



Third Annual USDA Partners Meeting

*“Think Solutions: Cultivating
The USDA/Community
Based Organization
Partnership To Strengthen Farming
and Rural Communities”*



August 2-4, 2006
CAPITAL HILTON
1001 16TH Street, NW
Washington, DC
20036

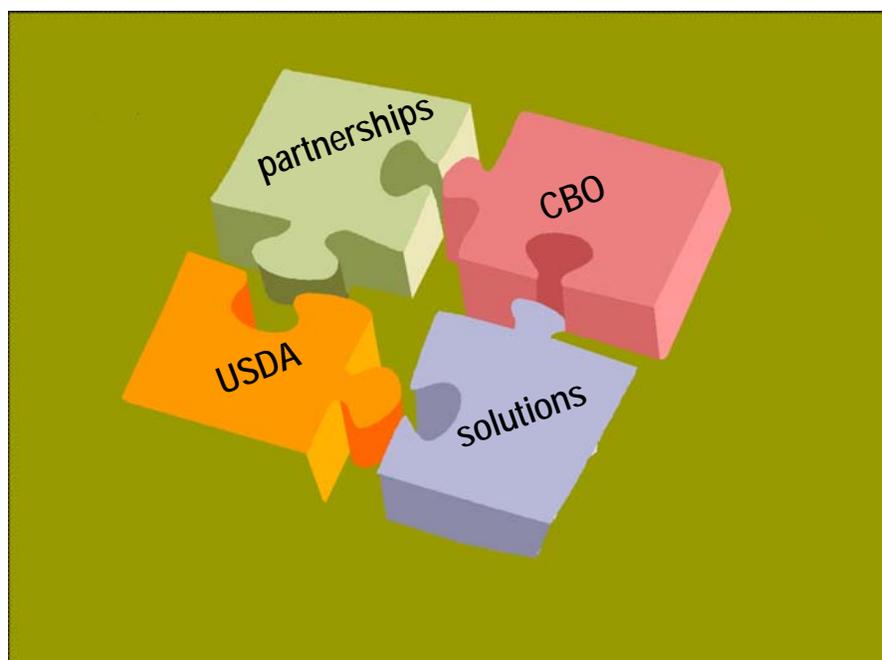
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY
FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

Partners III - Table of Contents

<i>Welcome</i>	5
<i>Partners III Program At-A-Glance</i>	6
<i>General Information</i>	9
<i>Program</i>	11
<i>The 2006 Conversations</i>	17
<i>Meeting Protocols</i>	33
<i>USDA Agencies</i>	34
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	37
<i>Hotel Map</i>	42

The Third Annual USDA/CBO Partners Meeting

“Think Solutions: Cultivating The USDA/CBO Partnership To Strengthen Farming and Rural Communities”



August 2-4, 2006

Capital Hilton Hotel, 1001 16th Street, NW

Washington, DC 20036

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

Office of Outreach

Partners III - Letter from the Secretary

United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Partners:

I am very pleased to welcome you to Partners III—the Third Annual Partners Meeting.

Barely three years ago, we embarked on a new journey to begin to close the gap in some of the differences between the Department of Agriculture (USDA) and small, minority and other underserved farmers and ranchers. We continue the journey today.

The goal of Partners III is twofold:

- First, to “think solutions” as we continue the dialogue begun at the 2004 Stakeholders meeting, and to build on last year’s conference and the ongoing interaction between the partners and USDA through the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights.
- Second, to examine ways USDA can utilize the expertise of community-based organizations (CBO) to help address the critical needs of our underserved constituents, and at the same time help us to more effectively deliver our programs and services.

The presence of more than 100 CBO representatives and nearly an equal number of USDA representatives is a testament to our mutual desire to cultivate this exciting partnership. By working together, this annual conference can become the keystone in providing a substantive forum by which we derive meaningful solutions to long-standing and emerging concerns of small and minority farmers and ranchers.

I encourage everyone to use this opportunity to learn more about the Partners and about USDA. As you participate in the sessions, *think solutions*—help identify strategies that hold promise for improving the long-term well being of small and minority farmers and ranchers in agriculture.

In this short time, we have come a long way. Thank you for staying the course we are setting together, and for making your voices and concerns heard at USDA.

Enjoy Partners III!

Sincerely,



Mike Johanns
Secretary

Partners III - Program At-A-Glance

Wednesday, August 2, 2006

Time	Event	Room
10:00 AM - 5:00PM	Conference Registration Desk Open	
Noon	Lunch	Federal AB
1:00 PM	Opening Plenary: Where We Were Yesterday, Where We Are Today	South American AB
	Orientation to Partners III	South American AB
3:00 PM	Break	Lobby outside South American AB
3:30 - 5:30 PM	Conversations # 1—4	
Conversation #1	Equitable Access to USDA Programs and Services	Massachusetts
Conversation #2	Enhancing Resources and Land Access for Small Farmers, ranchers, Farm Workers and Small Towns in Rural Areas	New York
Conversation #3	Risk Management, Marketing, and Food Safety	Ohio
Conversation #4	Community Food Security and Nutrition Assistance	California
5:45 PM	Report of Conversations #1—4; Discussion, Summary and Evaluation	South American AB
7:00 PM	Reception	Congressional
8:00 PM	CBO Partners Meeting	

Partners III - Program At-A-Glance

Thursday, August 3, 2006

Time	Event	Room
7:00 AM	Continental Breakfast	
8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	Conference Registration Desk Open	
8:30 AM - 10:00 AM	Second Plenary: The Status and Future of Small Farms	South American AB
10:00 AM	Break	
10:30 AM - 11:45 AM	Second Plenary, continued	South American AB
Noon	Luncheon	Federal AB
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM	Conversations #5—8	
Conversation #5	Animal Identification: Implications for Small-Scale Producers	Massachusetts
Conversation #6	Traditional Conservation, Land Stewardship, and Cooperative Conservation	New York
Conversation #7	Farmworkers, USDA, and U.S. Agriculture	Ohio
Conversation #8	Grants, Cooperative Agreements, and Partnerships	California
Special Session	The Future: Marketing Higher Value Crops & Accessing Higher Value Markets	Statler
4:00 PM	Break	
4:30 PM	Report of Conversations #5—8; Discussion, Summary and Evaluation	South American AB
6:30 PM	Dinner	Federal AB
8:00 PM	CBO Meetings	

Partners III - Program At-A-Glance

Friday, August 4, 2006

Time	Event	Room
7:00 AM	Continental Breakfast	
8:00 AM - NOON	Conference Registration Desk Open	
8:00 AM- 10:00AM	Conversations #9—12	
Conversation #9	Disaster Preparedness and Policy	Massachusetts
Conversation #10	Foreclosures, Accelerations, and Land Fractionation	New York
Conversation #11	New-Entry, Young and Women Farmers	Ohio
Conversation #12	County Committee Elections Process	California
10:00 AM	Break	
10:15 AM	Third Plenary: Thinking Solutions –How Will We Proceed? Dialogue with the Chief of Staff; Report on Conversation Follow-Up Committee	South American AB
Noon	Closing Luncheon; Conference Summary	Federal AB

Partners III - General Information

Registration

The Partners III registration desk is open each day of the conference. Employees of USDA and the Rural Coalition will be at the desk to assist you. The registration desk hours are as follows:

Wednesday, August 2, 2006	10:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Thursday, August 3, 2006	8:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Friday, August 4, 2006	8:00 AM to Noon

Participation

Only individuals who have registered for the conference can participate, and will be admitted to conference activities. *Please wear your badge at all times while the conference is in session.* If you lose your badge, please visit the registration desk to obtain a duplicate.

The Conference Program includes the time and location for each session. Should there be a change to the program, it will be announced at a Plenary Session and/or you will receive written notice.

Networking

Time for networking has been built into the conference agenda. Please use the breaks, meal functions, and the evenings to hold discussions with USDA staff and CBO representatives; and participate in the scheduled conversations and plenaries.

