

COALICIÓN

RURAL

COALITION

2008

ANNUAL

REPORT





Where Diversity Unites

The Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural is an alliance of farmers, farmworkers, indigenous, migrant and working people from the United States, Mexico, Canada and beyond, building toward a new society that values unity, hope, people, and the land.

Our some 70 diverse organizational members seek support to enhance the capacity of rural organizations to work for systemic change that fosters a just and sustainable agriculture and food system. With our members and allies, we support democratic participation to secure food and farm policies that:

- Assure adequate access to good and adequate food for all
- Maintain and restore the plurality of land ownership
- Provide fair wages and working conditions for farmworkers and all workers in the food system
- Provide equitable access and distribution of resources to all in the farm and food sector, including all federal (USDA) farm programs and resources
- Provide fair trade, food sovereignty and treatment of all people of the planet compatible with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Support in all things care of the earth, and the value the diversity and sustenance of creatures, culture and community

With their strong roots in the movements for human, civil, indigenous and farmworker rights, Rural Coalition members share the belief that rural communities everywhere can have a better future. The inequities, injustices and environmental degradation that affect Rural Coalition members and their counterparts in rural areas can best be addressed by a clear analysis of causes and solutions and by a unified approach to implementing solutions.

The Rural Coalition believes that the community-based organizations who have long served the needs of rural communities and people have a fundamental role in building that future. Investments in their work will provide important returns to our economy, our environment and our society. Thus, Rural Coalition focuses its efforts on building the individual and shared capacity of community-based organizations to define problems and combine their power to seek long-term solutions.

Also crucial to the future of rural communities is their ability to fully participate in society and access the resources and skills they need. The Rural Coalition helps its members to learn from each other, seek shared resources, and link their work with other communities to achieve these goals.

We've made major strides in identifying and planning strategies for moving our organization to the next level. We formulated policies with our members and allies, and have developed templates for the next phase of our work to best achieve our mission, build our organization, serve our constituents and enhance, complement and support the work of our members.

We are pleased to share these accomplishments with you.

The Board of Directors of the Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural



Coalición Rural Coalition



Coalición Rural Coalition

Third Annual Gala: December 2008

Celebrating Community Based Organizations and Farm Bill Victories

- 6:00 pm** Reception – *Holeman Lounge*
- 6:45 pm** Dinner Seating – *Ballroom - Music by the Howard Franklin Group*
- 7:00 pm** Opening – *Mrs. Pat Engel, Mistress of Ceremonies*
- Introduction of RC Board, Staff and Special Guests – *Rudy Arredondo*
- Welcome from Michael Hamrick - *National Press Club*
- Invocation – *Georgia Good*
- Dinner – *Music by the Howard Franklin Group*
- Presentation of Awards – *Georgia Good and John Zippert*
- Honorees*
- The Honorable Joe Baca-CA 43** (U.S. House of Representatives)
The Honorable Collin Peterson-MN 7 (U.S. House of Representatives)
(will be presented later)
Mr. Dale Moore-Chief of Staff to the Secretary of Agriculture
- Agency Service Award*
- United States Department of Agriculture National Agriculture Statistics**
Dr. Cynthia Clark, Administrator (Award Accepted by Carol House)
- USDA Staff Recognition*
- Geraldine Herring**, USDA-Office of Outreach
Denis Ebodaghe, USDA-CSREES
- Community-Based Service Awards*
- Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project** - 10 years
Concerned Citizens of Tillery - 30 years
Empire State Family Farm Alliance – 20 years
Farmworker Association of Florida - 25 years
Sin Fronteras Organizing Project - 25 years
The Solidarity Committee of the Capital District – 25 years
Land Loss Prevention Project – 25 years
- Reflecting on 30 years of Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural** –
John Zippert, Board Chair
- Dessert – *Music by the Howard Franklin Group*
- Good Night, Sweet Dreams – Next Year: Join Us Again, Build the Movement, Bring a Friend*



Mrs. Pat Engel

Mistress of Ceremony

Pat Engel has more than 30 years of experience working on rural, agricultural and education issues. Her diverse background working for and with nonprofits, universities, government agencies, political campaigns, public and private schools gives her a unique understanding of third party organizational needs and goals.

