



Outreach Program

Background

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Farm Service Agency (FSA) administers farm commodity and conservation programs. FSA also makes loans to farmers and ranchers who are unable to obtain conventional credit.

The FSA Outreach staff coordinates and implements agency-wide outreach activities to people, especially the underserved, who can benefit from the agency's programs and services. The staff's goal is to increase the participation of underserved customers in its programs, with special emphasis on those who are socially and economically disadvantaged, limited resource farmers, and members of racial and ethnic minority groups.

To ensure maximum participation in FSA programs and services for underserved customers, the FSA Outreach staff works with its partners and customers to eliminate the following barriers:

- All forms of discrimination, including racial, ethnic, cultural, and gender prejudices;
- Language, communication, transportation, and FSA program requirements and sign-up procedures;
- Limited access to FSA programs in remote areas.

Underserved customers include:

- Farmers/ranchers and landowners/operators with limited resources, minority groups (including African-Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Asian/Pacific American and Aleuts), Hispanic, women, and the physically challenged who may need, but have not fully benefited from, USDA assistance;
- Individuals and groups who have not participated in, or have received limited benefits from, FSA programs that may improve their quality of life and/or the environment;
- Rural and urban community members;
- Members of religious minorities;
- Small specialty crop farmers, organic farmers, and other farmers with production practices that are different from most farmers in the area.

The FSA Outreach Staff:

- Provides resources to help underserved farmers and ranchers improve their income through better farm management and financial planning;
- Provides information on loans, farm commodities, and conservation programs

to underserved farmers and ranchers who are unable to obtain conventional credit;

- Ensures that underserved farmers and ranchers participate fully in FSA state and county committee election outreach initiatives;
- Works with community-based organizations (including churches; social groups; 1862, 1890, and 1994 Land Grant Colleges and Universities; Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities; and tribally-controlled colleges to provide technical assistance, training, and enhanced program delivery to underserved communities and other USDA agencies;
- Helps customers understand USDA programs and fill out program forms;
- Provides program and service information to all customers in a friendly and timely manner.

For More Information

More information about FSA programs and outreach projects is available at local USDA Service Centers and FSA state and county offices. The telephone numbers are usually listed in the telephone directory under the United States Government, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Outreach and program information can be obtained by contacting:

USDA/FSA

Director, Outreach Staff
1250 Maryland Avenue, SW
Suite 508, Ag Stop 0511
Washington, D.C. 20024-0511

For more information about this or any other FSA program, visit FSA's Web site at: www.fsa.usda.gov or www.fsa.usda.gov/outreach.

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