Conference Evaluation

An evaluation form for each session has been prepared. Time has been allocated during each session for completing the evaluation form. *Please complete and submit the evaluation form at the end of the session.* In the evaluation form for the over-all event, please provide information on your suggestions and ideas for the future, including areas where you would like to contribute.

Messages

A message board is available in the registration area for posting telephone, lost and found, and other similar messages. Conference participants may also use the message board to contact other conference attendees or to post messages.

Computer and Internet Access

USDA staff will assist you with word processing needs via a laptop computer available at the registration desk. Internet connections are available in your hotel room. *You must pay the fee charged by the hotel for this service.*

Meals and Refreshments

Meals are provided for conference registrants. Continental breakfast is being provided on Thursday and Friday; lunch will be provided Wednesday, Thursday and Friday; and dinner will be provided on Thursday. A reception will be provided on Wednesday. Tickets for meals and the reception are included in your registration packet. *You will be required to present your meal tickets.*

Partners III - General Information

If you used the registration form to request a special type of meal or indicated that you have special dietary needs, your meal ticket reflects this information. The type of meal you will receive at the luncheon and dinner is based on your request.

Spouses cannot participate in the conference, including the meal functions, unless they are registered participants.

Special Needs

The staff of the Capital Hilton Hotel wants to ensure a comfortable and safe stay for you and your guests while in the Nation's Capitol. Please contact the hotel staff if you have special needs such as information on local tourist attractions, restaurants, etc.

Metro Access

The Capital Hilton is located at the intersection of 16th and K Streets NW in downtown DC, only a few blocks from 3 different Metro Stations.

From Farragut North Metro Station (Red Line):

Exit the station and go east two blocks on K Street to 16th Street. The Capital Hilton will be on the northeast corner of 16th and K Streets.

From Farragut West Metro Station (Blue & Orange Lines):

Exit the station and go east two blocks on I Street to 16th Street. Go north one block on 16th Street. The Capital Hilton will be on the northeast corner of 16th and K Streets.

From McPherson Square Metro Station (Blue & Orange Lines):

Exit the station and go west three blocks on I street to 16th Street. Go north one Block on 16th Street. The Capital Hilton will be on the northeast corner of 16th and K Streets.

Transportation to Metro Area Airports

For transportation to Dulles Airport, the Super Shuttle leaves from the Capitol Hilton on scheduled basis. Please check with the hotel concierge. One-day notice is recommended when making reservations. The estimated cost is \$26.00 to Dulles.

For transportation to Washington National Airport, a taxi or the Metro will get you there.

Requests for Assistance

For assistance related to participation in the program, see Gladys Gary Vaughn of the USDA Office of Outreach or Lorette Picciano of the Rural Coalition. If you need any other assistance, USDA and Rural Coalition staff are here to help. Look for the individuals with *green* name badges.

Partners III - Program

The Third Annual USDA Partners Meeting “Think Solutions: Cultivating the USDA/CBO Partnership to Strengthen Farming and Rural Communities”

August 2-4, 2006

PROGRAM

Wednesday, August 2, 2006

10:00AM to
5:00 PM Conference Registration Desk Open

Noon Informal Lunch Federal AB

1:00 PM South American AB

Plenary #1: Where We Were Yesterday, Where We Are Today

The opening session will focus on why we are here and what we have accomplished since Partners II in August 2005.

Presiding: William “Bill” Buchanan, Director, Civil Rights and Community Outreach, RMA, DC

Welcome and Introduction of the Deputy Secretary: Annabelle Romero, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, DC

Keynote Speaker: Deputy Secretary Chuck Conner, DC

Remarks: Shirley Sherrod, Federation of Southern Cooperatives, Georgia

Introduction of Guests

Orientation to Partners III: Gladys Gary Vaughn, Director, Office of Outreach, ASCR, DC

3:00 PM Break

3:30 PM

The Conversations: Partners/USDA Dialogue Sessions

Conversation #1: Equitable Access USDA Programs & Services Massachusetts

Conversation #2: Enhancing Resources and Land Access for Small Farmers, Ranchers, Farmworkers, and Small Towns in Rural Areas New York

Conversation # 3: Risk Management, Marketing and Food Safety Ohio

Conversation #4: Community Food Security and Nutrition Assistance California

Partners III - Program

5:45 PM	Report of Conversations #1-4 Discussion and Summary Evaluation	South American AB
7: 00 PM	Reception	Congressional
8:00 PM	CBO Partners Meeting	

Thursday, August 3, 2006

7:00 AM	Continental Breakfast	
8:00 AM to 5:00 PM	Conference Registration Desk Open	
8:30 AM		South American AB

Plenary # 2: The Status and Future of Small Farms

This two-part plenary session focuses on small farms. The first panel focuses on the counting and numbers of minority and other small farmers. The second panel explores emerging policy for the 2007 Farm Bill, including the USDA “theme” papers for three areas of Farm Policy (Risk Management, Conservation, and Rural Development), and the policy proposals being developed by the partners. Both panels will be facilitated by Patrick Field of the Consensus Building Institute, Massachusetts.

Presiding:

Geraldine Herring, USDA Office of Outreach, ASCR, DC
Mily Trevino-Sauceda, Organización en California de Lideres Campesinas, California

Panel #1: Current Status of Small Farms, Small Farmers and Farmworkers

The survey coverage of small farms, minority farms, immigrant farmers, and farm workers has been discussed at each USDA/Partners Meeting since the inception. What processes have been instituted to insure there is a vast improvement on the in survey coverage of this sector of the agrarian society in the 2007 Census cycle? How can the undercounting of underserved farmers and ranchers be improved? What do current data and research show on the status and number of small farms, minority farms, immigrant farmers, farmworkers and their role in agriculture? How are these terms defined? What alternative definitions merit consideration? In what areas or regions are these populations concentrated? What is their relationship with farm programs and other government resources? How will USDA involve CBOs in list building and survey coverage and outreach for the 2007 Census and the 2012 Census? How will Census data be linked to the Minority Farm Register? Why are these numbers important from the perspective of the Partners?

Partners III - Program

Panelists for Panel #1:

Susan Offutt, Administrator, ERS, *DC*

Joe Reilly, Associate Administrator, NASS, *DC*

Alfonzo Drain, Director, Small Farm Coordination, NASS, *DC*

Ross Racine, Intertribal Agriculture Council, *Montana*

Chukou Thao, National Hmong American Farmers, *California*

10:00 AM Break

10:30AM

South American AB

Plenary # 2: The Status and Future of Small Farms, continued

Panel #2: 2007 Farm Bill

The process of reauthorizing our national food and farm policy has begun. In this session, we will explore changing needs and directions in this policy and look at how small farms, ranches and farmworkers might be better served. What are the key findings of the recent theme papers on Risk Management, Conservation, and Rural Development as related to the upcoming Farm Bill? What analysis and alternatives can we supply relative to small farms, ranches and farmworkers in the upcoming farm bill? What analysis will be provided with respect to the needs of these producers and others in non-program crop areas? What new tools, including individual development accounts and marketing assistance, might be considered to help develop the small farm sector? How can this sector be better served by coordination within USDA, including increased support for the USDA Small Farms Coordinators Working Group and the Office of Outreach? What input could constituents supply?

CBOs envision a competitive advantage for small farms that is realized through a framework of supportive government, special initiatives, the application of appropriate research and extension, and new marketing opportunities. What is the Department's view of this vision?

Panelists for Panel #2:

Tom Dorr, Under Secretary, RD, *DC*

Bruce Knight, Chief, NRCS, *DC*

Eldon Gould, Administrator, RMA, *DC*

Savonala Horne, Land Loss Prevention Project, *North Carolina*

John Zippert, Federation of Southern Cooperatives, *Alabama*

Maria Moreira, Flats Mentor Farm, and Member, USDA Beginning Farms Advisory Board, *Massachusetts*

Partners III - Program

11:45 AM Break

Noon—:30PM Luncheon Federal AB

Inspiration for the Journey Ahead

The luncheon will feature Attorney Edith Primm from the Justice Center in Atlanta, Georgia. Her remarks will focus on managing long-term conflict.