Before becoming Director of Third Party Relations for Amplify, Pat was a senior consultant at IDI, where she first started as an independent government and public affairs consultant. Prior to that, Pat served in the United States Department of Agriculture, as the External Affairs Director of the Risk Management Agency. Before relocation to the D.C. area, Pat served as the Assistant Director of Student Services at Monroe College. As an officer of a Bronx-wide voting organization, Pat chaired the law committee, co-chaired two judicial screening panels, and

served as campaign manager and political consultant in several local elections. She has raised funds for various groups, candidates, and causes.

Pat holds a Bachelor's Degree from Herbert H. Lehman College of the City University of New York.

Pat and her spouse, Congressman Eliot Engel, have three children.

Howard Franklin Group

A self-taught musician until college, Franklin started to seriously pursue the drums at the age of fifteen. As a consummate full time musician, Franklin works in Jazz, Funk, Gospel, Latin, R&B, Rock, Reggae, and Fusion settings weekly. Also, Franklin performs locally and internationally and is known in many musical circles. As the band leader of the Howard Franklin Group and the Wildflower Band, his passionate energy is always present. He regularly performs for public and private events, weddings, corporate affairs, etc. A professional musician, teacher and endless student, he is always searching for new avenues of learning. Franklin returned to college to finish his music education degree under the tutelage of Calvin Jones (formerly of the Ray Charles Band, immediate past Director, University of the District of Columbia Jazz Studies Program). Given the nickname "Kingfish" by his late mentor, Calvin Jones and also called "Fishstix" by Shirley Horn's drummer Steve Williams, Franklin is definitely headed for stardom.



The owner of the historic Bohemian Caverns, Al Ashfar stated, "Howard Franklin is one of the best drummers out of D.C." Also, U.S. Congressman John Conyers of Michigan, a well-known jazz enthusiast, said, "Wow, that was awesome!" after witnessing one of Franklin's performances. Franklin has performed with many prominent artists such as Jackie Mclean, Benny Golson, Curtis Fuller, Slide Hampton, Fred Wesley, Robin Eubanks and Delfeayo Marsalis. He also has had the pleasure of working with Bruce Williams, Mark Gross, Nick Rolfe, Sherman Irby, Calvin Jones, Marshall Keyes, Roy Hargove, Paul Carr, Christian McBride and Tim Warfield to name a few of the jazz greats with whom he has collaborated. Franklin makes regular appearances at Blues Alley, Twins Jazz, Café Nema and Juste Lounge.

For For Information and Bookings Contact:

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2008 Gala: Celebrating Community-Based Organizations and Farm Bill Victories.

The Rural Coalition each December takes a moment to celebrate our accomplishments, and to honor the federal, congressional, business and community leaders who have been essential to our achievements. The 2008 these is Celebrating Community-Based Organizations and Farm Bill Victories.

Diversity in food and agriculture, the thrust behind our legislative advocacy, continues to be the theme that will provide the social and political energy for our work. Our 2008 Gala will feature a celebration of the achievements we have made in the past year in our policy work, and the many leaders who have helped us get there.

2008 Rural Coalition Gala Awards

INDIVIDUAL HONOREES

Congressman Joe Baca; 43rd District of California

Congressman Baca has served in Congress since winning a special election in 1999. Rep. Baca represents the 43rd District of California, which includes the cities of Colton, Fontana, Rialto, Ontario and San Bernardino, as well as the areas of Bloomington and Muscoy. Rep. Baca serves on the House Agriculture Committee, and he is the Chair of the Subcommittee on Departmental Operations, Oversight, Nutrition and Forestry. He also is a member of the Subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy and Poultry. He also serves on the House Financial Services Committee, where he is a member of the Subcommittee on Capital Markets, Insurance, and Government Sponsored Enterprises, and the Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit. In addition, Rep. Baca serves on the House Natural Resources Committee and as a member of the Water and Power Subcommittee.



In November 2006, the members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) elected Congressman Baca (D-California) to serve as its next Chair. Rep. Baca has led the group, which includes all Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate of Hispanic descent, during the current 110th Congress (2007-2008). He also chairs the CHC Corporate America, Technology, Communications and the Arts Task Force.

Congressman Baca is recognized for his leadership on including diversity and protections for socially disadvantaged producers and farmworkers in the 2008 Farm Bill.

