact on all protected group members as a result of proposed regulatory and budgetary issuances as well as proposed reorganizations and advisory committee actions. The CRIA analysis involves an assessment of the data on program participants. The civil rights policy of the USDA requires each agency to analyze the civil rights impact(s) of policies, actions, or decisions that will affect federally conducted and federally assisted programs and activities and the USDA workforce. In order to assess the civil rights impact, data on programs, activities, and employment must be analyzed in a consistent manner with respect to the race, ethnicity, sex, and disability of customers, applicants and participants.
Currently, no uniform method of reporting and tabulating race and ethnicity data exists in USDA. However, as mentioned previously, under the guidance of the ASCR's office, USDA is making an effort to establish a uniform demographic collection and reporting process.

All of USDA's collection and reporting procedures will be established in accordance with the requirements of data collection on race and ethnicity prescribed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

OMB first set forth requirements on the collection of race and ethnicity data for all Federal programs and activities in 1977 (OMB Directive 15). The original OMB data collection requirements were changed, beginning January 1, 2003, to allow persons to self-identify on a multi-racial basis and through new racial and ethnic categories. See 62 Fed. Reg. 58782 (Oct. 30, 1997).

Appendix B: Agency Programs

List of FY 2005 Programs

Programs			Data Included				
Program Name	**Mission Area**	**Agency**	**Race**	**Age**	**National Origin**	**Disability**	**Other**
Beginning Farmer and Rancher Loans	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Boll Weevil Eradication Loan Program	FFAS	FSA	N	N	N	N	N
Conservation Reserve Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	N	Y	N	N
Crop Disaster Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	N	Y	N	N
Dairy Indemnity Payment Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	N	Y	N	N
2004 Dairy Disaster Assistance Payment Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	N	Y	N	N
Debt for Nature Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	N	Y	N	N
Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	N	Y	N	N
Direct Farm Ownership Loan Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Direct Operating Loan Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Direct Loan Servicing	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Direct Loan Disaster Debt Set-Aside Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Down Payment Farm Ownership Loans	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Drainage and Irrigation Loans Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Emergency Conservation Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	N	Y	N	N
Emergency Loan Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Emergency Loan for Seed Producers Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
2004 Ewe Lamb Replacement and Retention Payment Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Farm Storage Facility Loan Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	N	Y	N	N

Programs			Data Included				
Program Name	**Mission Area**	**Agency**	**Race**	**Age**	**National Origin**	**Disability**	**Other**
Florida Citrus Disaster Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	N	Y	N	N
Florida Nursery Disaster Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	N	Y	N	N
Florida Vegetable, Fruit and Tropical Fruit Disaster Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	N	Y	N	N
Grazing Association Loans Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	N	Y	N	N
Guaranteed Farm Operating Loan Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Guaranteed Farm Ownership Loan Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Guaranteed Operating Loan Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	N	Y	N	N
Guaranteed Loan Servicing	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Hard White Wheat Incentive Payment Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Horse Breeder Loan Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Indian Tribal Land Acquisition Loan Program	FFAS	FSA	N	N	N	N	N
2003 and 2004 Livestock Assistance Program	FFAS	FSA	N	N	N	N	N
Milk Income Loss Contract Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	N	Y	N	N
Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	N	Y	N	N
Non-recourse Marketing Assistance Loan	FFAS	FSA	Y	N	Y	N	N
Loan Deficiency Payment Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Peanut Quota Buyout Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	N	Y	N	N
Recreation Loan Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N

Programs			Data Included				
Program Name	**Mission Area**	**Agency**	**Race**	**Age**	**National Origin**	**Disability**	**Other**
Special Apple Loan Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Softwood Timber Loan Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Soil and Water Loan Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Tobacco Transition Payment Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Tree Assistance Program	FFAS	FSA	N	N	N	N	N
Tree Assistance Program for Michigan Tree, Vine and Bush Losses Due to Fire Blight	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Tree Assistance Program for New York Fruit Tree Losses Due to Ice Storm	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Tree Assistance Program—Orchardists, Forest Timber Program, Pecan Tree Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Youth Loan Program	FFAS	FSA	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Agricultural Management Assistance Program	FFAS	RMA	N	N	N	N	N
Community Outreach and Assistance Partnership Program	FFAS	RMA	N	N	N	N	N
Commodity Partnerships for Risk Management Education	FFAS	RMA	N	N	N	N	N
Crop Insurance and Information Programs for Farmers and Ranchers in Targeted States	FFAS	RMA	N	N	N	N	N
Federal Crop Insurance Program	FFAS	RMA	N	N	N	N	N
Research and Development Partnerships Agreements	FFAS	RMA	N	N	N	N	N
Environmental Quality Incentives Program	NRE	NRCS	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Agricultural Management Assistance	NRE	NRCS	Y	Y	Y	Y	N

Programs			Data Included				
Program Name	**Mission Area**	**Agency**	**Race**	**Age**	**National Origin**	**Disability**	**Other**
Conservation Security Program	NRE	NRCS	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Agricultural Innovation Center Demonstration Program	RD	RBS	N	N	N	N	N
Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas	RD	RBS	N	N	N	N	N
Renewable Energy System and Energy Efficiency Improvement Program	RD	RBS	Y	N	Y	N	N
Research on Effects of Value-added on the Agricultural Sector	RD	RBS	N	N	N	N	N
Rural Cooperative Development Grants	RD	RBS	N	N	N	N	N
Value-added Producer Grants Program	RD	RBS	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Agricultural Marketing Resource Center Grant	RD	RBS	N	N	N	N	N
Farm Labor Housing Loan and Grant Program	RD	RHS	Y	N	Y	Y	N
Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program	REE	CSREES	N	N	N	N	N
Agricultural Risk Management Education Program	REE	CSREES	N	N	N	N	N
The Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Competitive Grant Program	REE	CSREES	N	N	N	N	N
The Farm Safety Outreach Program	REE	CSREES	N	N	N	N	N
The Assistive Technology Program for Farmers with Disabilities: AgrAbility Program	REE	CSREES	N	N	N	N	N

Appendix C: Program Descriptions

Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service

CSREES sees agriculture as a knowledge-based, global enterprise, sustained by the innovation of scientists and educators. CSREES responds to the needs of individuals, families, groups, and organizations with educational programs in three broad areas: agriculture and natural resources, family and consumer sciences and community initiatives, and 4-H youth development. CSREES programs are administered through a national network of land-grant university State partners, which link research, science, and technology to people's needs at home and at work.

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (SARE)

SARE is authorized under USC Title 7, Chapter 88, Subchapter I, sections 5801 through 5814 (for the R and E funding line).

Most of the funding goes to research and education grants that may involve producers as cooperators or collaborators. These grants are competitively awarded to producers for producer-led research, the results of which are disseminated to other farmers and ranchers (i.e. not just for private gain of the producer who carries out the project).

The purpose of the program is to increase knowledge about, and help farmers and ranchers adopt, practices that are profitable, environmentally sound, and good for communities. SARE appropriations fund projects that conduct research and extension programs that aim to benefit primarily farmers and ranchers, and to some extent, the general public in other forms.

SARE appropriations for FY 03 were $13,660,625. Most of this funding goes from the CSREES in four equal parts to four regional "host institutions" which are currently at land-grant universities. The money is awarded primarily by competitive grants by those regional hosts, under the direction of regional Administrative Councils. The Administrative Councils are comprised of farmers, ranchers, university, government, and other people. The composition is defined in statute.

About 10 percent of the funding goes to producer grants. These grants are competitively awarded to producers for producer-led research, the results of which are disseminated to other farmers and ranchers (i.e., not just for private gain of the producer who carries out the project).

Agricultural Risk Management Education (RME) Program

RME is authorized under Section 133 of the Agricultural Protection Act of 2000. The CSREES RME program received $5,000,000 in FY 2003. The program educates and supports educational programs covering a complete array of agricultural risk management tools and strategies. The program provides funds for the development of risk management educational materials used principally by Extension Service agents and employees to help producers mitigate and adjust to risk. Projects are funded via a competitive process. The grant review is conducted through four regional RME Centers which are located at the University of Delaware, Texas A&M University, Washington State University, and the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. Any institution able to demonstrate the expertise to develop risk management education materials is eligible to compete.

The Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Competitive Grant Program (OASDFRCGP)

OASDFRCGP is authorized under Section 2501(a) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, Pub. L. 101-624, November 28, 1990, (7 U.S.C. 2279(a)). This legislation authorizes the Secretary to make grants to eligible institutions and organizations to provide outreach and technical assistance to encourage and assist socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to own and operate farms and ranches and to participate equitably in the full range of agricultural programs offered by the Department. Further, the legislation states that this assistance shall enhance coordination of the outreach, technical assistance, and education efforts authorized under various agriculture programs and include information on and assistance with commodity, conservation, credit, rural, and business development programs, application and bidding procedures, farm and risk management, marketing and other activities essential to participation in agricultural and other programs of the Department. Universities, non-profit and other specific organizations with experience in helping target populations access agriculture programs are eligible for funding.

The OASDFRCGP was delegated to CSREES in 2003 to administer competitively awarded grants for fiscal years 2002 and 2003. FY 2003 funding was $3.4 million. A Request for Applications was released that resulted in the submission of 85 proposals. Five proposals requested support for conference projects and 80 proposals were for requested funding for full training and technical assistance (T&TA) projects. The review panel awarded funds to 34 projects of which 31 were full T&TA projects and 3 were conference proposals.

The Farm Safety Outreach Program (FSO)

FSO is conducted under Smith Lever 3(d) [7 USC 343(d)]. Funds support farm safety coordinators to develop location appropriate curricula which county or area offices use to produce education programs or to educate their staff about farm-related safety hazards.

The program encourages funded institutions to investigate farm hazards, disseminate information concerning avoiding these hazards, and educate those directly involved in production agriculture including growers, operators, and helpers and those indirectly involved including families, visitors, and service providers with the intent to reduce agriculturally related deaths, injuries, and illnesses.

Funds are distributed on a formula basis in equal amounts to 1862 land grants with Farm Safety programs (currently all 1862's with the exceptions of UDC and Micronesia), with a small amount set aside for partnering and support activities.

