

Summer 2011

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing to inform you of an important outreach effort being conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to resolve claims of discrimination and ask for your help in getting the word out to the public. This effort aligns with the Obama Administration priority to resolve all of the large civil rights cases at USDA. We are committed to resolving all cases involving allegations of past discrimination by individuals, including Hispanic and/or women farmers and ranchers. We believe that every farmer and rancher should be treated equally and fairly.

In February 2011, USDA announced a claims resolution process that will turn the page on claims of discrimination made by Hispanic and/or women farmers and ranchers who show they were improperly denied farm loan benefits between 1981 and 2000.

Hispanic and/or women farmers and ranchers may be eligible if:

1. They sought a farm loan or farm-loan servicing during that period;
2. The loan was denied, provided late, approved for a lesser amount than requested, approved with restrictive conditions, or USDA failed to provide an appropriate loan service; and
3. They believe these actions were based on them being Hispanic or female.

As a USDA agency, Farm Service Agency (FSA) in Minnesota is conducting extensive outreach and notice efforts to Hispanic and/or women communities so that all eligible farmers and ranchers learn about this claims process. Informational materials regarding the claims compensation process are attached. I would sincerely appreciate if you could make these materials available to interested parties.

Sincerely,



Linda Hennen
State Executive Director

Attachments:

- Notice to Hispanic and/or Women Farmers and Ranchers (English and Spanish)
- Summary of Claims Process- Female or Hispanic Farmers (English and Spanish)

NOTICE TO HISPANIC AND/OR WOMEN FARMERS AND RANCHERS

COMPENSATION FOR CLAIMS OF DISCRIMINATION

If you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation. This means you may be eligible if:

- 1.** You sought a farm loan or farm-loan servicing during that period;
- 2.** The loan was denied, provided late, approved for a lesser amount than requested, approved with restrictive conditions, or USDA failed to provide an appropriate loan service; and
- 3.** You believe these actions were based on your being Hispanic or your being female.

In 2011, a claims administrator will begin mailing claims packages to those who have requested one through the Call Center or website. The claims package will have detailed information about the eligibility and claims process.

If you want to register your name to receive a claims package, access the Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher Call Center or website:

Call Center: 1-888-508-4429

Website: www.farmerclaims.gov

For guidance, you may contact a lawyer or other legal services provider in your community. **USDA cannot provide legal advice to you.**

If you are currently represented by counsel regarding allegations of discrimination or in a lawsuit claiming discrimination, you should contact your counsel regarding this claims process.

AVISO A AGRICULTORES O GANADEROS HISPANOS Y A MUJERES AGRICULTORAS O GANADERAS

COMPENSACIÓN POR RECLAMACIÓN DE DISCRIMINACIÓN

Si usted considera que el Departamento de Agricultura de Estados Unidos (USDA por sus siglas en inglés) le negó indebidamente beneficios de préstamos agrícolas entre los años 1981 y 2000 por ser hispano o mujer, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para solicitar compensación. Usted podría cumplir con los requisitos si:

- 1.** solicitó del USDA un préstamo agrícola o la prestación de servicios de administración de préstamos agrícolas durante ese período, y
- 2.** el préstamo fue negado, otorgado tarde, aprobado por un monto menor al solicitado o aprobado con condiciones restrictivas, o el USDA no prestó un adecuado servicio de administración de préstamo, y
- 3.** usted considera que estos actos ocurrieron por ser usted hispano o mujer.

Si desea inscribirse para recibir los documentos para reclamación, puede llamar al Centro de Llamadas para Agricultores y Ganaderos al 1-888-508-4429 o ingresar a la página web: www.farmerclaims.gov.

En el 2011, un administrador de reclamaciones comenzará a enviar por correo los documentos para reclamación a quienes los hayan solicitado por medio del Centro de Llamadas o la página web. Los documentos para reclamaciones incluirán información detallada sobre los requisitos y el proceso de reclamaciones.

Para recibir mayor orientación puede comunicarse con un abogado u otro proveedor de servicios legales en su comunidad.

Si actualmente lo representa un abogado con respecto a quejas de discriminación o ha iniciado una demanda alegando discriminación por el USDA, debe ponerse en contacto con su abogado respecto a este proceso de reclamaciones.

El USDA no le puede proporcionar asesoría legal.

**NOTICE TO HISPANIC OR WOMEN FARMERS
AND RANCHERS:**

COMPENSATION FOR CLAIMS OF DISCRIMINATION

If you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic, or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation. You may be eligible if:

- 1. you sought a farm loan or farm-loan servicing from USDA during that period; and**
- 2. the loan was denied, provided late, approved for a lesser amount than requested, approved with restrictive conditions, or USDA failed to provide an appropriate loan service; and**
- 3. you believe these actions occurred because you are Hispanic or female.**

If you want to register your name to receive a claims package, you can call the Farmer and Rancher Call Center at 1-888-508-4429 or access the following website:

www.farmerclaims.gov

In 2011, a Claims Administrator will begin mailing claims packages to those who have requested one through the Call Center or website. The claims package will have detailed information about the eligibility and claims process.

In order to participate, you must submit a claim to the Claims Administrator by the end of the claims period.

If you are currently represented by counsel regarding allegations of discrimination against USDA or in a lawsuit claiming discrimination by USDA, you should contact your counsel regarding this claims process.

USDA Cannot Provide Legal Advice to You.

You are not required to hire an attorney to file a claim, but you may contact a lawyer or other legal services provider in your community for additional guidance.

**AVISO A AGRICULTORES Y GANADEROS HISPANOS O MUJERES
AGRICULTORAS O GANADERAS:**

COMPENSACIÓN POR RECLAMACIÓN DE DISCRIMINACIÓN

Si usted considera que el Departamento de Agricultura de Estados Unidos (USDA por sus siglas en inglés) le negó indebidamente beneficios de préstamos agrícolas entre los años 1981 y el 2000 por ser hispano o mujer, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para solicitar compensación. Podría cumplir con los requisitos si:

1. solicitó del USDA un préstamo agrícola o la prestación de servicios con respecto a la administración de un préstamo agrícola durante ese periodo, y
2. el préstamo fue negado, otorgado tarde, aprobado por un monto menor al solicitado o aprobado con condiciones restrictivas, o el USDA no prestó un adecuado servicio de préstamo, y
3. usted considera que estos actos ocurrieron por ser usted hispano o mujer.

Si desea inscribirse para recibir los documentos para reclamación, puede llamar al Centro de Llamadas para Agricultores y Ganaderos al 1-888-508-4429 o ingresar a la página web:
www.farmerclaims.gov

En del 2011, un administrador de reclamaciones empezará a enviar los documentos para reclamación a quienes los hayan solicitado por medio del Centro de Llamadas o la página web. Los documentos para reclamación tendrán información detallada sobre los requisitos y el proceso de reclamaciones.

Para poder participar, debe enviar su reclamación al administrador de reclamaciones antes de la fecha límite para presentarla.

Si actualmente lo representa un abogado con respecto a quejas de discriminación contra el USDA o ha iniciado una demanda judicial alegando discriminación por el USDA, debe ponerse en contacto con su abogado respecto a este proceso de reclamaciones.

El USDA no puede darle consejos legales.
No es necesario contratar un abogado para presentar la reclamación,
pero puede ponerse en contacto con un abogado u otro proveedor
de servicios legales de su comunidad si desea orientación adicional.