Congressman Collin Peterson; 7th District of Minnesota

Congress Peterson represents the 7th Congressional District in Minnesota. Congressman Peterson was born on June 29, 1944, in Fargo, North Dakota. He grew up on a farm in Baker, Minnesota, and he currently lives in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota. He served in the Minnesota Senate from 1977 to 1986. Congressman Peterson has served on the US House of Representatives since 1990, and is currently the Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee.

Congressman Peterson has received the following awards during his many years of service: Golden Triangle Award, National Farmers Union; Friend of Farm Bureau, American Farm Bureau Federation; Co-Legislator of the Year, Safari Club International; Conservation Legislator of the Year, Pheasants Forever; Champion of Private Property Rights, League of Private Property Voters; Guardian of Small Business, National Federation of Independent Business; Spirit of Enterprise Award, U.S. Chamber of Commerce; Deficit Hawk Award, Concord Coalition; Public Achievement Award, Minnesota Hospital and Healthcare Partnership; Medal of Honor Award, U.S. Oncology; and Friend of the Farm Conservation, National Resource Conservation Service.

Congressman Peterson is recognized for his unwavering leadership and hard work resulting in a farm bill that includes benefits for all farmers and ranchers. Our thanks also extend to the full House and Senate Agriculture committees and their staffs.

Dale Moore; Chief of Staff to the Agriculture Secretary

Mr. Moore served as the executive director for legislative affairs at the Washington, DC-based National Cattlemen's Beef Association, brings an array of agriculture and legislative experience to USDA from 1997 until he joined USDA. He was the legislative director of the Committee on Agriculture at the U.S. House of Representatives from 1995-96, where he worked on the formulation and passage of the 1996 Farm Bill. He has held a variety of positions with the House Agriculture Committee that included serving as the Republican legislative coordinator from 1993-94.



Mr. Moore served as the minority counsel for the House Agriculture Committee's Subcommittee on Department Operations, Research and Foreign Agriculture from 1991-93. From 1985-91 he was the agricultural legislative assistant for (then) U.S. Rep. Pat Roberts (Kan.), who is now a U.S. Senator from Kansas. A native of Copeland, Kan., where he was raised on a livestock, hay and grain farm, Moore holds a Bachelor of Science degree in animal science/biology from Fort Hays State University, in Hays, Kan.

Mr. Moore is recognized for his leadership, good humor, open door, and demonstrated commitment to providing a seat at the table to the diverse farmers we serve.

USDA AGENCY AWARD

National Agriculture Statistics Services (NASS):

Carol House (Accepting on behalf of Dr. Cynthia Clark, Administrator)

The USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is charged with accurate statistics on US Agriculture. NASS is being recognized in 2008 for its extraordinary work with community-based organizations to reach small, minority and limited-resource producers in the 2007 Census of Agriculture, and to make sure all were counted. The Census is especially important to traditionally underrepresented producers because it provides the factual data that underpins all USDA programs and services. It tells policymakers where the producers are, who they are, how they are changing, what they are producing, and how they are producing it. The more that is known about the nation's farms and ranches – and those who operate them – the better USDA can target programs to the people and places that need them most.

Though final census data has not yet been released by NASS, early return information was promising. In areas where CBO partners conducted Census Days, return rates for socially disadvantaged farmers were on par with those for their white peers. The Rural Coalition congratulates NASS and its CBO partners for the remarkable progress made, and hopes to see this partnership continue.

The Rural Coalition and our sister organizations will now work with NASS to translate the results of the current work into a longer-term plan. This plan will apply the lessons learned and improve the visibility and viability of the next Census of Agriculture. Continued efforts may include another CBO workshop upon release of the census data in 2009, tailoring census media promotion to reach socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, and developing new strategies for community outreach. For info, contact Michelle Radice- Deputy Administrator for Programs and Products at Michelle_radice@nass.usda.gov or 202-690-1311.