The Assistive Technology Program for Farmers with Disabilities: AgrAbility Program

AgrAbility Program is conducted under Smith Lever 3(d). To address the specialized needs of AgrAbility's customers, the program builds service capacity on national, regional, State, and local levels through education and networking. In the absence of capacity, projects provide assistance to customers. Projects use marketing to direct the public to initiatives in these three priority areas.

AgrAbility projects provide on-farm assistance in the form of gratis consultations during which they assess abilities and needs, make recommendations for farm site or task modifications and assistive technology, then develop an action plan for attaining goals.

Funds are distributed through a competitive process to 1862 and 1890 land grants that collaborate with at least one non-profit disability service organization. Most funds support State projects while some funds support a national project that services the State projects and provides modified services to States without AgrAbility projects. Funds may not be used to cover farm-site modification or assistive technology costs.

Farm Service Agency

Beginning Farmer and Rancher Loans ─ FSA provides direct and guaranteed loans to beginning farmers and ranchers who are unable to obtain financing from commercial credit sources. Beginning Farmer and Rancher loans were developed for individuals who have not previously operated a farm or ranch, or who have operated a farm or ranch for less than 10 consecutive years. Each fiscal year, the Agency targets a portion of both its direct and guaranteed farm ownership (FO) and operating loan (OL) funds to beginning farmers and ranchers.

Boll Weevil Eradication Loan Program ─ The Boll Weevil Eradication Loan Program provides low-interest loans to nonprofit organizations that work collaboratively with State agencies, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, and the National Cotton Council to eradicate the boll weevil. The program objective is to assist producers and State government agencies in the eradication of boll weevils from cotton-producing areas.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) ─ The CRP is a voluntary program available to agricultural producers to help safeguard environmentally sensitive land. Producers enrolled in CRP plant long-term, resource-conserving covers to improve the quality of water, control soil erosion, and enhance wildlife habitat. In return, FSA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. Contract duration is between 10 and 15 years.

Crop Disaster Program (CDP) ─ The CDP provides crop-loss disaster assistance for producers who suffered 2003, 2004, or 2005 crop losses caused by damaging weather and related conditions. Also included is disaster assistance specifically for producers in Virginia, and producers of fruit and vegetable crops located in North Carolina that suffered losses due to adverse weather and related conditions that occurred in 2003.

Dairy Indemnity Payment Program ─ The Dairy Indemnity Payment Program pays dairy producers when a public regulatory agency directs them to remove their raw milk from the commercial market because it has been contaminated by pesticides, nuclear radiation or fallout, or toxic substances and chemical residues other than pesticides. Payments are made to manufacturers of dairy products only for products removed from the market because of pesticide contamination.

2004 Dairy Disaster Assistance Payment Program (DDPP) ─ This program assisted dairy producers by providing payments to those who suffered dairy production and milk spoilage losses due to hurricanes in 2004. Losses for payments were based on hurricane-related dairy production and dairy spoilage losses suffered during the months of August through October 2004 in counties declared disaster by the President in 2004 due to hurricane. Public Law 108-324 required that Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) provide $10 million for DDPP.

Debt for Nature Program (DFN) ─ DFN, also known as the Debt Cancellation Conservation Contract Program, is available to persons with Farm Service Agency (FSA) loans secured by real estate. These individuals may qualify for cancellation of a portion of their FSA indebtedness in exchange for a conservation contract with a term of 50, 30, or 10 years. A conservation contract is a voluntary legal agreement that restricts the type and amount of development that may take place on portions of a landowner's property. Contracts may be established on marginal cropland and other environmentally sensitive lands for conservation, recreation, and wildlife purposes. By participating in this program, borrowers reduce their FSA debt, thereby improving their overall financial stability. Borrowers can conserve wildlife habitat and improve the environmental and scenic value of their farms.

Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment (DCP) Program ─ DCP payments provide income support to producers of eligible commodities and are based on historically based acreage and yields and do not depend on the current production choices of the farmer. DCP was authorized by the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (2002 Farm Bill) for farms enrolled for the 2002 through 2007 crop years for barley, corn, grain sorghum (including dual-purpose varieties), oats, canola, crambe, flax, mustard, rapeseed, safflower, sesame and sunflower (including oil and non-oil varieties), peanuts, rice (excluding wild rice), soybeans; upland cotton, and wheat.

Direct Farm Ownership Loan Program (FO) ─ FSA direct farm ownership loans are loans to purchase farmland, construct or repair buildings and other fixtures, and promote soil and water conservation. To qualify for a direct loan, the applicant must be able to show sufficient repayment ability and pledge enough collateral to fully secure the loan, and meet other regulatory criteria.

Direct Operating Loan Program (OL) ─ FSA direct farm operating loans are loans to purchase items such as livestock, farm equipment, feed, seed, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance, and other operating expenses. They can also be used to pay for minor improvements to buildings, costs associated with land and water development, family subsistence, and refinancing debts under certain conditions.

Direct Loan Servicing ─ To help keep borrowers on the farm, FSA may be able to provide certain loan servicing benefits to borrowers whose accounts are distressed or delinquent due to circumstances beyond their control. These benefits include, re-amortization, restructuring, and/or deferral of loans, rescheduling at lower interest rates, acceptance of conservation contracts on environmentally sensitive land in exchange for reduction of debt, and writing down the debt of delinquent borrowers to its collateral's current market value. If none of these options results in a feasible farming operation, borrowers may be offered the opportunity to purchase their debt at its current market value. If this is not possible, other options include debt settlement, retention of the homestead and up to 10 acres of land, or sale of the farms to a beginning farmer and rancher.

Direct Loan Disaster Debt Set-Aside Program ─ FSA borrowers who are located in designated disaster areas or contiguous (adjoining) counties, and who are unable to make their scheduled payments on any debt, may request that FSA consider setting aside some payments to allow the operation to become stable. Borrowers who are current or less than 90 days past due on all FLP loans, may apply to move the scheduled annual installment for each eligible FLP loan to the end of the loan term. The intent of this program is to relieve some of the borrower's immediate financial stress caused by a natural disaster.

Downpayment Farm Ownership Loans ─ Downpayment Farm Ownership loans were developed to help beginning farmers and ranchers purchase a farm or ranch. These loans provide a way for retiring farmers to transfer their land to a future generation of farmers and ranchers.

Drainage and Irrigation Loans ─ The former Farmers Home Administration provided loans to eligible associations to conduct the operations and construct the necessary structures to drain unproductive wetlands and irrigate land in need of a water supply. This program has not been funded or operated in many years; however, FSA still services a small number of these loans that are still outstanding.

Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) ─ ECP provides funding for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by wind erosion, floods, hurricanes, or other natural disasters, and for carrying out emergency water conservation measures during periods of severe drought. The natural disaster must create new conservation problems, which, if not treated, would: impair or endanger the land; materially affect the productive capacity of the land; represent unusual damage which, except for wind erosion, is not the type likely to recur frequently in the same area; and be so costly to repair that Federal assistance is or will be required to return the land to productive agricultural use.

Emergency Loan Program ─ FSA provides emergency loans to help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding, other natural disasters, or quarantine. Emergency loans may be made to farmers and ranchers who own or operate land located in a county declared by the President as a disaster area or designated by the Secretary of Agriculture as a disaster area or quarantine area (for physical losses only, the FSA Administrator may authorize emergency loan assistance). Emergency loan funds may be used to: restore or replace essential property; pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year; pay essential family living expenses; reorganize the farming operation; and refinance certain debts.

Emergency Loans for Seed Producers Program ─ This program provided assistance to seed producers who suffered economic hardships as a result of the bankruptcy filing of AgriBiotech which affected over 1,200 farmer growers in 39 States. AgriBiotech could not pay seed growers for 1999 crops in the amount of almost $50 million. Congress directed USDA to make no-interest loans to producers of the 1999 crop of grass, forage, vegetable, or sorghum seed that have not received payments for the seed as a result of

bankruptcy proceedings involving AgriBiotech. The seed producer must have had a valid claim in the bankruptcy proceeding arising from a contract to grow seeds in the United States. The Agency took an assignment on the grower's bankruptcy claim.

2004 Ewe Lamb Replacement and Retention Payment Program ─ This program provided $18 million to help producers of sheep and promoted the replacement and retention of ewe lamb breeding stock by providing payments to producers who had reduced production and flock size due to low prices, and other market conditions. Sheep and lamb operations making application had to certify that they would maintain ewe lambs in the herd for at least one complete offspring lambing cycle and had to actually maintain the lambs for the period.

Farm Storage Facility Loan Program ─ CCC may make loans to producers to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities for rice, soybeans, dry peas, lentils, small chickpeas, peanuts, sunflower seeds, canola, rapeseed, safflower, flaxseed, mustard seed, and other oilseeds as determined and announced by CCC. Corn, grain sorghum, oats, wheat, and barley are also eligible, subject to program requirements.

Florida Citrus Disaster Program ─ CCC provided assistance in FY 2005 for producers who maintain groves of fruit "bearing" trees of citrus types that were damaged by hurricanes and tropical storms in Florida. Losses covered were production loss, tree loss and rehabilitation and cleanup costs.

Florida Nursery Disaster Program ─ CCC provided assistance in FY 2005 to commercial ornamental nursery and fernery producers for inventory losses, fernery operation, and clean-up costs for nursery operations as a result of hurricanes in 2004.

Florida Vegetable, Fruit and Tropical Fruit Disaster Program ─ CCC provided assistance in FY 2005 to producers of vegetables, fruits and selected tropical fruit in Florida for hurricanes that occurred in that area. Payments were made on a per-acre basis based on the type of planting application or method installed or completed on the date of the hurricanes. Plasticulture producers must have had a loss 50 percent or greater of plastic or plant population, and producers had to document that practices were followed to produce vegetables using any of the practices.

Grazing Association Loans (GA) ─ GA loans were made by the former Farmers Home Administration, mainly in the Western United States, to associations to assist them in preparing pastures, ranges, water supplies, and other grazing areas for grazing of cattle and sheep on lands shared by and among the association members. GA loans were to assist local organizations to develop grazing or pasture facilities providing the family size farmer and rancher a method of increasing production and income.

