



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

Office of the
Assistant Secretary
for Civil Rights

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TO: All USDA Employees
FROM: Margo M. McKay
Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
SUBJECT: Workplace Diversity and Inclusion

Margo M. McKay JAN 10 2007

After a few short months in my position as the Department's Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, I would like to address all USDA employees on what I believe is a fundamental and important obligation for us all, and that is to ensure that we all do our part to promote a diverse workplace.

President Bush has emphasized that our goal must be that of a welcoming society...a Nation where no one is dismissed or forgotten. The President's Management Agenda and USDA's Strategic Management Plan mandate a diverse workforce with the necessary skills to accomplish USDA's mission and goals. The Secretary's Civil Rights Policy states that we must strive for a workplace that respects differences and embraces diversity.

A workplace that values diversity and inclusion is one where all employees demonstrate, on a daily basis, their respect for each individual's unique attributes, so that the workplace is free from harassment, discrimination, and intolerance. Our employees are our most important asset. We must conduct ourselves with mutual respect, and observe the highest standards of conduct. To do so makes "people sense" and "business sense." When people feel good about their jobs, enjoy coming to work, and believe that they are being treated fairly and with respect, they are more productive.

In a workplace that values diversity and inclusion, employees believe in equal access to opportunity for growth and advancement and are encouraged and supported to fulfill their potential for career growth, and, managers recognize and reward employees for their contributions on the basis of merit and ability.

All USDA employees are encouraged to demonstrate diversity as a core value. It is incumbent upon each and every employee to take individual responsibility for creating and maintaining a respectful, supportive work environment. The success of USDA's mission depends on it.