Presiding: Thelma Floyd, Director, USDA/1890 Programs, ASCR, DC

Speaker: Attorney Edith Primm, Justice Center, Atlanta, Georgia

2:00 PM

The Conversations: Partners/USDA Dialogue: Sessions

Conversation # 5: Animal Identification: Implications for Small Scale Producers
Massachusetts

Conversation #6: Traditional Conservation, Land Stewardship and Cooperative Conservation
New York

Conversation #7: Farmworkers, USDA and U.S. Agriculture
Ohio

Conversation #8: Grants, Cooperative Agreements and Partnerships
California

Special Session: Toward the Future: Marketing Higher Value Crops & Accessing Higher Value Markets
Statler

4:00 PM Break

4:30 PM Report of Conversations #5—8
and the Special Session
Discussion and Summary
Evaluation
South American

6:30 PM Dinner Federal AB

8:00 PM CBO Meetings

Partners III - Program

Friday, August 4, 2006

7:00 AM Continental Breakfast

8:00 AM - Noon Conference Registration Desk Open

8:00 AM

The Conversations: Partners/USDA Dialogue Sessions

Conversation #9: Disaster Preparedness and Policy

Massachusetts

Conversation #10: Foreclosures, Accelerations, and Land Fractionation

New York

Conversation # 11: New Entry, Young, and Women Farmers

Ohio

Conversation # 12: County Committee Elections Process

California

10:00AM Break

10:15AM

South American AB

Plenary #3: Thinking Solutions – How Will We Proceed?

This is the Closing Plenary and will feature dialogue with Chief of Staff Dale Moore and the participants; reports of Conversations # 9-12; the report of the joint “Solutions Follow-Up Team,” a discussion of priority issues for 2006/2007 and tentative topics for the 2007 conversations. We hope to emerge with a shared vision of where we would like to be next year and an outline of the next steps in our process.

Presiding: Clyde Thompson, Associate Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, ASCR, DC
Georgia Good, Rural Advancement Fund, *South Carolina*

Report of Conversations #9—12

Introduction of the Chief of Staff

Remarks: Chief of Staff Dale Moore

Dialogue between Partners and Dale Moore

Partners III - Program

Report of the Solutions Follow-up Team:

Chukou Thao, National Hmong American Farmers, *California*
Annette Hiatt, Land Loss Prevention Project, *North Carolina*
Cornelius Blanding, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/LAF, *Georgia*
Michael Harris, California Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Assoc., *California*
Maria Alvarez, National Immigrant Farming Initiative, *New York*
Geraldine Herring, ASCR, *DC*
Sonya Neal-Reeves, NRCS, *DC*

Noon

Closing Luncheon

Federal AB

Participant Reflections

Conference Summary: Patrick Field, Facilitator, Consensus Building Institute, *Massachusetts*

Closing Remarks: Clyde Thompson, Associate Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, ASCR, *DC*



***“Think Solutions:
Cultivating The
USDA/CBO
Partnership to
Strengthen Farming
and Rural
Communities”***

Partners III

Introduction to the 2006 Conversations

The “conversations” format, successfully initiated during the 2005 Partners Meetings with strong positive response from participants, is being repeated and expanded for the 2006 conversations. All conversation topics and the questions that frame them have been determined through collaboration between USDA staff and the CBO Partners Planning Committee. USDA and the Partners Planning Committee also suggested the conversationalists by recruiting their respective representatives. During Partners III, twelve (12) conversations will take place, an increase of four (4) conversations, in response to a request made by the Partners. The twelve (12) priority issues are drawn from an original twenty-eight proposed for 2006. The twelve conversations are as follows:

- #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 Animal Identification: Implications for Small Scale Producers
- #6 Traditional Conversation, Land Stewardship and Cooperative Conservation
- #7 Farmworkers, USDA and U.S. Agriculture
- #8 Grants, Cooperative Agreements and Partnerships
- #9 Disaster Preparedness and Policy
- #10 Foreclosures, Accelerations, and Land Fractionation
- #11 New Entry, Young, and Women Farmers
- #12 County Committee, Elections Process

A special session, in conversation format, entitled *The Future: Marketing Higher Value Crops & Accessing Higher Value Markets*, will also be held.

The conversation format features facilitated discussion that is interactive, spirited and promotes participation by the audience and the conversationalists. The facilitator manages the conversation. Each conversation is now two (2) hours in length, an increase of 30 minutes per session, based on feedback received from the 2005 participants. Prepared visual presentations, such as PowerPoint, are not used in order to promote genuine conversation and dialogue; however, handouts are welcome.

A logistics support team, comprised of a moderator, facilitator, reporter, evaluator, room monitor and documentarian, each with specific functions, ensure the effective unfolding of each conversation. Translation (Spanish) and interpretation (hearing impaired) are also available.

Each conversation is unique. Its unfolding will vary — among other factors — with the subject matter, the number and style of the conversationalists, and the interaction between the facilitator, participants and conversationalists, as well as the degree to which an individual is passionate about the issue being discussed. But, in each case, all dialogue includes a diverse array of both Partners and USDA representatives. In 2006, more individual conversations will feature participation by multiple USDA agencies. This encouraged USDA staff to move beyond their

Partners III

Introduction to the 2006 Conversations

respective agencies to gain new perspectives of the issues affecting farm, ranch and rural communities. The conversations format is also an attempt to promote active participation from everyone and to break down barriers prevalent in a presenter-audience format.

The conversations are presented in blocks of four (4); a participant must select from one (1) of the four (4) being offered. All participants – from the Partner groups and USDA – are strongly urged to participate in one (1) conversation during each of the three (3) sessions. This will enable the participants to contribute to three (3) of the twelve (12) conversations. The conversations will occur during the following time

First Session:	<p>Wednesday, August 2, 2006</p> <p>Conversations #1, #2, #3, and #4</p> <p>3:30 PM – 5:30 PM</p>
Second Session:	<p>Thursday, August 3, 2006</p> <p>Conversations #5, #6, #7, #8, and <i>Special Session</i></p> <p>2:00 PM – 4:00 PM</p>
Third Session:	<p>Friday, August 4, 2006</p> <p>Conversations #9, #10, #11, and #12</p> <p>8:00 AM – 10:00 AM</p>

Reporters and documentarians will keep a record of the discussion held during each conversation. The main points and action recommendations from each conversation will be reported during a report-out session and in the summary of the meeting.

We thank you for your contribution to this important process. You will be provided many opportunities for evaluation and feedback. We encourage you to submit your ideas for the next partners meeting, and the knowledge, experience and insight you and/or your agency/organization would be prepared to share.

Partners III - The 2006 Conversations

“Think Solutions”

Conversation #1: Equitable Access to USDA Programs and Services.

A recurring issue for small and minority farmers, ranchers and others is access to USDA programs and services. Farmers, ranchers and others throughout the country continue to face significant challenges in maintaining their operations and sustaining growth of their businesses. What is USDA doing to sustain small and limited resource farmers, ranchers and others? How are USDA agencies making sure that all citizens are aware of all USDA programs and services? How are they partnering with community-based organizations (CBOs) to ensure this happens? What have USDA agencies (national and state level) done to be more effective in its outreach efforts to underserved and minority producers, farmers, ranchers and others? How does the Office of Outreach provide leadership and guidance to State and local Outreach Coordinators and how do these coordinators work with CBOs? Does the Department support or provide training programs on record keeping for small farmers, ranchers and others? What are the essential skill sets needed to foster equitable access?