USDA STAFF AWARDS

Geraldine Herring - Special Project Coordinator; USDA Office of Outreach

Geraldine Herring is a 37-year plus award winning federal employee. She is currently a Special Outreach Program Manager in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Office of Outreach, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights helping to ensure equal access to all the Department's programs and services. The USDA Office of Outreach provides leadership, coordination, facilitation and expertise to internal and external partners to ensure equal and timely access to USDA programs for all constituents, with emphasis on the underserved. Ms. Herring brings to the USDA Office of Outreach more than three decades of expertise in administering, planning, organizing, directing, implementing and evaluating programs and initiatives to help assure USDA constituents are provided with efficient, timely and culturally appropriate assistance.

She has received numerous awards for high performance and excellence: the Burnice Blanks Friends of Black Farmers Award; Award of Excellence from Federal Partners in the Federal Interagency Working Group for Environmental Justice; David R. Humes Public Service Award for spearheading economic development in small and rural communities; Special Service Award for outstanding contributions to the successful development and implementation of the USDA Pilot Mentor Program for Employees with Disabilities; Secretary's Distinguished Service Award for implementing the President's Farm Credit Initiatives for farmers experiencing severe financial problems; Secretary's Initiative to review the Farmer Programs Foreclosure Process; Facilitator award for Achieving Extraordinary Customer Relations; Federal Women Program Manager's Council; Farmers Home Administration's Woman of the Year and many others.

Ms. Herring is recognized for her long dedication and service to all of our communities, and for her efforts to reach out and include everyone.

Denis Ebodaghe - National Program Leader; USDA CSREES; Small Farms USDA-CSREES

Dr. Ebodaghe serves as a national program leader for small farm research and extension program development; through partnership and collaborative efforts with our land-grant university partners and other stakeholders, deal with small farm and ranch issues and concerns, including formulating and guiding broad scale efforts to assist small farmers improve their income levels, and the economic viability of small farm enterprises. Mr. Ebodaghe has 22 years working with USDA and a Ph D in agronomy from VA Tech.

Dr. Ebodaghe is recognized for his dedication and commitment to reaching and serving all small farmers and ranchers, and to assisting our communities in every way possible.

Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural - 30 Years

The Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural is an alliance of farmers, farmworkers, indigenous, migrant and working people from the United States, Mexico, Canada and beyond, building toward a new society that values unity, hope, people, and the land.

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Concerned Citizens of Tillery - 30 Years

Concerned Citizens of Tillery envisions an empowered, sustainable community that builds on our natural, historic and cultural resources to promote economic independence, a healthy and environmentally sound life, the development of heritage and agricultural tourism that honors and celebrates the spirit and fortitude of Tillery, and an enhanced quality of life through our own outside participation in conferences, retreats, seminars and other educational activities. CCT has accomplished many of its goals since its creation in 1978. The Concerned Citizens of Tillery's unique, creative and path-breaking organizing model has been recognized locally, nationally and internationally. CCT firmly believes that in order for communities to survive, members must have a voice in the decisions which will have an impact, adverse or otherwise, on their lives. We will continue to work toward creating a safe environment where even the most alienated, disenfranchised, and historically oppressed people can speak—for speaking is the first step toward action.

CCT has successfully seated grassroots folk on county boards including the Council on Aging, the Health Department, School Board, and other programs, including Smart Start. CCT drafted and implemented the first Intensive Livestock Ordinance in North Carolina, copied by many other counties, and also created a model for health care in partnerships with universities that also was used in five other communities.

CCT has opened the Resettlement Community Restaurant and Store in Tillery, and helped local and state politicians win their office.

Sin Fronteras Organizing Project - 25 Years

Sin Fronteras Organizing Project, a non-profit organization properly incorporated in the State of Texas on February 1993, was founded to fight against the injustices and inequalities faced by the farmworker community of West Texas and Southern New Mexico. Sin Fronteras Organizing Project is one of the most important and active farmworkers' efforts in the United States-México border. This organizing effort is part of a growing farm labor movement. Born of decades of neglect and poverty in the fields of America, this movement is a response to the need for social change. When this goal is accomplished, farmworkers will then be able to live with dignity and peace.

The organizing and educational work of Sin Fronteras takes place in the border region integrated by Southern New Mexico, far West Texas and Northern Chihuahua. In this region of three states and two nations, about 14,000 farm laborers live and work. El Paso, the largest North American city of this region, is the most important recruitment place for agricultural workers along the border. It also serves as the base for these workers, and many more that use this border to cross into the diverse agricultural regions of the nation. Our most important accomplishment in over ten years of struggle is our center, the Centro de los Trabajadores Agrícolas Fronterizos.

