



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**



StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity

www.usda.gov/strikeforce

StrikeForce Fast Facts - 2015

Median State Child Poverty Rate: 24.9%
 Number of StrikeForce Counties: 970
 Total Outreach Events: 2214
 Number of Community Partners: 1,596
 Total USDA Projects: 62,297
 Total USDA Investment: \$7.49 billion

Contacts

Talk to us about becoming a StrikeForce partner by contacting your StrikeForce Coordinator (listed on the following page).

Congressional Inquiries:
(202) 720-7095

Media Inquiries:
(202) 720-4623

StrikeForce States

Alabama	New Mexico
Alaska	North Carolina
Arizona	North Dakota
Arkansas	Ohio
Colorado	Oklahoma
Florida	Puerto Rico
Georgia	South Carolina
Kentucky	South Dakota
Louisiana	Tennessee
Mississippi	Texas
Missouri	Utah
Montana	Virginia
Nevada	West Virginia

Currently, 85 percent of our country’s persistent poverty counties are in rural America. More than one third of rural Americans, and one in four rural children live in poverty. Kids growing up in families earning twice the poverty threshold are nearly three times as likely as other children to have poor health, are more likely to finish two fewer years of school, and are more likely to earn half as much money in their adult lives.

Growing the economy by investing in rural communities and increasing opportunities for families is key to our Nation’s future. In 2010, Secretary Vilsack established USDA’s StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity to address the specific challenges associated with rural poverty. Since then, StrikeForce teams have collaborated with more than 1,500 community partners and public entities to bring targeted assistance to rural areas experiencing chronic poverty.

These efforts have invested more than \$23.5 billion to create jobs, build homes, feed kids, assist farmers and conserve natural resources across more than twenty states. In 2016, StrikeForce expanded to include Florida, Missouri, Montana, and Ohio. Now, USDA StrikeForce teams will operate in 970 counties in 25 states and Puerto Rico. Each StrikeForce project is a commitment to America’s economic future.

StrikeForce At Work

Georgia Farmers and Ranchers are Growing Opportunities through Community Partnerships

Last year, McIntosh Sustainable Environment and Economic Development (SEED) partnered with USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) with the goal of improving delivery of NRCS programs to Georgia’s socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in USDA StrikeForce counties. SEED is a grassroots, community-based organization with a mission to improve social, economic, environmental and cultural interests of the community while providing quality education, better housing, recreational facilities, business opportunities and environmental protection and restoration.

By partnering with local community-based organizations, three USDA agencies—NRCS, Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Rural Development (RD)—are working to improve the Department’s outreach to increase access and participation in the agencies’ technical and financial assistance programs. Through StrikeForce, they have laid a foundation of cooperation and collaboration that has better served USDA’s customers.

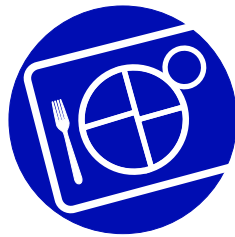
In the past year, numerous full and part-time jobs have been created, and additional jobs will be specifically targeted for young people—primarily high-school students—in an effort to get them more involved with their communities. SEED hopes the results will be a better appreciation for the importance of agriculture in their daily lives.

StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity

62,297 Projects in 2015 = \$7.49 Billion Invested



5,817
Jobs Created
or Saved



75,482,986
Summer
Meals for Kids



9997
Farmers
Assisted



133,232
Home
Investments



14,629
Conservation
Efforts

Local USDA StrikeForce Coordinators:

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