Guaranteed Farm Ownership Loan Program ─ FSA guaranteed loans provide lenders (banks, Farm Credit System institutions, credit unions) with a guarantee of up to 95 percent of the loss of principal and interest on a loan. Farmers and ranchers apply to an

agricultural lender, which then arranges for the guarantee. The FSA guarantee permits lenders to make agricultural credit available to farmers who do not meet the lender's normal underwriting criteria. A percentage of guaranteed loan funds is targeted to beginning farmers and ranchers and minority applicants. Guaranteed Farm Ownership Loans may be made to purchase farmland, construct or repair buildings and other fixtures, develop farmland to promote soil and water conservation, or to refinance debt.

Guaranteed Operating Loan Program ─ FSA guaranteed loans provide lenders (banks, Farm Credit System institutions, credit unions) with a guarantee of up to 95 percent of the loss of principal and interest on a loan. Farmers and ranchers apply to an agricultural lender, which then arranges for the guarantee. The FSA guarantee permits lenders to make agricultural credit available to farmers who do not meet the lender's normal underwriting criteria. A percentage of guaranteed loan funds is targeted to beginning farmers and ranchers and minority applicants. Guaranteed Operating loans may be made to purchase items needed such as livestock, farm equipment, feed, seed, fuel, farm chemicals, repairs, insurance, and other operating expenses. Operating Loans also can be used to pay for minor improvements to buildings, costs associated with land and water development, family living expenses, and to refinance debts under certain conditions.

Guaranteed Loan Servicing ─ When a guaranteed loan is in default, the guaranteed lender can provide the borrower with several restructuring options if a feasible plan of restructuring can be developed. To restructure guaranteed loans, lenders certify to the need for restructuring. If a borrower is current on a loan, but will be unable to make a payment, a restructuring proposal may be submitted prior to the payment coming due. Farm Ownership loans may be amortized over the remaining term of the note, or with an uneven payment schedule. The maturity date cannot exceed 40 years. Operating loans must be rescheduled over a period not to exceed 15 years from the date of the rescheduling. A line of credit may be rescheduled over a period not to exceed 7 years from the date of the rescheduling or 10 years from the date of the original note, whichever is less. Advances cannot be made against a line of credit loan that has had any portion of the loan rescheduled. Loans secured by real estate and/or equipment can be restructured using a balloon payment, equal installments, or unequal installments. If rescheduling or re-amortization does not create a feasible plan, payments may be deferred up to 5 years, if not extended beyond the due date of the note. If a deferral does not work, a lender may write down a delinquent guaranteed loan in an amount sufficient to permit the borrower to develop a feasible plan. If a default cannot be cured after considering servicing options and mediation, the lender will proceed with liquidation of the collateral.

Hard White Wheat Incentive Program (HWWIP) – HWWIP is intended to increase the supply of hard white wheat available for domestic milling and export for the 2003 through 2005 crop years. Producers must apply for HWWIP benefits annually for each of the 2003 through 2005 crop years. Both hard white winter wheat and hard white spring wheat are eligible for payment, as long as the end use of the wheat is not for animal feed.

Horse Breeder Loan Program ─ This program was required by the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2002 which directed FSA to implement a temporary low-interest loan program to assist horse breeders suffering economic loss as a result of mare reproductive loss syndrome (MRLS). These loans mitigated income loss and reduction in credit availability faced by horse breeders. Assistance is limited to only those horse breeders who have suffered losses as a result of MRLS, cannot obtain sufficient credit elsewhere, and meet all other requirements established in the authorizing *Federal Register* notice.

Indian Tribal Land Acquisition Program (ITLAP) – ITLAP loans enable Indian tribes to purchase privately held lands that lie within their reservations. Loan funds may be used to pay expenses incidental to the purchase of the land, but not for land development.

2003 and 2004 Livestock Assistance Program (LAP) ─ The Military Construction Appropriations and Emergency Hurricane Supplemental Appropriations Act, October 13, 2004, required CCC to make payments to livestock producers for either 2003 or 2004 grazing losses in a county designated a disaster for losses due to drought in 2003 or 2004. Payments were not allowed for both years. To be eligible for 2003 LAP benefits, a livestock producer in an eligible county must have suffered a loss of grazing production in an eligible county equivalent to at least a 40-percent loss of normal carrying capacity for a minimum of 3 consecutive months during the 2003 or 2004 production year.

Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) Program ─ The MILC Program compensates dairy producers when domestic milk prices fall below a specified level. MILC payments are made monthly when milk price falls below the established price per hundredweight.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) ─ NAP provides financial assistance to eligible producers affected by drought, flood, hurricane, or other natural disasters. NAP covers noninsurable crop losses and planting prevented by disasters. Landowners, tenants, or sharecroppers who share in the risk of producing an eligible crop are eligible. Eligible crops include commercial crops and other agricultural commodities produced for food, including livestock feed or fiber for which the catastrophic level of crop insurance is unavailable. Also eligible for NAP coverage are controlled-environment crops (mushroom and floriculture), specialty crops (honey and maple sap), and value loss crops (aquaculture, Christmas trees, ginseng, ornamental nursery, and turfgrass sod).

Nonrecourse Marketing Assistance Loan (MAL) ─ MALs provide producers interim financing at harvest time to meet cashflow needs without having to sell their commodities when market prices are typically at harvest-time lows. MALs allow producers to store production at harvest and facilitate more orderly marketing of commodities throughout the year. MALs for covered commodities are nonrecourse because the commodity is pledged as loan collateral and producers have the option of delivering the pledged collateral to the Commodity Credit Corporation as full payment for the loan at maturity.

Loan Deficiency Payment (LDP) Programs ─ A producer who is eligible to obtain an MAL, but who agrees to forgo the loan, may obtain an LDP. An LDP is the amount by which the applicable loan rate where the commodity is stored exceeds the alternative loan repayment rate for the respective commodity.

Peanut Quota Buyout Program ─ The 2002 Farm Bill repealed the marketing quota program for peanuts and provided for CCC to pay eligible peanut quota holders to ease the transition from the marketing quota program to the new peanut marketing assistance loan program. Payments are made to each eligible peanut quota holder based on the amount of the peanut quota that was available to such holder for the 2001 crop year. An eligible peanut quota holder owned a farm as of May 13, 2002, that had a permanent peanut quota. Quota holders may receive payment under this program in five equal installments in each of the 2002 through 2006 fiscal years, or as a single lump sum payment in any of these years.

Recreation Loan Program (RL) ─ A Recreation Loan is a loan that was made to eligible applicants to assist in the conversion of all or a portion of the farm they owned or operated to outdoor income-producing recreation enterprises to supplement or supplant farm income. RLs are no longer funded; however, such outstanding loans are serviced by the Agency.

Special Apple Loan Program ─ This program provided loans to apple producers who suffered hardships due to low prices in the 1998-1999 growing season when apple prices fell to their lowest levels in nearly 10 years. Applicants must have produced apples for market in either 1999 or 2000, with a minimum of 10 acres in production in either of those years.

Softwood Timber Loans ─ The Softwood Timber Loan Program allows borrowers to convert all or a portion of their debt to a Softwood Timber loan. This conversion allows a borrower who is financially distressed or delinquent on an Agency direct loan to defer loan payments and generate income from planting and harvesting softwood timber to make future loan payments. Since 1983, the Agency has processed only 35 Softwood Timber loans.

Soil and Water Loan Program ─ Soil and Water loans were made to encourage and facilitate the improvement, protection, and proper use of farmland by providing financing for soil conservation, water development, conservation, and use; forestation; drainage of farmland; the establishment and improvement of permanent pasture; pollution abatement and control; and other related measures consistent with all Federal, State, and local environmental standards. SW loans are no longer funded; however, such outstanding loans are serviced by the Agency.

Tobacco Transition Payment Program (TTPP) ─ Title VI of the American Jobs Creation Act of 2004 ended the FSA and CCC tobacco marketing quota and price support loan programs and authorized the TTPP. TTPP will provide payments over a 10-year period to quota holders and producers of quota tobacco to help them make the transition from the federally regulated program. Payments are made to approved persons who owned farms on October 22, 2004, for which tobacco quota was assigned for the 2004 marketing year, and producers of quota tobacco. Transition payments are based on the Basic Quota Levels (BQLs) determined for each farm, and then for quota holders' ownership shares in the farm and producers' shares in the risk of producing quota tobacco on the farm during the years 2002, 2003, and 2004.

Tree Assistance Program (TAP) ─ TAP was authorized but not funded by section 10201 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Pub. L. 107-171) (7 U.S.C. 8201) to provide assistance to eligible orchardists to replant trees, bushes, and vines that were grown for the production of an annual crop and were lost due to a natural disaster. Congress provides funding for TAP from time to time to address specific tree-, bush-, or vine-related disasters.

Tree Assistance Program for Michigan Tree, Vine, and Bush Losses Due to Fire Blight ─ This was a special program operated by CCC in FY 2005 to provided assistance to producers that had suffered losses in Michigan from fire blight, a destructive bacterial disease of trees. The Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2003 required CCC to use $9,700,000 of funds to provide assistance to eligible orchardists for tree losses incurred since January 1, 2000, due to fire blight in the State of Michigan.

Tree Assistance Program for New York Fruit Tree Losses Due to Ice Storm ─ CCC provided $5,000,000 under the Tree Assistance Program (TAP) to compensate tree-fruit growers in a federally declared disaster area in the State of New York who suffered tree losses in 2003 as the result of an April 4-6, 2003, ice storm. Claims were limited to the lesser of the established practice rates or 75 percent of the actual costs for eligible replantings after adjusting for normal mortality. In addition, the reimbursement for those plantings could not exceed the reasonable cost of those replantings as determined by FSA.

Tree Assistance Program – Orchardists, Forest Timber Program, Pecan Tree Program ─ CCC provided disaster assistance for orchardists and forest timber owners who suffered losses due to natural disasters between December 1, 2003, and December 31, 2004, and pecan producers who were in a Presidential-declared disaster county and suffered hurricane-related tree losses during the 2004 hurricane season. Public Law 108-324, October 13, 2004, required CCC to provide assistance under TAP to orchardists, allocated $15 million to forest timber owners, and $8.5 million for pecan producers. Assistance was provided under the regulations governing TAP, claims were a maximum of established practice rates or 75 percent of actual costs for eligible replantings, and reimbursement did not exceed the cost of replantings.