Farmworker Association of Florida - 25 Years

The Farmworker Association of Florida, Inc. (FWAF) is a membership organization of over 6,330 farmworker families from predominately Mexican, Haitian, Afro-American, Guatemalan and Salvadoran communities, which was begun in 1983 and incorporated in May 1986. The goal is to build a strong multi-racial, economically viable organization of farmworkers in Florida—empowering farmworkers to respond to and gain control over the social, political, economic, and workplace issues that affect their lives. The members of the FWAF work mainly in ferns, foliage, citrus, vegetables, and mushrooms. To date there are members in over eleven counties: Orange, Lake, Sumter, Seminole, Volusia, Putnam, Dade, Hendry, Collier, Lee, and Osceola. The South Florida organizing projects were initiated in 1992.

In the early 90's, members of the Association gained improvements in wages and working conditions for workers in over 40 Central Florida companies, and continues to address injustices suffered by farmworkers in the work place. FWAF also addresses community problems facing farmworkers, such as police harassment, neighborhood crime, problems with the Border Patrol, and State and Federal agencies. Since the early 90's, the Association has addressed pesticides, field sanitation, and other health and safety issues, educating and training members to learn their rights, secure the passage of Florida's Right-to-Know law to protect farmworkers, filed complaints for violations and advocating the government for better enforcement, and participated in a study in the effects of pesticides on farmworkers.

Land Loss Prevention Project – 25 Years

The Land Loss Prevention Project (LLPP) was founded in 1982 by the North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers to curtail epidemic losses of Black-owned land in North Carolina. LLPP was incorporated in the state of North Carolina in 1983. The organization broadened its mission in 1993 to provide legal support and assistance to all financially distressed and limited resource farmers and landowners in North Carolina.

LLPP's advocacy for financially distressed and limited resource farmers involves action in three separate arenas: litigation, public policy, and promoting sustainable agriculture and environment. Activity in the litigation arena typically involves debt restructuring for farmers in crisis and other legal work. On the public policy front, LLPP monitors agricultural policy and the impact it has on North Carolina's small family farmers. Finally, LLPP helps family farmers and landowners develop sustainable agricultural practices that are environmentally friendly and economically viable for their rural communities. LLPP is committed to working alongside state, regional and national coalitions who support sustainable agriculture practices, development and policy innovations.

The Solidarity Committee of the Capital District – 25 years

The Solidarity Committee of the Capital District is an all-volunteer organization committed to building a just, peaceful, and cooperative society. Composed of activists from local labor unions and the community, it has struggled for more than two decades to defend workers' rights, promote social and economic equality, foster peace, and protect the environment. The Solidarity Committee began in November 1983, when, in the midst of a bitter strike by members of the Amalgamated Transit Union against the Greyhound Corporation, union members in the capital district organized a Strikers Support Committee. Led by John Funicello, the committee staged large, pro-labor demonstrations at the Greyhound bus terminal in Albany, and helped turn the tide in labor's favor. After the settlement of the strike, Albany union activists, determined to continue this kind of successful mobilizing effort, renamed the strike support committee the Solidarity Committee of the Capital District.

In the years since then, the Solidarity Committee has held monthly meetings open to all, reported regularly on workers' struggles to the Albany County Central Federation of Labor, and published a monthly newsletter (Solidarity Notes, mailed free of charge to a thousand activists). It has participated in nearly every union organizing drive, strike, or contract struggle in the capital district--leafleting, swelling picket lines and leading chants, raising support funds, and sometimes working with the union leadership to plan strike strategy. In addition, it has held public forums on the harmful effects of NAFTA, worked with unions and environmental groups to defeat the devastating James Bay hydroelectric project, exposed corporate exploitation and criminality, co-sponsored annual May Day celebrations of workers' rights, helped build opposition to the Bush administration's reckless foreign policy, and opposed agribusiness by opposing dangerous pesticides and rallying support for family farms.