What USDA-wide departmental regulations provide direction and accountability for “effective outreach at USDA?” How can CBOs help create an environment at USDA where outreach can be seen as a “win-win situation” for both sides and not a “necessary evil” that USDA must perform to satisfy internal and external critics? How can partnerships with CBOs be used to foster such a “win-win” relationship? What is the status of outreach authority and funding for each of the program agencies to enter into contracts and agreements with CBOs and minority farmers, ranchers and farmworkers? New accountability standards were established in Section 10708 of the 2002 Farm Bill: What success does the 10708 report show in regard to USDA program and service delivery? When will a searchable database for Section 10708 be provided?

Moderator: Lorette Picciano, Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural, *DC*

Conversationalists:

Jerry Pennick, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, *Georgia*

Lou Anne Kling, National Tribal Development Association, *Minnesota*

Spencer Thomas, Southwest Indian Agricultural Association, *Arizona*

Dennis Kopp, Assistant Administrator for Programs and Analysis, CSREES, *DC*

Charles Smith, Program Manager, Office of Outreach, ASCR, *DC*

Mike Hill, Acting Director, Outreach Staff, FSA, *DC*

Rick Lopez, New Mexico State Director, FSA, *New Mexico*

Facilitator: Patrick Field, Consensus Building Institute, *Massachusetts*

Reporter: Anthony Reed, CRSEES Fellow, Alcorn State University, *Mississippi*

Evaluator: Gregg Walton, Outreach Coordinator, FNS, *DC*

Room Monitor: Mocile Trotter, Public Affairs Specialist, Office of Communications, *DC*

Documentarian: Aimee Witteman, Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural, *DC*

Partners III - The 2006 Conversations

“Think Solutions”

Conversation #2: Enhancing Resources and Land Access for Small Farmers, Ranchers, Farm Workers, and Small Towns in Rural Areas.

In order to achieve viable operations, minority producers need infrastructure in communities that serve their needs. How can USDA and its CBO partners cooperate to improve opportunities and participation of minority communities and minority farmers and ranchers in Rural Development programs such as Housing, Community Facilities, Rural Business, Business & Industry Loans, Value-Added Grants, Farm Labor Housing, Infrastructure Development, Cooperative Development, and Broadband? How can critical needs for infrastructure be met? How can we reverse the perception that Rural Development is increasingly divorced from agriculture? How can Rural Development bridge the gap in the availability of programs and services for small farmers, ranchers and others?

Moderator: Arthur Phalo, Outreach Specialist, Southeastern Region, FS, *Georgia*

Conversationalists:

Calvin King, Arkansas Land and Farm Development Cooperation, *Arkansas*

Luz Bazan Gutierrez, Rural Community Development Resources, Center for Minority Farmers, *Washington*

John Zippert Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, *Alabama*

Carmen Humphrey, Team Leader, Farmers Markets and Facility Design, Marketing Services Branch, Transportation and Marketing Programs, AMS, *DC*

Chris Alsop, Deputy Administrator, Rural Development Housing Programs, RD, *DC*

Richard Reeder, Economist, ERS, *DC*

Facilitator: Frank Boteler, Deputy Administrator, Economic & Community Systems, CSREES, *DC*

Reporter: Sonya Neal Reeves, Outreach Coordinator, NRCS, *Maryland*

Evaluator: Cecilia Davila, Texas/Mexico Border Coalition, *Texas*

Room Monitor: Lisa M. Mason, Program Specialist, Office of Outreach, ASCR, *DC*

Documentarian: Bouapha Toommaly, Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural, *DC*

Partners III - The 2006 Conversations

“Think Solutions”

Conversation #3: Risk Management, Marketing and Food Safety.

Small and minority farmers and ranchers tend to be outside the arc of information related to Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), risk management, marketing and food safety. Protection from risk, assurance of product quality and access to markets are fundamental to the viability of diversified small-scale farms. What tools and skills do small farmers need to mitigate risk and improve income with better markets? What role should crop insurance play? How could expansion of AGR and AGR-lite help small farmers? What other tools are available? How can farmers utilize alternative/niche marketing avenues to direct market to local and international customers? What skills/information will they need to compete in these markets? What kinds of analysis/studies have been done to identify gaps/risks that still exist for small farmers, ranchers and others? How can successful practices, such as Farmers Markets, be used by small, beginning, and minority farmers and ranchers to enhance their sustainability in farming? What are Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Farming Practices? What are the implications of these practices for the success of small producers who do not employ these guidelines? How does the Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act (PACA) impact small producers? What rights of a small farmer or rancher are protected in the programs offered by the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) in the marketing of livestock, poultry, meat, cereals, oilseeds, and related agricultural products? How does GIPSA promote fair and competitive practices? How does the Packers and Stockyards Act (PSA) relate to small farmers and ranchers? How can goat producers get assistance from Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) to establish federally inspected plants to aid in meeting the increasing demand for meat goat products? What programs and services are specifically designed to assist minority and limited resource farmers and ranchers and new farmers meet pre-slaughter requirements?

Moderator: George Paris, Small Farmers Marketing Association, *Alabama*

Conversationalists:

Shirley Sherrod, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, *Georgia*

Maria Moreira, Flats Mentor Farms, *Massachusetts*

Dorothy Barker, Operation Spring Plant, *North Carolina*

Lupe Garcia, Hispanic Farmers and Ranchers of America, *New Mexico*

Eldon Gould, Administrator, RMA, *DC*

Dave Shipman, Deputy Administrator, Federal Grain Inspection Service, GIPSA, *DC*

James Adams, Branch Chief, Litigation Branch GIPSA, *DC*

Mark Bailey, National Program Leader, Economic & Community Systems, CSREES, *DC*

Lorenzo Tribbett, Assistant Branch Chief, PACA Branch, AMS, *DC*

Kathy Staley, Head, Field Operations Section, Fresh Products Branch, Fruit & Vegetable Programs, AMS; *DC*

Karlease Kelly, Chief Training Officer, FSIS, *DC*

Facilitator: William “Bill” Scaggs, Program Manager, Office of Outreach, ASCR, *DC*

Reporter: Winona Scott, Management and Program Analyst, ASCR, *DC*

Evaluator: Alicia Rodriguez, Program Manager, Office of Outreach, ASCR, *DC*

Room Monitor: John Jefferson, Outreach Coordinator, FSA, *DC*

Documentarian: Eleanor Green, Delta State University, *Mississippi*

Partners III - The 2006 Conversations

“Think Solutions”

Conversation #4: Community Food Security and Nutrition Assistance.

What can communities do to assure a secure and nutritious food supply for all members and strengthen the local connections between producers and consumers? What is Urban Agriculture and the role of producers? What are the eligibility requirements for Community Food Security and nutrition assistance programs, such as Farmers Markets, School Food and Summer Feeding Programs, and programs such as Food Stamps, Women, Infants and Children (WIC), and Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), Food Distribution Programs, and Food and Nutrition Education? Which programs are open to CBO participation as service providers? What benefits can CBO participation provide? What is the CBO experience in participation in these programs? What is working well and what improvements could be made? What is USDA Trifurcated Program Delivery? What agencies are involved? What is the role of each agency involved? Does Trifurcated Program Delivery apply to CBOs?

Moderator: Edgar Lewis, Outreach Coordinator, Rural Cooperative Service, RD, DC

Conversationalists:

Michael Harris, California Black Farmers and Agriculturalists Association, *California*

Cornelius Blanding, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, *Georgia*

Georgia Good, Rural Advancement Fund, *North Carolina*

Chris Morton, Minnesota Food Association, *Minnesota*

Colien Hefferan, Administrator, CSREES, DC

Roberto Salazar, Administrator, Food and Nutrition Services, FNCS, DC

Duane Williams, Branch Chief, Commodity Procurement Branch, Livestock and Seed Programs, AMS, DC

Pam Kelly, Outreach Coordinator, FNS, *Virginia*

Ricardo Krajewski, Economist, AMS, DC

Facilitator: Thomas Bullock, Operation Spring Plant, *North Carolina*

Reporter: Patricia McAleer, Program Assistant, Economic & Community Systems, CSREES, DC

Evaluator: Sequana Anderson, Management and Program Analyst, ASCR, DC

Room Monitor: Velma Charles-Shannon, Program Manager, Office of Outreach, ASCR, DC

Documentarian: John Green, Delta State University, *Mississippi*

Partners III - The 2006 Conversations

“Think Solutions”

Conversation #5: Animal Identification: Implications for Small-Scale Producers.