Youth Loans ─ FSA makes loans to individual rural youths, between the ages of 10 and 20 years, to establish and operate income-producing projects of modest size in connection with their participation in 4-H clubs, the Future Farmers of America, and similar organizations. Each project must be part of an organized and supervised program of work. The project must be planned and operated with the help of the organization adviser, must produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and must provide the youth with practical business and educational experience.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

NRCS provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment. The natural resources conservation programs of NRCS help people reduce soil erosion, enhance water supplies, improve water quality, increase wildlife habitat, and reduce damages caused by floods and other natural disasters. Public benefits include enhanced natural resources that help sustain agricultural productivity and environmental quality while supporting continued economic development, recreation, and scenic beauty.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

EQIP was reauthorized in the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (2002 Farm Bill) to provide a voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible national goals. EQIP offers financial and technical help to assist eligible participants install or implement structural and management practices on eligible agricultural land.

EQIP offers contracts with a minimum term that ends 1 year after the implementation of the last scheduled practices and a maximum term of 10 years. These contracts provide incentive payments and cost-shares to implement conservation practices. Persons who are engaged in livestock or agricultural production on eligible land may participate in the EQIP program. EQIP activities are carried out according to an environmental quality incentives program plan of operations developed in conjunction with the producer that identifies the appropriate conservation practice or practices to address the resource concerns. The practices are subject to NRCS technical standards adapted for local conditions. The local conservation district approves the plan.

EQIP may cost share up to 75 percent of the costs of certain conservation practices. Incentive payments may be provided for up to 3 years to encourage producers to carry out management practices they may not otherwise use without the incentive. However, limited-resource producers and beginning farmers and ranchers may be eligible for cost-shares up to 90 percent. Farmers and ranchers may elect to use a certified third-party provider for technical assistance. An individual or entity may not receive, directly or indirectly, cost-share or incentive payments that, in the aggregate, exceed $450,000 for all EQIP contracts entered during the term of the Farm Bill.

Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA)

AMA provides cost share assistance to agricultural producers to voluntarily address issues such as water management, water quality, and erosion control by incorporating conservation into their farming operations. Producers may construct or improve water management structures or irrigation structures; plant trees for windbreaks or to improve water quality; and mitigate risk through production diversification or resource conservation practices, including soil erosion control, integrated pest management, or transition to organic farming.

Conservation Security Program (CSP)

The 2002 Farm Bill also amended the Food Security Act of 1985 to authorize CSP, a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to promote the conservation and improvement of soil, water, air, energy, plant and animal life, and other conservation purposes on tribal and private working lands. Working lands include cropland, grassland, prairie land, improved pasture, and range land, as well as forested land that is an incidental part of an agriculture operation. The program is available in all 50 States, the Caribbean Area and the Pacific Basin area. The program provides equitable access to benefits to all producers, regardless of size of operation, crops produced, or geographic location.

Risk Management Agency

RMA administers the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC) programs and promotes national welfare by improving the economic stability of agriculture through a secure system of crop insurance and risk management tools. RMA meets the crop insurance and risk management needs of the Nation's small and limited-resource farmers and ranchers through a network of public and private sector partners. Together, RMA and these partners create new crop insurance and risk management products, provide risk management education and outreach, and ensure program accessibility and integrity.

Agricultural Management Assistance Program

This program is intended to encourage increased participation in the Federal crop insurance program by farmer and ranchers located in the 15 statutorily designated "historically underserved" States (Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming). Farmers and ranchers operating in one of these States may receive an additional subsidy, reducing the producer paid portion of the premium, on their crop insurance. The additional subsidy is intended to encourage farmers and ranchers to begin participating in the Federal crop insurance program or to encourage existing participants to purchase higher, more meaningful, levels of coverage, thereby reducing the need for ad hoc disaster assistance.

Community Outreach and Assistance Partnership Programs

This program is aimed to ensure that participation of women, limited-resource, socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, and other traditionally underserved producers of priority agricultural commodities covered by the noninsured crop disaster assistance program are provided with the information and training necessary to use financial management, crop insurance, marketing contracts, and other existing and emerging risk management tools. The Community Partnership program is authorized under section 522(d)(3)(F) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act. The funding availability of this program is up to $5 million for partnership agreements.

Commodity Partnerships for Risk Management Education

Through partnership agreements, this program will provide risk management education and information program in specific geographical areas. Projects funded through this program are envisioned to include the participation of multiple and diverse partners which includes public and private agricultural organizations, beginning farmers and ranchers, and livestock and forage producers. Commodity Partnerships for Risk Management Education: program is authorized under section 522(d) and 524(a) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act. The funding availability of the program is up to $3.5 million for partnership agreements.

Crop Insurance Education and Information Programs for Farmers and Ranchers in Targeted States

Outreach efforts in this program will be used to conduct crop insurance education programs in 15 States that have been determined to have low participation or are underserved by the Federal Crop insurance program. The 15 States are Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Utah, Vermont, West Virginia, and Wyoming. Crop Insurance Education in Targeted States: The Crop Insurance Education in Targeted States is authorized under section 522(d) and 524(a) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act. The funding availability of this program is up to $4.25 million for partnership agreements.

Federal Crop Insurance

The Federal Crop Insurance Program provides farmers and ranchers actuarially sound risk management tools which protect against agricultural production losses due to unavoidable "natural" causes such as drought, excessive moisture, wind, insects, etc. In addition, revenue insurance products are available under which producers of certain commodities are protected against loss of revenue stemming from low prices, poor yields, or a combination of both. Recent changes to the authorizing legislation has provided for the development of innovative insurance products protecting livestock producers from low prices and/or high input costs and whole farm products which protects the producer's entire farming operation against a loss in revenue. The livestock and whole farm products are currently being pilot tested in a number of States prior to being expanded nationwide. The Federal crop insurance program is authorized by the Federal Crop Insurance Act and protects more than $40 billion of agricultural production against potential losses.

Research and Development Partnerships Agreements

Participation in this program will be used to develop risk management tools and provide educational efforts to assist forage and rangeland producers of agricultural commodities currently covered by section 106 of the Agriculture Market Transition Act (7 U.S.C. 7333), specialty crops, livestock, rangeland, and underserved commodities. The Risk Management Research & Partnerships is in accordance with section 522(d) of the Federal Crop Insurance Act. The funding availability of this program is up to $4 million for partnership agreements.

Rural Development

Rural Development is composed of the Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS), the Rural Housing Service (RHS), and the Rural Utilities Service (RUS), and Office of Community Development. Rural Development offers rural communities financial and technical resources. Rural Development: encourages the establishment and growth of rural businesses and cooperatives to provide good jobs and diverse markets; provides access to technical assistance, capital, and credit for quality housing, as well as for modern, essential community facilities and firefighting equipment; finances the development of electric, telephone, telecommunication, water and wastewater infrastructures to create modern, affordable utilities; and provides information, technical assistance, and, when appropriate, leadership to rural areas to design and carry their own rural development initiatives through community capacity building.

Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Agricultural Innovation Center Demonstration Program

The Agriculture Innovation Center Demonstration Program funds innovation centers for work on providing technical and business development assistance to agricultural producers seeking to enter into ventures that add value to commodities or products they produce. Grants are awarded through a competitive process. Up to 10 grants may be awarded and the maximum amount that can be awarded is $1,000,000. The grants are for a 1-year project period. The program was authorized by the 2002 Farm Bill.

Renewable Energy System and Energy Efficiency Improvement Program

The 2002 Farm Bill established the Renewable Energy System and Energy Efficiency Improvement Program. A final rule implementing the program was published in July 2005. The program makes loans, loan guarantees, and grants to “a farmer, rancher, or rural small business" to purchase renewable energy systems and make energy efficiency improvements. The purpose of the program is to help agricultural producers and rural small businesses to reduce energy costs and consumption.

Rural Cooperative Development Grants

Rural Cooperative Development grants are made for establishing and operating centers for cooperative development for the primary purpose of improving the economic condition of rural areas through the development of new cooperatives and improving operations of existing cooperatives.

Value-Added Producer Grants Program (VAPG)

VAPG Program was authorized by the Agriculture Risk Protection Act of 2000 and was amended by the 2002 Farm Bill. Grants may be used for planning activities and working capital for marketing value-added agricultural products and for farm-based renewable energy. Eligible applicants are independent producers, farmer and rancher cooperatives, agricultural producer groups, and majority-controlled, producer-based business ventures.

Agricultural Marketing Resource Center Grant

The purpose of the program is to provide independent producers and processors with critical information needed to build successful value-added agriculture enterprises via an electronically based center that creates and presents information about value-added agriculture. The center draws on the abilities, skills, and knowledge of leading economists, business strategists, and outreach specialists to provide reliable information needed by independent producers to achieve success and profitability in value-added agriculture. The program was authorized by the Agricultural Risk Protection Act of 2000.

Rural Housing Service

Farm Labor Housing Loan and Grant Program

This program is authorized under the Housing Act of 1949 (as amended). Loans are made to farmers, associations of farmers, family farm corporations, Indian tribes, nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and associations of farm workers. Typically, loan applicants are unable to obtain credit elsewhere, but in some instances, farmers able to get credit elsewhere may obtain loans at a rate of interest based on the cost of Federal borrowing. Grants are made to farm worker associations, nonprofit organizations, Indian tribes, and public agencies. Funds may be used in urban areas for nearby farm labor. This is the only RHS rural service area exception.

Appendix D: USDA Agencies and Offices

USDA Agencies

Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)
AMS facilitates the strategic marketing of agricultural products in domestic and international markets while ensuring fair trading practices and promoting a competitive and efficient marketplace. AMS constantly works to develop new marketing services to increase customer satisfaction.

Agricultural Research Service (ARS)
ARS is USDA's principal in-house research agency. ARS leads America towards a better future through agricultural research and information.

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)
APHIS provides leadership in ensuring the health and care of animals and plants. The agency improves agricultural productivity and competitiveness and contributes to the national economy and the public health.

Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (CNPP)
CNPP works to improve the health and well-being of Americans by developing and promoting dietary guidance that links scientific research to the nutrition needs of consumers.

Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES)
In partnership with land-grant universities, and other public and private organizations, CREES provides the focus to advance a global system of extramural research, extension, and higher education in the food and agricultural sciences.

Economic Research Service (ERS)
ERS is USDA's principal social science research agency. Each year, ERS communicates research results and socioeconomic indicators via briefings, analyses for policymakers and their staffs, market analysis updates, and major reports.

Farm Service Agency (FSA)
FSA aids farmers and ranchers as it works to stabilize income through its efforts to conserve resources, provide credit and relieve operations from the effects of disaster.

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)
FNS increases food security and reduces hunger in partnership with cooperating organizations by providing children and low-income people access to food, a healthy diet, and nutrition education in a manner that supports American agriculture and inspires public confidence.

Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)
FSIS enhances public health and well-being by protecting the public from foodborne illness and ensuring that the Nation's meat, poultry, and egg products are safe, wholesome, and correctly packaged.

Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)
FAS works to improve foreign market access for U.S. products. This USDA agency operates programs designed to build new markets and improve the competitive position of U.S. agriculture in the global marketplace.

Forest Service (FS)
FS sustains the health, diversity and productivity of the Nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA)
GIPSA facilitates the marketing of livestock, poultry, meat, cereals, oilseeds, and related agricultural products. It also promotes fair and competitive trading practices for the overall benefit of consumers and American agriculture. GIPSA ensures open and competitive markets for livestock, poultry, and meat by investigating and monitoring industry trade practices.

National Agricultural Library (NAL)
NAL ensures and enhances access to agricultural information for a better quality of life.

National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)
NASS serves the basic agricultural and rural data needs of the country by providing objective, important, and accurate statistical information and services to farmers, ranchers, agribusinesses, and public officials. This data is vital to monitoring the ever-changing agricultural sector and carrying out farm policy.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
NRCS provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment.

Risk Management Agency (RMA)
RMA helps to ensure that farmers have the financial tools necessary to manage their agricultural risks. RMA provides coverage through the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation, which promotes national welfare by improving the economic stability of agriculture.

Rural Development
Rural Development helps rural areas to develop and grow by offering Federal assistance that improves quality of life. Rural Development targets communities in need and then empowers them with financial and technical resources.

USDA Offices

Civil Rights (CR)
CR ensures compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies for USDA customers and employees regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, marital or family status, political beliefs, parental status, protected genetic information, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

Departmental Administration (DA)
DA provides central administrative management support to Department officials and coordinates administrative programs and services.

National Appeals Division (NAD)
NAD conducts impartial administrative appeal hearings of adverse program decisions made by USDA and reviews of determinations issued by NAD hearing officers when requested by a party to the appeal.

Office of Budget and Program Analysis (OBPA)
OBPA provides centralized coordination and direction for the Department's budget, legislative, and regulatory functions. It also provides analysis and evaluation to support the implementation of critical policies. OBPA administers the Department's budgetary functions and develops and presents budget-related matters to Congress, the news media, and the public.

Office of the Chief Economist (OCE)
OCE advises the Secretary on the economic situation in agricultural markets and the economic implications of policies and programs affecting American agriculture and rural communities. OCE serves as the focal point for economic intelligence and analysis related to agricultural markets and for risk assessment and cost-benefit analysis related to departmental regulations affecting food and agriculture.

Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO)
OCFO shapes an environment for USDA officials eliciting the high-quality financial performance needed to make and implement effective policy, management, stewardship, and program decisions.

Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO)
OCIO has the primary responsibility for the supervision and coordination of the design, acquisition, maintenance, use, and disposal of information technology by USDA agencies. OCIO strategically acquires and uses information technology resources to improve the quality, timeliness, and cost-effectiveness of USDA services.

Office of Communications (OC)
OC is USDA's central source of public information. The office provides centralized information services using the latest, most effective and efficient technology and standards for communication. It also provides the leadership, coordination, expertise, and counsel needed to develop the strategies, products, and services that are used to describe USDA initiatives, programs, and functions to the public.

Office of Congressional Relations (OCR)
OCR serves as the USDA's liaison with Congress. OCR works closely with members and staffs of various House and Senate Committees to communicate the USDA's legislative agenda and budget proposals.

Office of the Executive Secretariat (OES)
OES ensures that all Department officials are included in the correspondence drafting and policy-making process through a managed clearance and control system. Keeping policy officials informed of executive documents enhances the Secretary's ability to review sound and thought-out policy recommendations before making final decisions.

Office of Inspector General (OIG)
OIG investigates allegations of crime against the Department's program and promotes the economy and efficiency of its operations.

Office of the General Counsel (OGC)
OGC is an independent legal agency that provides legal advice and services to the Secretary of Agriculture and to all other officials and agencies of the Department with respect to all USDA programs and activities.

Appendix E: FY 2005 SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE RESEARCH AND EDUCATION PROGRAM

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program			
Project Title	**Recipient**	**State**	**Amount**
Wisdom in the Land-Cultivating Regenerative Farms through Farmer-to-Farmer Mentoring	Innovative Farmers of Ohio	OH	$92,560.00
Growing Growers for Greater Kansas City: Establishing a Permanent Program to Train Farmers in Sustainable, Local Food Production and Marketing	Kansas State University	KS	$105,027.00
The Wisconsin School for Beginning Dairy Farmers Program-the First Ten Years: A Graduate Follow-up Survey and Beginning Dairy Farmer Case Studies	University of Wisconsin-Madison Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems	WI	$55,700.00
Improving Soil Quality During and After Organic Transition	Iowa State University Agronomy & Horticulture	IA	$149,509.00
Organic Production and Marketing of Forest Medicinals: Building and Supporting a Learning Community Among Growers	Rural Action	OH	$106,000.00
Double Cropping Field Peas Offer Economic Sustainability for Midwest Swine Producers	Iowa State University Cooperative Extension	IA	$109,651.00

Soil Fertility Strategies on Organic Vegetable Farms	University of Wisconsin-Madison	WI	$72,056.00
Practical Biodiversity: Keeping Oat on Farms by Helping Farmers Enhance Disease Resistance	Iowa State University	IA	$111,548.00
Effectiveness of Thiamine in Reducing the Impacts of High-Sulfate Water	South Dakota State University	SD	$144,805.00
High Value Enterprises for Small Spaces: Accelerating Commercialization and Integration of Woody Florals and Hybrid Hazelnuts in Sustainable Systems	University of Nebraska-Lincoln	NE	$149,997.00
Revise/Reprint "Biological Control of Insects and Mites"	University of Wisconsin-CIAS	WI	$87,558.00
Ag Diversification on the Airwaves: Diversification Broadcasts to Inform and Inspire	Minnesota Department of Agriculture	MN	$124,535.00
Project Title	**Recipient**	**State**	**Amount**
Reducing Pesticide Use in Honey Bee Colonies through Sound Sampling and Treatment Procedures	University of Minnesota Dept of Entomology	MN	$150,000.00
Reestablishing the Use of Buckwheat as a Precise Weed Control Tool	Cornell Univ./NYSAES	NY	$103,235.00
Alternative Continuous Cover Forages 2	Cornell Coop Ext. - Delaware County	NY	$37,936.00
Using Cover Crops and Crop Diversity to Optimize Ecologically-based Weed Management	Penn State University	PA	$98,732.00
Increasing Sustainability of Massachusetts Cranberry Production Through Cultural Management of the Bog Habitat	UMASS Cranberry Station	MA	$169,885.00
Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration for Profitable and Ecological Cultivation of Forest Medicinals	Rural Action - Appalachian Forest Residential Center	OH	$103,500.00
Farm to Chef: Increasing Farmer and Chef Capacity for Marketing and Purchasing Agricultural Products in Western Pennsylvania	PASA	PA	$96,571.00
Increasing the Use of Sustainable Forestry by Farmers Who Have Woodlots	MA Woodlands Coop., LLC	MA	$112,625.00
Mentoring Small Fresh Produce Farmers Who Want to Increase Farm Revenue by Selling Value-Added Products Through Direct Market Channels	DE. Dept. of Agriculture	DE	$65,000.00

New England LEAD Program	VT Farm Bureau Fund For Agriculture, Inc.	VT	$52,000.00
New Entry Sustainable Farming Project Transitioning Farmer Program	Community Teamwork, Inc.	MA	$133,468.00
Increasing Economic and Environmental Sustainability of Aquaculture Production Systems Through Aquatic Plant Culture	UMD Center for Environmental. Sciences	MD	$159,309.00
Creating a Technical Support System for Rhode Island Small-Scale Farms	URI Cooperative Extension	RI	$149,990.00
WAgN: Sustainable Ag. Network by and for Women Producers	Penn State University	PA	$138,292.00
In Search of Sustainable Botrytis Management: An Extension and Research Effort	Pennsylvania State University	PA	$87,374.00
Farmer to Farmer Directory	MOFGA	ME	$24,999.00
Project Title	**Recipient**	**State**	**Amount**
Implementing a Sustainable Greenhouse Health Maintenance Program	University of Massachusetts	MA	$83,637.00
Increasing Viability of Meat Goat Farms	Cornell University	NY	$49,284.00
Increased Profits for Sustainably Produced Garlic	USDA-ARS-NCGRP	CO	$65,000.00
High Tannin Grain Sorghum as a Possible Natural Anthelmintic for Sheep and Goats	UMES	MD	$100,000.00
Community Market Project	NOFA-VT	VT	$94,746.00
Exploiting the Organic Peanut Market: Design of Production Systems for the Southeast	Hebert Green Agroecology	NC	$159,000.00
Certified Forests: preparing private landowners for the future	Mississippi State University Extension Forestry	MS	$102,000.00
Forage systems for the sustainable production of uniform goat carcasses	Department of Agriculture & Natural Resources, U T at Martin	TN	$200,000.00
Microarray analysis and functional assays to assess microbial ecology and disease suppression in soils under organic or sustainable management	North Carolina State University, Department of Plant Pathology	NC	$250,000.00
Understanding Plant-Soil-Livestock Interactions: A Key to Enhanced Sustainability in Southern-Pine Silvopasture Systems	Auburn University Department of Agronomy & Soils	AL	$120,000.00
Sustainable and profitable control of invasive species by small ruminants	Texas A&M University	TX	$178,000.00
Best management practices for organic orchard nutrition	University of Arkansas, Department of Horticulture	AR	$200,000.00