Empire State Family Farm Alliance – 20 Years

Empire State Family Farm Alliance was formed to promote family farmers getting a fair price for their products. Our goal is to maintain a strong voice for the family farmer, and to educate legislators as to what is necessary to keep our family farmers producing our food instead of relying on imports and factory farms. We work to support and work with other groups with similar sustainable goals, including the land as well as the farmer. We also provide education to consumers to help them choose a healthy diet for their families, for a reasonable price, while providing a decent living for the farmer.

Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project - 10 Years

The mission of the Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project is to implement business initiatives that will address training, employment and economic development in the town of Wewoka, Oklahoma, surrounding towns of Seminole County and the state of Oklahoma. Its goals are to: strengthen youths in agriculture, growth development and career choices; economic development and revitalization of Rural America; develop partnerships with local, state, federal agencies and private corporations; and to create



LAND STEWARDSHIP PROJECT

Congratulations to the Rural Coalition for 30 Years of Powerful Organizing!

The members of
Land Stewardship Project
are glad to be allies in
forging a more just and
sustainable food and
agriculture system.

Keeping the Land and People Together

www.LandStewardshipProject.org

opportunities for City officials and citizens to experience and explore cultural connection through long-term community partnerships with outreach assistance from local, state and federal agencies.

The Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project's vision is to develop economic exchanges from trade through the tools of import/export, agriculture, business development opportunities and tourism. Our purpose is to preserve the rich history of Blacks (Maroons) and Native-Americans in both Oklahoma and Florida.



USDA Coalition of Minority Employees

The Coalition was founded in May 1994. Its primary mission is to work toward the eradication of historical and systemic discrimination at USDA, identify issues, concerns and recommend solutions. Our goal is to eradicate many of the barriers to equality found in employment and program delivery.

Lawrence C. Lucas, *President*

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Celebrating Farm Bill Victories

2008 Farm Bill: Diversity Gains Set the Stage for a Powerful Movement for Change

by Lorette Picciano, Executive Director

After being passed, vetoed and overridden twice, the much discussed and anticipated Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 was finally enacted into law. While much of what was written and said about the bill in the media is decidedly negative, the new farm bill, and the process behind it, merits a deeper look.

The final tab for the five-year farm bill is slightly above the \$280 million “baseline” assigned in the Congressional budget to reflect the cost of current programs. The bill increased spending on nutrition programs and assistance to food banks. A new disaster fund was created, funds for conservation energy increased, and small yet significant gains were made for socially disadvantaged and beginning farmers and ranchers.

The Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 achieved significant strides in promoting equitable access to programs, and addressing farmworker needs, especially for minority and disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

A few of the 2008 Farm Bill gains for socially disadvantaged producers and farmworkers include:

- Set-asides in some conservation and other programs allocated a percentage of overall funds to limited resource and socially disadvantaged producers every year:
 1. \$7.3 billion (over 5 years) for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, with a 5% set aside for Socially Disadvantaged and Beginning Producers. In addition to this approximately \$366 million reserved over 5 years for socially disadvantaged and beginning producers, the government will provide a 90% cost share and advance payments up to 30% for them.
 2. The Conservation Security Program received about \$12 billion available over the next 10 years. Socially disadvantaged and beginning farmers and ranchers will receive a 5% set aside or a minimum of \$600 million over 5 years.
 3. The Conservation Reserve Program Transition Incentives provides \$25 million over 10 years to encourage owners of Conservation Reserve Program land to sell or rent to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers
- \$75 million over 4 years is provided to the 2501 Outreach and Technical Assistance Program--a partnership program between USDA and community-based organizations and minority-serving institutions that has helped socially disadvantaged farmers remain on their land.
- A permanent position for USDA farmworker coordinator was created.
- Offices serving socially disadvantaged, beginning and small farmers were consolidated into the Office of Advocacy and Outreach.
- The administration was instructed to settle outstanding civil rights claims, including class action lawsuits by American Indian, Latino and women producers
- At least \$100 million was allocated to settle claims that were never considered under the historic Pigford consent decree for African American producers;
- The Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program received \$75 million mandatory funds over 4 years, and \$30 million discretionary funds for this program. 25% of these funds (\$18.75 million) are reserved for socially disadvantaged producers, with \$7.5 million in discretionary funds.