A national animal identification system has been established to safeguard the public against major animal-borne diseases such as Avian Influenza and Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE or Mad Cow Disease). This system has many implications for diverse small-scale operations. What is Avian Influenza? What is Mad Cow Disease? How are these diseases transmitted? What is the risk to producers and consumers? What is the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) and what is it designed to accomplish? What is required for livestock producers to be in full compliance with NAIS and by when? How will USDA include small, limited resource and socially disadvantaged animal and livestock producers' perspectives in the development and implementation of NAIS? What are small-scale producers doing to prepare for the mandatory NAIS implementation? What financial and technical assistance are available? What preventive or protective measures can a small producer take?

Moderator: Kathryn Hill, Public Liaison Manager, Office of Communications, *DC*

Conversationalists:

Ross Racine, Intertribal Agriculture Council, *Montana*

Rudy Arredondo, HOLA/National Latino Farmers and Ranchers Trade Association, *DC*

Lao Xiong, Hmong American, Inc., *Arkansas*

Ron DeHaven, Administrator, APHIS, *DC*

Adam Grow, Director, Surveillance/Identification Programs, APHIS, *DC*

Ronnie D. Green, National Program Leader, ARS, *Maryland*

Facilitator: David A. Rust, Program Planning Advisor, ARS, *Maryland*

Reporter: David Wiggins, Deputy Director, Civil Rights and Community Outreach, RMA, *DC*

Evaluator: Rozier Crew, Outreach Coordinator, RD, *DC*

Room Monitor: Versha Kumar, Program Manager, Office of Outreach, ASCR, *DC*

Documentarian: Randy Eldridge, Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural, *DC*

Partners III - The 2006 Conversations

“Think Solutions”

Conversation #6: Traditional Conservation, Land Stewardship and Cooperative Conservation.

Many underserved populations come from a tradition of land ownership, and love of nature and the land. How can USDA’s conservation programs and practices assist and benefit agricultural producers, landowners, Tribes, or individuals? What concepts can be included in the 2007 and 2012 Farm Bills to improve minority and small farmers and ranchers participation in USDA programs and services, and work with CBOs to achieve this goal? What is the future vision for new rewards systems for their participation in these programs? What special initiatives or waivers can be developed to address current barriers to participation by underserved producers and landowners? How are the conservation programs of the Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS) and Forest Service (FS) supporting the efforts of minority communities to promote and reward stewardship of the land and foster a new generation of conservation-minded landowners, farmers and ranchers? How can minority farmers and ranchers learn about and increase their participation in FSA’s Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)? How do local and state conservation and technical committees work, and what do minority farmers need to know about them to increase participation? What program changes might enhance participation and better meet the needs of minority producers and landowners? What role has Federal and State Forestry agencies played in educating underserved landowners, farmers and ranchers about the Land Stewardship program and other similar programs and services?

Moderator: Sonya Neal Reeves, Outreach Coordinator, NRCS, *Maryland*

Conversationalists:

Melvin Crum, Rural Advancement Fund, *South Carolina*

Donnie Valdez, Minority Agriculture Producers Cooperative, *Texas*

Russel Zephier, Intertribal Agriculture Council and Indian Nations Conservation Alliance, *South Dakota*

Peter Yang, National Hmong Farmers Association, *California*

Arun Basu, Special Assistant to the Chief for Outreach and Diversity, NRCS, *DC*

Edith Morigeau, Tribal Relations Coordinator, NRCS, *DC*

Larry Holmes, Outreach Director, NRCS, *Maryland*

Gus Jordan, Branch Chief, Conservation Improvement Programs Division, NRCS, *DC*

Robert Molleur, Small Farms Coordinator, NRCS, *DC*

Katie Goslee, Landowner Assistance Specialist, FS, *DC*

Facilitator: Patrick Field, Consensus Building Institute, *Massachusetts*

Reporter: Horace D. Hodge, 1890 Liaison, Prairie View A&M University, *Texas*

Evaluator: Cheryl V. Bailey, Small Farms Coordinator, Cooperative Forestry, FS, *DC*

Room Monitor: Lisa Mason, Program Specialist, Office of Outreach, USDA, *DC*

Documentarian: Eleanor Green, Delta State University, *Mississippi*

Partners III - The 2006 Conversations

“Think Solutions”

Conversation #7: Farmworkers, USDA, and U.S. Agriculture.

Farmworkers are one of the important constituencies of agriculture. How do farmworkers view their lives and experiences in the field? What is needed to better recognize the critical value of their work? What does Economic Research Service (ERS) data show on the population of farmworkers serving US agriculture? What is the full range of USDA programs that serve farmworkers? What is the status of the establishment of a permanent Farmworker Coordinator position at USDA? How can housing and disaster response be improved to meet the needs of farmworkers? What other services can be supported, including health and safety training, access to land, credit unions, and other services? What training programs can be developed to assist farmworkers in their transition to become viable producers, farmers and ranchers?

Moderator: Lisa C. Purnell, Program Analyst, ARS, *DC*

Conversationalists:

Tirso Moreno, Farmworker Association of Florida, *Florida*

Mily Trevino-Sauceda, Organización en California de Lideres Campesinas, *California*

Heladio Zavala, United Migrant Opportunity Services, Inc., *Minnesota*

John Jefferson, Outreach Coordinator, FSA, *DC*

Sue Harris Green, Branch Chief, Multi-Family Housing, RD, *DC*

William Kandel, Sociologist, ERS, *DC*

Facilitator: Lydia Villanueva, C.A.S.A. del Llano, *Texas*

Reporter: Carl Butler, 1890 Scholars Program Manager, ASCR, *DC*

Evaluator: Shirley Harrington, Program Manager, Office of Outreach, ASCR, *DC*

Room Monitor: Velma Charles-Shannon, Program Manager, Office of Outreach, ASCR, *DC*

Documentarian: John Green. Delta State University, *Mississippi*

Partners III - The 2006 Conversations

“Think Solutions”

Conversation #8: Grants, Cooperative Agreements and Partnerships.

USDA offers limited opportunities for CBOs and other grass roots organizations serving underserved communities. What USDA grant and cooperative agreement programs are available to CBOs? What is the purpose of these programs? What accomplishments have they produced and how are these reported to Congress and to the public? What are the funding levels for these programs? How does support in these programs compare to the resources allocated to similar programs serving farmers, ranchers and others? What are the cycles for these programs? How are proposals solicited and evaluated? How can CBOs participate in this process? What strategies are being used by the Department and the CBOs to increase the funding levels for these programs? What are the eligibility criteria for each? In recent years, what has been the universe of applicants? How are these grantees assisting small and minority farmers, ranchers and small/rural communities? How can CBOs participate in improving the clarity of the language of the Request for Proposal/Application? What processes is used to inform unsuccessful applicants about how they fared in an awards competition? What feedback can be provided by USDA program managers to help qualified CBOs improve their chances of securing grants? How can post-grant/cooperative agreement management of awardees be improved to ensure that they are successful and the targeted audiences are served? Can the Payment Management System (PMS) be used for all grants/cooperative agreements/partnerships to ensure more timely and efficient payment for services provided? What is the role of the Office of Outreach in disseminating information on the availability of grants, cooperative agreements and partnerships? What is the role of the Office of Outreach in the selection of grant and other recipients?