Sustainable Control of Gastro-intestinal Nematodes in Small Ruminants	Fort Valley State University	GA	$250,000.00
Sustainability indicators as management tools to guide farmers, scientists, policy makers and the general public	NCSU Department of Agriculture & Resource Economics	NC	$250,000.00
Defining the feasibility and environmental impact of applying poultry litter to forests of the Western Gulf region	LSU Ag Center Hill Farm Research Station	LA	$14,520.00
Expanding the Marketing Opportunities for Minority and Limited Resource Farmers in Louisiana and Mississippi	Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice Southeastern Louisiana University	LA	$15,000.00
Project Title	**Recipient**	**State**	**Amount**
The use of renewable energy to improve the sustainability of Southeastern U.S. pond aquaculture: technical, economic, and industry evaluations of solar power options	Tuskegee University	AL	$14,850.00
Research and Demonstration on Banana Production Technologies in Micronesia	Cooperative Research & Extension	FM	$83,992.00
Developing Distance Learning Based on Perceptions and Knowledge of Producers and Agricultural Professionals	Montana State University	MT	$98,819.00
Using Farmer-Rancher Input to Develop and Implement Experiential Educational Opportunities for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers	University of Idaho	ID	$160,056.00
Alternative Proteins for Organic Meat and Milk Production	Oregon State University	OR	$63,565.00
Assessment and Demonstration of the Sustainability of Long vs. Short Potato Rotations	University of Idaho	ID	$179,403.00
Farmers Facilitating the Adoption of New Meadowfoam Establishment Practices	Oregon State University	OR	$67,078.00
Renewable Energy in Sustainable Agriculture (RESA)	Ecological Farming Association	CA	$68,208.00
Supply and Market Analysis for Organic Producers in the Four Corners States	Colorado State University	CO	$144,511.00
Integrated Soil and Crop Management for Organic Potato Production	Oregon State University	OR	$196,067.00

Integrated Crop and Livestock Systems: Dryland Crop Rotations to Improve Economic and Ecological Sustainability in the Central High Plains	University of Wyoming	WY	$212,928.00
Oilseed Farm-to-Market Demonstration	Whitman Conservation District	WA	$77,688.00
Sunflowers as a Methionine Source for Organic Poultry Production, Sunflower Hulling Processes and Sunflower Variety Trial	Jalko Farm	ME	$9,419.00
A Longitudinal Comparison Study of Milk Nutrient Levels Among Varied Farm Management Systems	Kathie Arnold	NY	$9,964.00
Sub-Tidal Aquaculture of Surf Clams	Seafood Divers, Inc	MA	$9,365.00
Project Title	**Recipient**	**State**	**Amount**
Control of Chalkbrood in Honeybees with Essential Oils	Warm Colors Apiary	MA	$6,671.00
Development of Management Strategies to Improve Aseasonal Reproduction in Sheep	Richard Ehrhardt	NY	$6,700.00
Using Ultrasound Scanning and Performance Testing Technology to Increase Loineye Area in Lamb	Hall & Suffolks	MD	$5,785.00
Replacing Soil Sterilant Practices with Low, Permanent Ground Covers in Northeast Vineyards	Hunt Country Vineyards	NY	$5,269.00
Tarnished Plant Bug Scouting and Control in Organic Annual Day-Neutral Strawberry Production in the Northeast	Blue Barrens Farm	ME	$9,160.00
Productivity Trials for the Combination Queen Rearing Nucleus and Comb Honey Hive	Michael Johnston	NY	$4,559.00
Control of Grape Root Borer	Landey Vineyards	PA	$2,892.00
Mustard-Green Seed Crop Production	Sweetgrass Farm	VT	$4,514.00
Rhode Island Pastured Poultry Association	Urban Edge - Southside Community Land Trust	RI	$5,250.00
A Feasible Method for Organic Fertilization of Greenhouse Tomatoes Through Drip Irrigation	Mello's Farm Stand	RI	$3,430.00
Evaluating Organic Feed Quality for Dairies	Maine Organic Milk Producers	ME	$10,000.00
Integration of Winter Barley with Management Intensive Grazing	Mia Morrison	ME	$3,859.00
Cedar: A Control for Varroa Mites	John O'Meara	ME	$5,215.00

Effects of Hive Wrapping Strategies on Honey Bee Survival in Western Massachusetts	Jonathan Parrott	MA	$4,500.00
Monitored Study of Broomcorn Growth in Hancock County, Maine	Susan Sharpe	ME	$3,682.00
A Comparison of Biodegradable Mulches to Black Plastic Mulch	Cave Moose Farm	VT	$2,577.00
Educational Plan for Alternative Manure Management System	North Williston Cattle Co.	VT	$5,752.00
Growing Alternative Crops in Tobacco Greenhouses	Clinch Mountain Farmers, Inc.	VA	$4,085.00
Soil Building and Fertility through Cover Cropping among Limited Resource Farmers	Selma-Dallas Small Farmers Association	AL	$11,968.00
Project Title	**Recipient**	**State**	**Amount**
Aquaculturally Derived Products as Fertilizers for High-value Organic Crop Production	Marc Cardoso	TN	$9,953.00
Salsa Pepper Project	Sara Gardner	TN	$9,660.00
Silvopasture for forage, cattle and trees	John Keeler	MS	$9,995.00
Managing Cover Crops Under-The-Trellis: A Vital Step Toward Vineyard Sustainability	Jason Murray	VA	$9,958.00
Organic Farming in the Tropics with Legume Groundcover	ReViBe	PR	$8,107.00
On Farm Hatchery for Fingerling Catfish	James O. Shands	VA	$9,350.00
Alternative techniques for harvesting inland saltwater shrimp	Greene Prairie Aquafarm	AL	$6,557.00
Weed Control for Row Crops Using Corrugating Linerboard/Medium Paper	The Landowners Association of Texas Tyler Chapter	TX	$7,399.00
Range Enhancement/Predator Management/Fire Mitigation Using Goats to Control Oak-Brush	Michael Occhiato	CO	$9,997.00
Wastewater Delivery System for Irrigation and Soil Enrichment on Guam	Pacifica Triple B Farms	GU	$4,570.00
Sheep vs. Weeds: Biological Control Agents to Combat Noxious Weeds	Gillespie Grazing Company	OR	$9,981.00
Partnership for Monitoring Rangeland and Riparian Health in Red Rock Canyon Watershed, Santa Cruz, Arizona	The Collins C6 Ranch, LLC	AZ	$19,976.00
Controlling Common Tansy with Sheep	Kimberly McConnaghy	ID	$3,422.00
Non-chemical Control of Nematodes on Potatoes	Three S Ranch	CO	$9,922.00
Solar Energy for Sustainable Year-Round Production	Don Bustos	NM	$9,683.00

Forage Winter Wheat Production for Grazing or Hay Production in Eight Montana Counties	George Reich	MT	$19,795.00
Recycling Fish Waste to Fertilize Guam Farms	GMF	GU	$19,809.00
Small-scale Aquaponic Demonstration System in American Samoa	Malo Paleso's	AS	$10,000.00
Farm Internship Curriculum and Handbook	Maud Powell	OR	$20,000.00
Goats in the Chaparral: Determining Forage Quality, Location, and Seasonal Variation	SCRMP	CA	$19,990.00
Increasing the Profitability of Raspberries by Extending the Growing Season	Clark Willis	UT	$2,310.00
Project Title	**Recipient**	**State**	**Amount**
Determining the Feasibility of Compost Production from Agronomic Waste and Wood Byproducts Through Mushroom Cultivation Techniques for Small Market Farmer	Fido's Farm	WA	$2,419.00
Sustaining an Agricultural Region: Capay Valley Grown	Full Belly Farm	CA	$14,980.00
Evaluation of Abalone Effluent for Reclamation	The Cultured Abalone	CA	$7,685.00
Brush Mower/Mixed Mountain Shrub Enhancement	JY Ranch	WY	$19,370.00
Agricultural Landscape Design through Participatory Modeling: Collaboration among Diverse Stakeholder Groups	Iowa State University	IA	$9,998.38
Nitrogen Fertilization for Hybrid Hazelnuts in the Upper Midwest	University of MN	MN	$9,589.00
Marker-Assisted Selection of Late Blight (Phytophthora Infestans) Resistant Potatoes (Solanum Tuberosum)	University of WI-Madison	WI	$10,000.00
Processes Involved in the Weed Suppressiveness of Hairy Vetch & Implications for Weed Management in Vegetable Production	Michigan State University	MI	$10,000.00
Using Farmer Input to Develop Research Projects & Outreach Activities for Organic Agriculture	Purdue University	IN	$10,000.00
Making the Case for Local Food Systems as Economic Development	University of Illinois	IL	$9,900.00
Determining Occurrence & Distribution of Viruses Causing Diseases on Cucurbit Crops for Developing Effective Management Strategies	University of Illinois	IL	$9,890.00
Soil & Crop Quality Under High Tunnels	Kansas State University	KS	$10,000.00

Assessing the Feasibility of Entry Into Entrepreneurial Agriculture for Mexican Immigrants in Marshalltown	Iowa State University	IA	$6,891.00
Managing Crop Residues: Balancing Soil Quality & Farm Profitability	Michigan State University	MI	$9,970.00
Effect of Supplementation & Lactation Stage on Performance of Grazing Dairy Ewes	University of Wisconsin-Madison	WI	$9,951.00
Project Title	**Recipient**	**State**	**Amount**
Expanding Local Participation in Conservation Programs: Examining Factors Affecting Conservation Adoption Among Old Order Amish in the Sugar Creek Watershed	Ohio State University	OH	$9,822.60
Developing Methods for Determining Survival of Phytophthora Capsici in Soil for Establishing Effective Cropping Rotations for Sustainable Vegetable Production	University of Illinois	IL	$9,794.00
Illinois Bundleflower: a Perennial Multiple Purpose Third Crop for Iowa	Iowa State University	IA	$9,962.00
An Interdisciplinary Framework for Sustainable Tart Cherry (Pruus cerasus L) Production	University of California Santa Cruz	CA	$10,000.00
BT Cotton, Tillage and Cover Crops Identity: Relative Effects on Above and Below Ground Invertebrate Diversity	University of Georgia, Institute of Ecology	GA	$2,895.00
Effects of the Quality of Organic Soil Amendments on the Soil Community and on Plant N Availability in an Agroecosystem in the Georgia Piedmont	University of Georgia, Institute of Ecology	GA	$8,576.00
Development of an IPM Strategy for Control of Flower-Thrips in Blueberries in Southeastern United States	University of Florida Entomology and Nematology Department	FL	$9,914.00
Inducing Disease Resistance and Increased Production in Organic Heirloom Tomato Production Through Grafting	North Carolina State University Department of Plant Pathology	NC	$10,000.00
Effect of a condensed tannin containing forage (sericea lespedeza), fed as pellets, on natural and experimental challenge nematode infection in lambs	Louisiana State University Department of Pathobiological Science	LA	$10,000.00