In total, the new farm bill will benefit socially disadvantaged producers and farmworkers to the tune of about \$1.5 billion. The 2008 Farm Bill is significant step towards equity for socially disadvantaged producers. It assures that USDA benefits will actually reach producers for whom the USDA doors have long been closed. Finally, American Indian, African American, Latino, Asian American, and other small-scale producers, have a real opportunity to secure the same conservation, credit and other benefits long provided to other producers.

Diversity Initiative (DI) Policy Team

The DI is led by a crosscutting Policy Team established in July 2006 to synthesize existing policy into proposals to expand diversity and equity in the 2008 farm bill. Our leaders have long term and substantive relationships with policy makers, having worked for as many as three decades to bring justice and equity to food and farm policy.

Farm and Food Policy Diversity Initiative Policy Team

- **Savi Horne**, Land Loss Prevention Project, Policy Team Co- Chair
- **Ross Racine**, Intertribal Agriculture Council, Policy Team Co- Chair
- **Jerry Pennick and John Zippert**, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund
- **Rudy Arredondo**, National Latino Farmers and Ranchers Trade Association
- **Lloyd Wright**, former USDA Director of Civil Rights, Independent Consultant
- **Albert Jacquez and Antonio Gonzalez**, William C. Velasquez Institute
- **Michael Harris**, Institute for Community Resource Development
- **Daniel Cordalis**, National Congress of American Indians
- **Tirso Moreno**, Farmworker Association of Florida
- **Chukou Thao**, National Hmong American Farmers
- **Mily Trevino-Saucedo**, Organización en California de Liderés Campesinas
- **Edmund Gomez**, New Mexico State University
- **Brett Malone**, ALBA
- **Anim Steel**, The Food Project
- **Quinton Robinson**, Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural, Policy Advisor
- **Lorette Picciano**, Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural, Policy Team Coordinator

MESSAGE OF SOLIDARITY

Agricultural Missions, Inc.

Congratulations/Felicidades Rural Coalition/Coalición on this 30th anniversary of your struggles for justice and equity for rural people! In solidarity/solidaridad, Agricultural Missions, Inc.

“The provisions supporting socially disadvantaged and minority farmers and ranchers in the 2008 Farm Bill reflect the recognition of the strength and diversity in American agriculture.”
– Rep. Collin Peterson, Chair, House Agriculture Committee

Our work on the 2008 Farm Bill was the culmination of two-year effort by the Farm and Food Policy Diversity Initiative. FFPDI was established in 2006 to ensure that organizations serving people of color in the food system had the opportunity to develop from their own initiatives a comprehensive food and agriculture policy agenda. It is coordinated by Rural Coalition, and its goal was to secure access to the same opportunities open to other producers the 2008 farm bill. The DI and its partners sought to improve equity in the farm bill through policies that increase transparency and accountability, and by building bridges between the diverse leaders engaged in food and farm policy development. With support from the Jessie Smith Noyes and W.K. Kellogg Foundations and Oxfam America, members of the Diversity Initiative worked with Congress and the Administration to assure the 2008 Farm Bill addressed the many structural inequities American Indian, African American, Latino and Asian-Pacific American producers and farmworkers have long faced.

The FFPDI represents the rural and urban agricultural interests of African American, American Indian, Latino, Asian American, faith-based organizations, farmworkers and a broad base of supporters of equity and justice. The involvement of organizations of color in the farm bill policy debate is crucial not only to halt land and farm loss by eliminating the factors that cause it, but also to expand opportunities and restore access for populations that seek prosperity in the food system. Organizations that represent people of color have been steeped in the struggles for a better way of life for some of the most vulnerable communities in the U.S. and beyond. As such, these leaders are well positioned and qualified to contribute the often strongest and most straightforward policy solutions for improving the sustainability and viability for everyone in the food system.

“I applaud the Diversity Initiative for their consistent hard work and commitment during the long and often difficult farm bill process. Thanks in no small part to the Initiative’s efforts and advocacy, Congress crafted the first ever farm bill that takes significant steps in creating greater equity and diversity in American agriculture. I thank the Diversity Initiative for serving as a voice to smaller and socially-disadvantaged farmers, and I look forward to continuing our work together in the future.”
- The Honorable Joe Baca, Chairman, Subcommittee on Department Operations, Oversight, Nutrition, and Forestry, House Committee on Agriculture.