Moderator: Frances Benton-Gibson, United Farmers USA, *South Carolina*

Conversationalists:

Chukou Thao, National Hmong American Farmers, *California*

John Zippert, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, *Alabama*

Georgia Good, Rural Advancement Fund, *South Carolina*

John Dunn, Acting Deputy Administrator for Rural Development Cooperative Programs, RD, *DC*

William Buchanan, Director, Civil Rights and Community Outreach, RMA, *DC*

Liz Tuckermanty, National Program Leader, Integrated Programs, CSREES, *DC*

Carmen Humphrey, Outreach Coordinator, AMS, *DC*

Fred Reaves, Natural Resource Specialist, NRCS, *DC*

Mike Hill, Acting Director, Outreach Staff, FSA, *DC*

Facilitator: Savi Horne, Land Loss Prevention Project, *North Carolina*

Reporter: Sibyl Wright, Outreach Coordinator, FSIS, *DC*

Evaluator: George Richardson, USDA/1890 Agricultural Liaison Officer, University of Arkansas Pine Bluff, *Arkansas*

Room Monitor: Sharon Williams, Small Farms Coordination, NASS, *DC*

Documentarian: Debra Livingston, Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural, *DC*

Partners III - The 2006 Conversations

“Think Solutions”

Conversation #9: Disaster Preparedness and Policy.

Minority and small farm communities tend to suffer disproportionately in times of disaster. What impacts have recent natural disasters had on small farmers, ranchers and farmworkers? What is the status of relief and short and long-term recovery for these populations, especially in the Gulf Region and those facing recurring droughts? How can critical issues that have arisen during disasters be addressed, including the lack of protections for farmworkers, the slowness of response, the lack of eligibility for disaster aid for farmers lacking crop insurance or Non-Insured Crop Assistance Program (NAP), the delays in implementing the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), especially in Florida, and the lack of preparedness programs especially to mitigate the impact of droughts? What other programs does USDA have, apart from the Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP), to assist communities during and after natural disasters? How can the Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) program help local communities prepare for and respond to disasters? What recordkeeping and other conservation and risk-management practices can help farmers and farmworkers prepare for and recover from disasters?

How were the USDA Disaster resources delivered by race, gender and ethnicity in the past two years and what does the Section 10708 report on these programs show? What barriers were encountered under current policy? What progress are counties making to reach and include minority populations on their county lists? What experience and impact have the CBO partners had in disaster response? How could partnerships and outreach improve preparedness and response?

Moderator: Constance Bails, Deputy Director, Office of Civil Rights, ASCR, DC

Conversationalists:

Cornelius Blanding, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, *Georgia*

Tirso Moreno, Farmworker Association of Florida, *Florida*

Bairo Erregin, Small Farmers Group, *Florida*

Hezekiah Gibson, United Farmers USA, *South Carolina*

Andrew Johnson, Branch Chief, Water Resources Programs, NRCS, DC

Ron Harris, Team Leader, Community and Rural Assistance Team, NRCS, DC

David Wiggins, Deputy Director, Civil Rights and Community Outreach, RMA, DC

Salomon Ramirez, New Mexico District Director, FSA, *New Mexico*

Facilitator: Cecilia Davila, Texas/Mexico Border Coalition, *Texas*

Reporter: Stephanie Kozinski, Interim Tribal College Coordinator, ASCR, DC

Evaluator: Robert Molleur, Small Farm Coordinator, NRCS, DC

Room Monitor: Ken Johnson, Center for Minority Farmers, ASCR, DC

Documentarian: John Green, Delta State University, *Mississippi*

Partners III - The 2006 Conversations

“Think Solutions”

Conversation #10: Foreclosures, Accelerations, and Land Fractionation.

Despite efforts to stem the tide, many small and minority farmers still face acceleration and foreclosure. A perennial issue of land loss is fractionated land ownership. What is the status and number of pending foreclosures and accelerations? What actions are being taken by USDA agencies to address these? What actions are being taken to reduce the potential for a future wave of foreclosures? What broad implications—economic, health, and social—are likely to occur as a result of land loss by minority farmers and ranchers if pending accelerations and foreclosures are not addressed? What authorities can USDA use to resolve these problems? Has USDA identified “problem counties?” Are policies and structures being put in place to hold those accountable who continue to contribute to this problem through discriminatory lending tactics? Has the Department examined the recent foreclosure problems of Southeast Asians in the poultry industry?

What is land fractionation? How is access to USDA programs and services impacted by fractionated land ownership? What programs are being funded or implemented by USDA to address this critical and continuing problem among underserved populations? What are the kinds of succession planning educational programs available to an aging community of minority farmers and ranchers? Are any of these programs available for use by CBOs as service providers?

Moderator: Sibyl Wright, Outreach Coordinator, FSIS, DC

Conversationalists:

Jerry Pennick, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, *Georgia*

Lou Anne Kling, National Tribal Development Association, *Minnesota*

Annette Hiatt, Land Loss Prevention Project, *North Carolina*

Carolyn Cooksie, Deputy Administrator, Farm Loan Programs, FSA, DC

Facilitator: Patrick Field, Consensus Building Institute, *Massachusetts*

Reporter: Shirley Harrington, Program Manager, Office of Outreach, ASCR, DC

Evaluator: Dan Abeyta, Outreach Coordinator, New Mexico FSA, DC

Room Monitor: Charles Smith, Program Manager, Office of Outreach, ASCR, DC

Documentarian: Debra Livingston, Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural, DC

Partners III - The 2006 Conversations

“Think Solutions”

Conversation #11: New Entry, Young, and Women Farmers.

Continuing neglect of the entry of beginning producers will compromise the future of the agricultural enterprise; women and immigrant producers are the fastest growing source of new entrants. Succession planning is also critical to the maintenance of the minority land base. Has USDA’s special emphasis program on new and beginning farmers resulted in an increase in farmers since the launch of the campaign? What is the participation rate of farmers in these programs by race, gender and ethnicity and among states? What technical and financial assistance is available to aspiring underserved agricultural producers and what partnerships with CBOs are in place? How can USDA help minority or underserved communities as they seek to acquire the capital and resources to become viable and sustained agricultural producers/beginning farmers? What succession planning strategies are to be used by USDA agencies and partners to help ensure the continuation of small and minority farms?

What additional outreach activities, incentives, or policy changes are necessary to help new, younger, refugee, immigrant and women populations into farming and ranching? Are land fractionalization issues being addressed on several fronts in a coordinated multi-agency way? Are there mentoring, recognition and other programs that recognize and build skills for farmers, ranchers and farmworkers? What programs are available at USDA for refugees and immigrants who are either producers or farmworkers? What strategies are in place at the Department that support or implement Limited English Proficiency (LEP) constituents?

Moderator: Doris Newton, Economist, ERS, *DC*

Conversationalists:

Willard Tillman, Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project, Inc, *Oklahoma*

Maria Alvarez, National Immigrant Farming Initiative, *New York*

Peter Vang, National Hmong American Farmers, *California*

Rudy Arredondo, HOLA/National Latino Farmers and Ranchers Trade Association, *DC*

James MacDonald, Small Farms Coordinator and Branch Chief, Agricultural Structure and Productivity, ERS, *DC*

Dennis Kopp, Assistant Administrator for Programs and Analysis, CSREES, *DC*

Stephan Tubene, Coordinator, Small Farm Institute, University of Maryland, CSREES, *Maryland*

Mark Falcone, Deputy Director for Guaranteed Loans, FSA, *DC*

Larry Laverentz, Rural Initiative Program Manager, Administration of Children and Families, DHHS, *DC*

Facilitator: Monique Kristofers, Outreach Coordinator, Davis, CA; FSA, *DC*

Reporter: Sylvia Montgomery, USDA/1890 Agricultural Liaison Officer, Virginia State University, *Virginia*

Evaluator: Rosalie Ramirez, Outreach Coordinator, New Mexico, FS, *DC*

Room Monitor: Geraldine Herring, Program Manager, Office of Outreach, ASCR, *DC*

Documentarian: Eleanor Green, Delta State University, *Mississippi*

Partners III - The 2006 Conversations

“Think Solutions”

Conversation #12: County Committee Election Process.