The Effects of Different Organic Apple Production Systems on Seasonal Variation of Soil Properties and Foliar Nutrient Concentration	University of Arkansas Department of Horticulture	AR	$10,000.00
Organic mulches and high residue no-till for collard production in Alabama	Auburn University Department of Agronomy and Soils	AL	$10,000.00
Effect of European Corn Borer on Corn Whole-Plant Yield and Forage Quality	Virginia Tech	VA	$6,107.00
Project Title	**Recipient**	**State**	**Amount**
Effects of Grazing vs. Confinement on First Lactation Performance of Dairy Replacement Heifers	Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cortland	NY	$9,600.00
Evaluating Two Colony Hives for Increased Productivity and Varroa Mite Control	Penn State University	PA	$9,744.00
Farm-Fabricated On-Farm Composting Equipment Project; Aerating Equipment	Highfields Institute	VT	$9,980.00
Developing Beneficial Insect Habitat for Greenhouses	IPM Labs, Inc.	NY	$9,968.00
Adopting Pre-Sidedress Nitrogen to Minimize Nitrate Application in Sweet Corn and Pumpkins	Univ. of Maine Coop Ext.	ME	$8,010.00
Women's Agricultural Network Farm Visits	Women's Agricultural Network, University of VT Extension	VT	$4,313.00
Evaluation of Forage Soybeans to Provide Simultaneous Benefits: A High Protein Dairy Forage and a Legume Cover Crop	Univ. of Maine Coop Ext.	ME	$9,800.00
Evaluation of Silver Reflective Mulch, White Inter-row Mulch and Plant Spacing for Increasing Yields of Bell Pepper	UMCE - Highmoor Farm	ME	$9,167.00
Assessment of Regional Organic Alternative Dairy Management Practices (AROADMaP)	Penn Dutch Cow Care	PA	$9,225.00
MOFGA's Farm Training Project: Workshops for Farm Apprentices and Other New and Beginning Farmers in Maine	MOFGA	ME	$6,560.00
Promoting Pollinators on Maryland's Working Landscapes	University of Maryland	MD	$9,535.00
Hybrid and Heirloom High Tunnel Tomato Variety Trial	Cornell Vegetable Program	NY	$9,880.00
New York High Tunnel Pepper Variety Trial	Cornell Vegetable Program	NY	$6,563.00

Pilot Production of Biodiesel From Canola in New England	University of Maine Cooperative Extension	ME	$9,925.00
Evaluating Hornfaced Bees (Osmia cornifrons Radoszkowski) as Pollinators of Highbush Blueberry	West Virginia University	WV	$9,933.00
Evaluating Bitter Melon Varieties Grown Using Intensive Production Methods for Yield and Caribbean Immigrant Customer Preferences	East NY Farms!/United Comm. Centers	NY	$7,950.00
Project Title	**Recipient**	**State**	**Amount**
Livestock and Feedstock: Distillers Grain and Fuel Ethanol	Water Assurance Technology Energy Resources	TX	$15,000.00
Sustainable Grazing Systems for Arkansas: Native warm season grass establishment and control of cool season annual weeds	USDA/NRCS	AR	$14,700.00
Salmonella Contamination and Antibiotic Resistance on Pastured Poultry and Conventional Poultry Farms	Warren Wilson College	NC	$9,542.39
Optimization of Irrigation Practices in Organic and Sustainable Vegetable Production with Soluble Dye as an Educational Tool	University of Florida, Horticultural Sciences Department	FL	$14,663.00
Coffee Seedlings in Forestry Tubes	El Atlantico Resource Conservation & Development	PR	$14,957.00
Protecting High-quality Rangelands in Garfield County from Invasive Weed Spread	Garfield County Extension	MT	$20,000.00
Environmentally Sound Irrigation and Fertility Systems for Sweet Cherry Crops in the Pacific Northwest	Oregon State University	OR	$19,585.00
Demonstration of Leafy Spurge Management Using Sheep Grazing in a Leafy Spurge Barrier Zone	Prairie County Extension	MT	$9,960.00
Weed Control in Summer Cover Crops on California's Central Coast	UC Cooperative Extension	CA	$9,942.00
Maximizing Production Efficiency in a Three Stage Integrated Agriculture System Using Taro, Tilapia, Aquatic Plants and Fancy Guppies	University of Guam	GU	$9,951.00

A Superhero Without a Cape: Using the Cover Crop Sunn Hemp to Feed the Soil, Suppress Nematodes, and Smother Weeds	University of Hawaii at Manoa	HI	$7,716.00
Women Farmers Building a Healthy Community and Economy in the High Country	Blue Ridge Women in Agriculture (BRWIA)	NC	$9,900.00
Rural Women as Agriculture Leaders	Southwest Georgia Project for Community Education, Inc.	GA	$9,980.00
Assessing and Meeting the Growing Needs of Arkansas' Women in Agriculture	University of Arkansas-Fayetteville	AR	$9,901.00
Project Title	**Recipient**	**State**	**Amount**
The Farmer as Entrepreneur	Iberia Parish Industrial Development Foundation	LA	$9,950.00
Agritourism and Agribusiness Entrepreneur Training, Assistance and Product Marketing in the Eastern Alabama Black Belt	Tuskegee University	AL	$9,956.00
Partnerships for Sustainable Communities	Tuskegee University G.W. Carver AES	AL	$10,000.00
Creating Capacity to Confront Invasive Plants as Barriers to Economic Productivity and Environmental Sustainability	Rural Action - Appalachian Forest Resource Center	OH	$75,000.00
Conservation Planning Training for Private Sector Agronomy Service and Local Conservation Agencies	The Minnesota Project, Inc.	MN	$53,562.00
Building a Diverse Food Web: Professional Development Training in Sustainable Community Food Systems with a focus on Appropriate Technologies for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Small Scale Producers in Rural and Urban Communities	Growing Power, Inc	WI	$75,000.00
Moving Educators from Awareness to Action in Environmental Manure Management	Michigan State University Farm Management	MI	$34,422.00
Soil Quality Workshop: Concepts and Practices	Penn State University	PA	$43,695.00
Strengthening Farmers Markets Through Advanced Business Training and Mentoring	Cooperative Development Inst., Inc.	MA	$62,600.00
Climate Change and Agriculture: Preparing Educators to Promote Practical and Profitable Responses	UVM Extension	VT	$113,106.00
Demonstrating Effective Grass Farming Practices	New Eng. Livestock Alliance	MA	$82,720.00

Building Professional Capacity to Enhance Farm to School Marketing and Distribution Networks	Cornell University	NY	$110,487.00
Sustainable Production Systems for Range-Reared Standard Turkeys	American Livestock Breeds Conservancy	NC	$109,444.00
Direct Market Training for Agricultural Professionals	North Carolina State University	NC	$96,757.00
Small-Scale Poultry Production: Sustainability Training	Heifer International	KY	$129,530.00
Project Title	**Recipient**	**State**	**Amount**
Regional Meat Goat Production and Marketing Project: Phase 2	Kentucky State University Cooperative Extension Program	KY	$39,578.00
Regional Meat Goat Production and Marketing Project: Phase 1	Kentucky State University	KY	$30,000.00
Strengthening Sustainable Agriculture Programming with Native American Producers in the West	University of Nevada Coop. Ext.	NV	$90,000.00
Rhizosphere Ecology in Changing Cropping Systems Understanding the Relationships of Farming Systems to Soil Quality	Oregon State Univ. Extension	OR	$7,348.00
Transfer of Research Based Knowledge in Agriculture in the American Pacific	University of Guam Coop. Ext.	GU	$74,507.00
Pacific Island Agroforestry Workshops and Field Visits	Permanent Agriculture Resources	HI	$59,777.00
Forage and Pasture Educational Program for Extension, FSA, and NRCS in the Pacific Northwest	University of Idaho, Twin Falls R&E Center	ID	$90,000.00
Manure Management: An Essential Component of 4-H Livestock Projects	Colorado State University	CO	$59,927.00
Capacity Building and Training in Commercial Aquaculture for Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, and American Samoa	University of Guam	GU	$90,000.00

Appendix F: FY 2005 RISK MANAGEMENT EDUCATION PROGRAM

Risk Management Education Program			
Project Title	**Recipient**	**Location**	**Amount**
Organic Marketing for Producers	Missouri Department of Agriculture	MO	$ 39,983
Beginning Farmer Program Reduces Risks in New States	Land Stewardship Project	MN	$ 40,000
Hmong Risk Management Agricultural Education	Western Dairyland Economic Opportunity Council, Inc.	WI	$ 39,841
Heart of the Farm Conference Series	University of Wisconsin – Center for Dairy Profitability	WI	$ 20,554
Heart of the Farm Conference Series	University of Wisconsin – Center for Dairy Profitability	WI	$ 20,554
Wisconsin Ag Link	University of Wisconsin – Center for Dairy Profitability	WI	$ 26,130
Joint Wisconsin RME Project for Fresh Market Apple, Berry , & Vegetable Producers	Wisconsin Apple Growers Association	WI	$ 22,000
Growing Great Farm Families	South Dakota Farm Bureau	SD	$ 13,200
Multi-Regional Women in Agricultural Conference	South Dakota State University	SD, NE, WY, ND, MT	$ 20,000