For a Complete Report on farm bill accomplishments, see our report “A Seat at the Table: Diversity in the 2008 Farm Bill” at www.ruralco.org.

MESSAGE OF SOLIDARITY

Marian Douglas Ugardo

Love to family, friends and colleagues,
especially in the mountains of Western North
Carolina and East Tennessee. Keep up the
good work! - *from Marian’s Blog*

land loss prevention project

Dedicated to the Preservation of the Family Farm Celebrating 25 Years of Service

In 1982, the North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers wanted to assist in reversing the trend of land and farm losses among Black families, and so founded the Land Loss Prevention Project (LLPP). Since that time, LLPP's has continued its mission to curtail the losses of Black-owned land in North Carolina by addressing such issues as heir property disputes, condemnation and eminent domain cases, tax foreclosures, lender foreclosures, adverse possessions, involuntary partition sales, and fraud.

In 1990, the mission of the LLPP was expanded to address the growing environmental threats to human health as a result of the hazardous environmental problems, disproportionately located in minority and limited-resource communities. Since 1994, LLPP has been an active participant in the Sustainable Agriculture movement within North Carolina and through membership and board service in national organizations, including the Rural Coalition. With Rural Coalition and our other partners, we led the work of the Farm and Food Policy Diversity Initiative.

Recognized nationally for its expertise. LLPP is the only nonprofit law firm in the country that provides direct legal assistance to financially distressed farmers and limited-resource landowners or persons with interests in land. LLPP serves all one hundred counties of North Carolina as a statewide nonprofit organization. The LLPP also accepts calls from attorneys, farmers, and advocates from other states.

The Land Loss Prevention Project congratulates the Rural Coalition on its 30 years of service to rural and people of color producers and communities and on its coordinating work for the Farm and Food Policy Diversity Initiative.

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Coalition Rural Coalition

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Special Thanks From Our Rural Coalition 2008-2010 Board of Directors to Our Members and Supporters

We are grateful to the members of the Rural Coalition/ Coalicion Rural and our supporters for their efforts in the past 30 years to sustain our work.

On behalf of our members, we send special thanks to our current supporters, including:

Farm Aid

Jessie Smith Noyes

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USDA Risk Management Agency

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With Gratitude to Our Sprouts

Gary Farms, Florida

Dr. Gladys Gary Vaughn

Special Thanks to Our Seedlings

Geraldine Herring

Center for New Community

Agricultural Missions, Inc.

MESSAGE OF SOLIDARITY

Farmworker Association of Florida

The Farmworker Association of Florida sends a BIG congratulations to the Rural Coalition on their 30 years of building power among farmworkers, farmers, and ranchers!





United States Department of Agriculture
Risk Management Agency



David Wiggins

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RMA Outreach Programs *For the 21st Century*

The USDA Risk Management Agency supports Minority Farmers and Ranchers through its Office of Civil Rights and Community Outreach blueprint—
Community Outreach and Assistance Partnership Program.

RMA Outreach Goals Include: Ensuring that every farmer and rancher has equal access to all risk management tools and programs; Increasing awareness and effective use of risk management tools; and Enhancing and strengthening the safety net for the traditionally underserved producer.

To learn how these programs may benefit you go to the RMA website www.rma.usda.gov or from ten Regional Offices across the U.S.

The U.S Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.



The USDA Rural Development Mission:

To increase economic opportunity and improve the quality of life for all rural Americans.



Community
Facilities



Housing
Assistance



Business
Programs



Utilities and
Communications

Today, rural America is creating new economies able to compete in global markets by employing digital connectivity, developing new technologies, and harnessing ingenuity. It is advancing new sources of renewable energy through the utilization of America's natural resources and bringing greater quality of life to areas where enhanced education and health care services previously didn't exist.

Our USDA Rural Development team of professionals is working every day to meet the challenges and opportunities facing our rural residents and communities. With our customers in mind, we have adopted streamlined underwriting and investment delivery approaches that we believe better serve our customers.

Rural America is full of inventive, hard-working, ambitious people with robust dreams and determined attitudes. USDA Rural Development is, and will continue to be, ready to help turn their dreams into realities, hard work into sustainable economic gain, and problem-solving minds into nationwide solutions. USDA Rural Development is committed to the future of rural communities.

Thomas Dorr
Under Secretary