Small and minority farmers have traditionally faced many barriers to involvement in the local agricultural decision-making structure. Has there been an increase in the number of minorities serving on County Office Committees as voting members during the past two election cycles? What do 10708 reports show? Is this increase a significant change? Did the results of the election reflect the demographics of the county residents? Where have minority representation and election participation improved, and what may have contributed to this improvement? In what areas should the Secretary consider exercising his discretionary authority to appoint minorities to the committees to satisfy the intent of Congress, which deemed it necessary to include language in the 2002 Farm Bill (Section 10708) to address this issue? Is it now time for Congress to revisit the 1930’s legislation creating the County Office Committee process? What are the alternatives to the existing County Committee System? What outreach programs has FSA set in place to improve the understanding of the County Committee system and to ensure all minority farmers are on the county lists? What are alternatives to current county committee systems?

How can CBO’s help facilitate change at the county level without risking retaliation from USDA county and state staff?

Moderator: Denis E. Ebodaghe, Small Farms Coordinator, CSREES, DC

Conversationalists:

Ross Racine, Intertribal Agriculture Council, *Montana*

Melvin Crum, Rural Advancement Fund, *South Carolina*

Donnie Valdez, Minority Agriculture Producers Cooperative, *Texas*

Tom Hofeller, Associate Administrator, Operations and Management, FSA, DC

Ken Nagle, Administrative Management Specialist, FSA, DC

Facilitator: Alfonzo Drain, Director, Small Farms Coordination, NASS, DC

Reporter: Valentine A. Thompson, Small Farms Coordinator, FAS, DC

Evaluator: Arthur Neal, Outreach Coordinator, AMS, DC

Room Monitor: Peter Jackson, Small Farms Coordinator, GIPSA, DC

Documentarian: Randy Eldridge, Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural, DC

Partners III - The 2006 Conversations

“Think Solutions”

Special Session: The Future: Marketing Higher Value Crops & Accessing Higher Value Markets.

Small and limited resource farmers must engage in new opportunities to remain viable in our modern technological and economic environment. What new/alternative crops should be considered that might yield greater returns for small and limited resource farmers? Are the markets receptive to crops produced from new, small and limited resource suppliers? What operational changes must farmers make to facilitate access to these higher value, markets? What are the short-term and long-term costs of these changes? What resources exist to assist farmers' access these new markets? How can USDA help farmers access these new markets and realize the enhanced revenue potential that they can generate? What are the risks associated with pursuing these new markets and what are the potential rewards? What lessons have been learned from the USDA-Marriott MOU and how can we benefit from them?

Moderator: Thelma Floyd, Director, USDA/1890 Programs, ASCR, DC

Conversationalists:

Calvin King, Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation, *Arkansas*

Carl Nicosia, Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation, *Illinois*

Tom Dorr, Under Secretary, RD DC

Lloyd C. Day, Administrator, AMS, DC

Ted Keany, Owner, Keany Produce, *Maryland*

Facilitator: Scott B. Mexic, Director, External Affairs, ASCR, DC

Reporter: Clifton Peters, USDA/1890 Programs, ASCR, DC

Evaluator: Shellea Price, Program Specialist, USDA/1890 Programs, ASCR, DC

Room Monitor: Jacqueline Frazier, Support Services Specialist, Performance and Planning, ASCR, DC

Documentarian: Julia Battochi, Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural, DC

Partners III - Ground Rules

Meeting Protocols

This is a working meeting. The focus is on a free and frank conversation with meaningful dialogue between representatives of USDA and its Community-Based Organization (CBO) partners.

The goal of the meeting is to emerge with a clear idea of what has been accomplished and what still needs to be done, particularly how the Partners and USDA can work together to make substantive, transformative and lasting change in their relationship. In 2006, we will focus on defining specific and measurable solutions.

We will respect and protect the confidentiality of individual legal proceedings.

In order to ensure honest dialogue and focus on the substance and content of the issues, the record of the meeting will not attribute comments to anyone by name or organization.

In order to reach the goal, participants will stay on track within the framework of the dialogue, and keep to the points and issues at hand.

As time allows, those who wish to speak will be provided time to speak. Priority for participation will be given to participants from CBO's representing farmers, ranchers, farmworkers, and rural communities. Comments and remarks should be brief. The facilitator may ask an individual to complete his/her comments or remarks if they are longer than three (3) minutes.

Comments should focus on systemic issues and proposed change rather than individual and organizational problems.

Don't let the meeting get personal! Refrain from personal attacks. Keep the focus on collaboration and partnership: What can be done together.

All issues that can't be addressed immediately will be placed in the "parking lot" and addressed in the on-going USDA/CBO dialogue.

USDA and the CBO partners will issue press releases or other public releases on the findings of the meeting, except the final report or proceedings, by mutual agreement.

Sessions will begin and end on time.

During the sessions, cellular telephones are to be turned off or placed in vibration mode. Participants will leave the session to answer cellular phones.

Agencies of the United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR)

ASCR's mission is to facilitate the fair and equitable treatment of USDA customers and employees, while ensuring the delivery and enforcement of civil rights programs and activities. ASCR 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 familial 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. (Not all bases apply to all programs.)

<http://www.usda.gov/cr/index.html>

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.

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/>

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.

<http://www.ars.usda.gov/main/main.htm>

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.

<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/>

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.

<http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/>

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.

<http://www.csrees.usda.gov/>

Agencies of the United States Department of Agriculture

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.

<http://www.ers.usda.gov/>

Farm Service Agency (FSA)

The Farm Service Agency implements agricultural policy, administers credit and loan programs, and manages conservation, commodity, disaster and farm marketing programs through a national network of offices.

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/>

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.

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/default.htm>

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.

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/>

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.

<http://www.fas.usda.gov/>

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.

<http://www.fs.fed.us/>

Agencies of the United States Department of Agriculture

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 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.

<http://www.nass.usda.gov/>

Natural Resource and Conservation Service (NRCS)

Natural resources conservation service provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain and improve our natural resources and environment.

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/>

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.

<http://www.rma.usda.gov/>

Rural Development (RD)

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

<http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/>

Partners III - Acknowledgments

The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights gratefully acknowledges those representatives of Community Based Organizations, USDA Agencies, individuals and others who assisted with and provided support for Partners III.

Partners Planning Committee

Shirley Sherrod, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, Chair
Rudy Arredondo, HOLA/National Latino Farmers and Ranchers Trade Association
Annette Hiatt, Land Loss Prevention Project
Savonala Horne, Land Loss Prevention Project
Calvin King, Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation
Lou Anne Kling, National Tribal Development Corporation
Tirso Moreno, Farmworker Association of Florida
Ralph Paige, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund
Jerry Pennick, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund
Ross Racine, Intertribal Agricultural Council
Chukuo Thao, National Hmong American Farmers
Lorette Picciano, Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural, Facilitator

Partners Support Team

Cheryl Normile, Speech Writer, Office of Communications
Marlene Minix, Executive Assistant to the Deputy Secretary, Office of the Secretary
Veronica Bradley, Virginia State University
Julia Battochi, Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural
Randy Eldridge, Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural
Debra Livingston, Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural
Yetta Lyle, Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural
Bouapha Toommaly, Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural
Hezekiah Gibson, United Farmers USA
Timothy McNeilly, Special Assistant to the Under Secretary, RD
Calvin Gibson, Executive Assistant, Office of Civil Rights
Gloria Derobertis, Office of Judicial Officer
Felicia Cullum, Office Assistant, NRCS
Sequana Anderson, Management & Program Analyst, ASCR
Jacquette Frazier, Services Support Specialist, ASCR
Monique Simmons, Management & Program Analyst, ASCR
Brenda Cannon, Acting National Special Programs Manager, ASCR
Carl Butler, USDA/1890 National Scholars Program Manager, ASCR
Shellea Price, Program Specialist, ASCR
Lisa Wardlaw, Administrative Assistant, ASCR
Iris Roseboro, Budget Analyst, ASCR
Queen Victoria Kavanaugh, Management and Program Analyst, ASCR
Aloysius Asu, IT Management and Program Analyst, ASCR
Hezekiah Dillahunt, Management and Program Analyst, ASCR
Sterling August, Management and Program Analyst, ASCR
Brittney Hobbs, Intern, ASCR
Andrea Brown, Intern, ASCR
Dominique Mitchell, Intern, ASCR
Kasey McCoy, Intern, ASCR