Agricultural Marketing and Financial Seminars	Ohio Farm Bureau Federation	OH	$ 15,000
Annie's Project - Ohio	American Small Farm Association	OH	$ 20,000
Organizing the Risk Management Toolbox-A Guide to Marketing, Insurance, and Government Programs	University of Nebraska	NE	$ 41,759
Project Title	**Recipient**	**Location**	**Amount**
Farm/Ranch Transfer: How to Start, How to Retire	Center for Rural Affairs	NE	$ 40,000
Rural Women in America	Bowman/Slope Soil Conservation District	ND	$ 18,000
Golden Age Farming	University of Missouri	MO	$ 24,500
Planning for Success: A Business Plan Guide for Latino and Other Minority Farmers	University of Missouri	MO	$ 39,987
Farm Transfer & Estate Planning for MN Farm Families	University of Minnesota	MN	$ 27,800
Minnesota and North Dakota Risk Management Education & Discussion	Minnesota Association of Wheat Growers	MN, ND	$ 14,000
Bridging Brown County FARM Team	Bridging Brown County Food, Agriculture, & Rural Marketing Team	MN	$ 13,283
Labor Risks in Pork Production	Michigan State University	MS	$ 39,996
2006 Midwest Women In Agriculture Conference: North & South	Purdue University	IN	$ 25,000
Annie’s Project Iowa-Missouri Phase II	Mehaska County Agricultural Extension District	IO, MO	$ 37,741
Interactive Agri-Entrepreneurial Tools for Assessing Business Development Risks	Missouri Department of Agriculture	IO	$ 37,500
A Comprehensive Risk Management Initiative for Amish and Mennonite Growers of High-Value Crops in Eastern Iowa	Iowa State University	IO	$ 39,616
Risk Management: Integrating Insurance and Marketing Strategies	Iowa State University	IO	$ 25,020
Marketing Directly to Consumers	The Pennsylvania State University	PA	$ 17,057

The Development of a Grain Marketing Decision Aid	University of Delaware	DE	$ 25,000
An Entrepreneur's Guide to Starting a New Agricultural Enterprise - Managing Risk	University of Delaware	DE	$ 36,632
Diversifying Farm Accounts through a Southeastern Massachusetts Growers' Business-to-Business Network	University of Massachusetts Dartmouth	MA	$ 31,088
Project Title	**Recipient**	**Location**	**Amount**
Developing and Testing a Code of Sustainable Viticulture Practices for Vineyards in New York and Pennsylvania	Cornell University	NY	$ 30,000
Risk Management Education for Women Farm Entrepreneurs in the Northeast	University of Vermont	VT	$ 32,956
2006 Regional Women in Agriculture Conference	University of Delaware	Northeast Region	$ 29,025
Evaluation and Development of New and Diversified Agricultural Businesses in Six Rural Counties in Northern New York State	Cornell Cooperative Extension of St. Lawrence County	NY	$ 40,000
County Risk Management Education County Grants@$1,000 each	Various counties throughout the Northeast	Northeast Region	$ 41,000
Building Decision-Making Skills for Beef Cattle Producers	Colorado State University	CO	$ 4,999
Business Tools for Tough Times	University of California	CA	$ 19,471
Effective Direct Marketing Strategies to Manage Price Risk in Hawaii	University of Hawaii, Manoa	HA	$ 38,451
Enhance Risk Management on Pacific Northwest Farms Through Innovative Farm Business Planning	Washington State University	Pacific Northwest	$ 39,728
Idaho Grain Marketing & Risk Management Education Project	Idaho Barley Commission	ID	$ 5,500
Insurance Options across Alaskan Lands	Alaskan Assoc. of Conservation Districts	AK	$ 15,565
Labor, OSHA, and Other Regulatory Risk Training for SE Asian Immigrants/Minorities in California	University of California Cooperative Extension	CA	$ 47,014

Learning Strategies for Developing Long Term Leasing Arrangements and Cash Flow Analysis through Digital Media	Mid-Columbia Agricultural Research and Extension Center, Oregon State University	OR	$ 39,400
Managing Production Costs and Market Risks for Southwest Vegetable and Nursery Producers	University of Arizona	AZ	$ 36,995
Managing Risk by Managing Production Costs	University of Idaho	ID	$ 24,402
Project Title	**Recipient**	**Location**	**Amount**
Managing Risk Through Effective Marketing Strategies for Organic Producers	New Mexico Organic Commodity Commission	NM	$ 4,000
Managing Transfer Risks for the "Next Generation" of Montana Farm/Ranch Operators	Montana State University Extension Service	MT	$ 39,989
Reconnecting the Farmer to the Consumer In Today's Customer Driven Economy	Shepard's Grain	Pacific Northwest	$ 35,932
Record Keeping Training for Native American Livestock Producers	University of Arizona	AZ	$ 32,844
Risk Management Training with Right Risk	Colorado State University	Eight Western States	$ 38,574
Securing the Future of Bitterroot Family Farms and Ranches	Bitter Root Land Trust	MT	$ 39,965
Value Added Agricultural Products	Western Marketing Extension Committee	Western States	$ 40,001
A Training Manual for Preparation of Market Outlook Presentation	North Carolina State University	NC	$ 39,938
Development of a Business Plan Curriculum for Agricultural Producers	Texas Cooperative Extension	TX	$ 8,925
Emergency Operations Procedures: Green Industry	Alabama Cooperative Extension System	AL	$ 20,043
Increasing Marketing Initiatives for Minority and Socially Disadvantaged Producers in Louisiana	Southern University	LA	$ 39,587
Managing for Success in Oklahoma Agriculture	Oklahoma State University	OK	$ 37,781
Managing Risk in the Green Industry in Tennessee	University of Tennessee	TN	$ 21,936

Marketing Plan Implementation, Impact Assessment, and Operation of an Advanced Topic Series	Texas Cooperative Extension	TX	$ 19,990
North Alabama Risk Management Education Program	Alabama A&M University	AL	$ 40,000
Personnel Management Training for High Plains Agribusiness Producers	Texas Cooperative Extension	TX	$ 21,525
Precision Agriculture Decision Aids for Risk Management Education	University of Kentucky	KY	$ 39,976
Project Title	**Recipient**	**Location**	**Amount**
Producer Strategic Marketing	Texas Grain Sorghum Producers	TX	$ 37,500
Regional Multi-State Enterprise Budgets and Post-Harvest Handling Cost Analysis	University of Arkansas	AR	$ 38,168
Risk Management Education for Farmers in Puerto Rico	University of Puerto Rico, Cooperative Extension Service	PR	$ 39,505
Risk Management Training for Absentee Landowner Issues	Mississippi State University	MS	$ 45,002
Risk Management Training for Oklahoma Farm Youth and Families	Oklahoma State University	OK	$ 33,375
Risk Management Training Through Financial and Farm Resource Planning, Diversification in Production and Marketing, and Using Low-Impact Pest Management Methods	Kentucky State University	KY, TN	$ 40,000
Risk Reduction Training in Four Farming Systems for Southern Producers	Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group	Southern States	$ 39,853
Sorghum Grip Education Program	National Grain Sorghum Producers	Southern States	$ 30,000
The Development and Implementation of a Value-Added Production and Marketing Strategy for African American Women Farmers in Southwest Georgia	Southwest Georgia Project for Community Education, Inc.	GA	$ 38,640
Understanding the Farm Business Planning and Tax Implementations of Federal and State Environmental Regulations and Conservation Efforts	North Carolina Farm Transition Network, Inc.	NC	$ 39,959

Appendix G: FY 2005 OUTREACH AND ASSISTANCE FOR SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED FARMERS AND RANCHERS COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM

Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Competitive Grant Program			
Project Title	**Institution**	**Location**	**Amount**
Effective Outreach and Management Strategies to Ensure Survival of Small and Limited Resource Farms	Alabama A&M University	AL	$ 300,000
Small Farm Outreach Training and Technical Assistance Project	Tuskegee University	AL	$ 269,000
Agri-Enterprise Development for Beginning Farmers and Youth	Arkansas Land And Farm Development Corporation	AR	$ 300,000
An Outreach Program for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers in Eastern Arkansas	University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff	AR	$ 296,795
Small Farm Incubators, Outreach, Technical Assistance and Produce Distribution for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers	Agriculture & Land-Based Training Association	CA	$ 253,217
Engaging Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers in an Outreach and Technical Assistance Program	Delaware State University	DE	$ 184,477
Strengthening Minority Farmers in 16 South Georgia Counties Through Technical Assistance and Development of a Regional Marketing System	Federation of Southern Cooperatives	GA	$ 270,000

Sustaining Socially Disadvantaged Farmers Through Improved Management & Enhanced Communications Between USDA and Other Providers	Fort Valley State University	GA	$ 270,000
Outreach and Assistance for Disadvantages Farmers in Hawaii	Pacific Gateway Center	HA	$ 270,000
Small Farmer Agricultural Leadership Training Institute	Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center	LA	$ 299,750
Project Title	**Institution**	**Location**	**Amount**
New Entry Sustainable Farming Project	USDA HNRC at Tufts University	MA	$ 299,977
University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers	University of Maryland Eastern Shore	MD	$ 200,000
Strategies for Enhancing Farm Income and Quality of Life of Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers in Rural North Carolina	Operation Spring Plant, Inc.	NC	$ 125,000
Hispanic & Native American Farmer/Rancher Outreach Project	Legal Aid of Nebraska	NE	$ 300,000
Livestock Genetic Improvement Project/Establishment of a Regional Animal Resource Center	Crownpoint Institute of Technology	NM	$ 150,000
Northern New Mexico Outreach Project	The Regents of New Mexico State University	NM	$ 270,000
Sustainable Outreach and Assistance to Farmers and Ranchers (SOFAR)	Langston University	OK	$ 300,000
Small Farm Outreach and Technical Assistance Program	Virginia State University	VA	$ 225,573
Enhancing Decision-Marking for Post-Startup Farm Business Development	University of Vermont and State Agricultural College	VT	$ 300,000
Immigrants Forging New Ground in Farming	Rural Community Development Resources	WA	$ 300,000
Meat Goat Production Guidelines: An Outreach Tool Promoting Animal Health and Food Safety Among Socially Disadvantaged Farmers	Concentric Management Applications	NC	$ 138,750