Partners III - Acknowledgments

Spanish Language Interpreters

Juan Marinez, University of Michigan
Aimee Witteman, Oxfam America
Alicia Rodriguez, ASCR
Philip Nuar, FAS
Rosalie Ramirez, New Mexico, FS
Dan Abeyta, New Mexico, FSA
Monique Kristofers, California, FSA

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Office of the Secretary

Mike Johanns, Secretary
Chuck Conner, Deputy Secretary
Dale Moore, Chief of Staff

Mission Area Under Secretaries

J. B. Penn, Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services
Eric Bost, Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services
Richard Raymond, Food Safety
Chuck Lambert, Marketing and Regulatory Programs
Mark Rey, Natural Resources and the Environment
Gale Buchanan, Research, Education and Economics
Tom Dorr, Rural Development

Agency and Office Heads

Lloyd C. Day, Agricultural Marketing Service
Ed Knipling, Agricultural Research Service
Ron DeHaven, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Colien Hefferan, Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service
Susan Offutt, Economic Research Service
Teresa Lasseter, Farm Service Agency
Roberto Salazar, Food and Nutrition Service
Barbara Masters, Food Safety and Inspection Service
Mike Yost, Foreign Agricultural Service
Dale Bosworth, Forest Service
Jim Link, Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration
Ron Bosecker, National Agricultural Statistics Service
Bruce Knight, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Eldon Gould, Risk Management Agency
Jackie Gleason, Rural Business-Cooperative Service

Partners III - Acknowledgments

Russell Davis, Rural Housing Service
James Andrew, Rural Utilities Service
Scott Steele, Office of Budget and Program Analysis
Terry Teuber, Office of Communications
Linda Strachan, Office of Congressional Relations
Mark L. Kesselman, Office of the General Counsel

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

Annabelle Romero, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
Clyde Thompson, Associate Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
Josie Woodley Jones, Special Assistant
Rhonda Davis, Director, Performance and Planning
Telora Davis, Director, Budget
Farook Sait, Special Assistant to the Director
Scott B. Mexic, Director of External Affairs; ASCR
Gladys Gary Vaughn, Director, Office of Outreach
Dale Gentry, Director, Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center
Thelma Floyd, Director, 1890 Programs
Sadhna True, Director, Office of Civil Rights
Constance Bails, Associate Director, Office of Civil Rights
Deborah Hamilton, Staff Assistant, Office of Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
Gwendolyn Edmondson, Staff Assistant to the Associate Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
Lisa Colman, Staff Assistant to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
Doretha Cox, Receptionist

Office of Outreach

William Scaggs, Program Manager
Charles Smith, Regional Marketing Specialist
Kenneth E. Johnson, Acting Director, Center for Minority Farmers
Versha Kumar, Program Manager
Shirley Harrington, Program Manager
Velma Charles-Shannon, Environmental Justice Program Manager
Geraldine Herring, Special Outreach Program Coordinator
Stephanie Kosinzki, Acting Tribal College Liaison
Lisa M. Mason, Program Marketing Specialist
Lauretta Miles, Program Assistant
Leon Thomas, Program Assistant
Wylie Rollins, Temporary Assistant
Jennifer Peagler, Intern
Aisha Davis, Intern

Partners III - Acknowledgments

Interpreters for the Hearing Impaired

Nancy Kowalski, USDA Interpreting Services
Jerel Meadows, USDA Interpreting Services
Sarah Gershone, USDA Interpreting Services
Bobette Brown, USDA Interpreting Services

Photographer

Alice Welch, Office of Communications, USDA

Videography and other Technology

Garth Clark, Office of Communications, USDA

Agency Outreach Coordinators

Geraldine Herring, Chair, Agency Outreach Coordinators, Office of Outreach
Velma Charles-Shannon, Agency Outreach Coordinators, Office of Outreach
Lisa M. Mason, Agency Outreach Coordinators, Office of Outreach
Carmen Humphrey, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)
Arthur Neal, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)
Gwendolyn A. Smith, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)
Steve Shelor, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)
Terry A. Henson, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS)
David Rust, Agricultural Research Service (ARS)
Lisa C. Purnell, Agricultural Research Service (ARS)
Curt DeVille, Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES)
Denis A. Ebdaghe, Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES)
Patricia McAleer, Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES)
Doris Newton, Economic Research Services (ERS)
Dale Miller, Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)
Valentine A. Thompson, Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)
Greg Walton, Food Nutrition Service (FNS)
Pam Phillips, Food Nutrition Service (FNS)
Cheryl Bailey, Forest Service (FS)
Robert Ragos, Forest Service (FS)
John Jefferson, Farm Service Agency (FSA)
John Toles, Farm Service Agency (FSA)
Richard Chavez, Farm Service Agency (FSA)
Sibyl Wright, Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)
Terri L. Henry, Grain Inspection, Packers, and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA)
Alfonzo Drain, National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS)
Hubert Hamer, National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS)
Sonya Neal Reeves, National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Kathryn Hill, Office of Communications (OC)
Mocile Trotter, Office of Communications (OC)
Kimberly Chapman, Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO)
Josie Woodley-Jones, Office of Civil Rights (OCR)
Leslie Lightner, Office of Civil Rights (OCR)
Linda Epstein, Office of Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU)

Partners III - Acknowledgments

Edgar Lewis, Rural Development (RD)
Carlton Lewis, Rural Development (RD)
Rhonda Brown, Rural Development (RD)
David Wiggins, Risk Management Agency (RMA)
William Buchanan, Risk Management Agency (RMA)

Small Farms Coordinators

Alfonzo Drain, Director, Small Farms Coordination (SFC)
Carmen Humphrey, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)
Denny Johnson, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)
Evert Byington, Agricultural Research Service (ARS)
Terence L. Lynch, Agricultural Research Service (ARS)
Arnold S. Foudin, Agency Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Winona Lake Scott, ASCR
Alicia Simon, Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES)
Denis A. Ebodaghe, Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service
Patricia McAleer, Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service
Charles Cleland, Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service
Bob Hoppe, Economic Research Services (ERS)
Doris Newton, Economic Research Services (ERS)
Jim MacDonald, Economic Research Services (ERS)
Valentine A. Thompson, Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS)
Marlene Phillip, Foreign Agricultural Service
Ron Johnson, Food Nutrition Service (FNS)
Stacey Sheffey, Food Nutrition Service (FNS)
Cheryl Bailey, Forest Service (FS)
Hal Brockman, Forest Service
John Jefferson, Farm Service Agency (FSA)
Jorge O. Comas, Farm Service Agency (FSA)
Mark Falcone, Farm Service Agency (FSA)
Erich Hemphill, Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)
Sibyl Wright, Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)
Peter J Jackson, Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA)
Robert Molleur, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
Jim Staiert, Office of Budget and Program Analysis (OBPA)
Kathryn Hill, Office of Communications (OC)
Shirley E. Brown, Office of the Chief Economist (OCE)
Tami Trost, Office of the General Counsel (OGC)
Geraldine Herring, Office of Outreach (ASCR)
Velma Charles-Shannon, Office of Outreach (ASCR)
Lisa M. Mason, Office of Outreach (ASCR)
Dan Schofer, Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS)
Edgar L. Lewis, Rural Business-Cooperative Service (RBS)
Rozier Crew, Rural Development
Rhonda Brown, Rural Development-Faith-Based and Community Initiatives
Jacqueline Jackson, Rural Development-Faith-Based and Community Initiatives
Sharon Hestvik, Risk Management Agency (RMA)
Kasturi Basu, Small Farms Coordination (SFC)
Sharon Williams, Small Farms Coordination (SFC)