



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



USDA STAFF OFFICES **EQUITY ACTION PLAN**

JANUARY 2024



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Message from the Deputy Secretary



At USDA, we recognize that our pursuit of equity requires involvement by every part of our organization. When we create opportunity for all—regardless of zip code or background—we ensure that farmers, farmworkers, ranchers, landowners, communities, families, and business owners have access to the tools they need to thrive in the communities they love.

On day one of the Biden-Harris Administration, President Biden issued Executive Order 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government. The Executive Order kicked off an ambitious whole-of-government equity agenda, initiating a learning process in pursuit of a more perfect union. Since the release of this order our Staff Offices have been working tirelessly to ensure that USDA’s Mission Areas and Agencies have the resources available to them to execute on their own ambitious equity action plans.

Committed to living up to USDA’s aspiration to be the “People’s Department,” our Staff Offices are implementing the transparency and accountability needed to cement long-lived change in the way USDA serves every one of our customers. Institutionalization of equity is vital for success across the Department and that requires embedding equity work in all the offices highlighted in this Equity Action Plan; this document complements the plans already released, which covered all USDA’s mission areas and agencies, and two staff offices—the Office of Tribal Relations and the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights.

*- Xochitl Torres Small
Deputy Secretary*

USDA Equity Mission Statement

USDA's mission is: "To serve all Americans by providing effective, innovative, science-based public policy leadership in agriculture, food and nutrition, natural resource protection and management, rural development, and related issues with a commitment to delivering equitable and climate-smart opportunities that inspire and help America thrive." To accomplish this mission, we must, together, build and maintain public trust and confidence among USDA stakeholders that this truly is, in the words of President Lincoln, the "People's Department". We must: (1) identify and root out systemic discrimination in USDA programs; (2) ensure equitable access to USDA programs and services for all communities, including by removing barriers to access and working to repair past mistakes that have resulted in economic, social, and racial disparities; and (3) promote nutrition security, a healthy environment, and the opportunity for a good life for every person, in every community in America.

Department Equity Action Strategies

USDA's work is not just about farms and the people who work them and their associated processes.

- It's about keeping businesses alive in small towns.
- It's about school children having access to healthy food grown in their own communities.
- It's about protecting our planet from droughts and wildfires and natural disasters.
- It's about America leading the way in what it means to be a sustainable, inclusive, resilient place.

Centering equity in this work is essential.

USDA has identified seven equity strategies to focus on over the upcoming year:

Strategy #1: Broaden access to agricultural programs: Ensure agricultural resources and assistance for producers are broadly accessible, while creating new, more, and better market opportunities so USDA policies and programs advance agriculture for all who want to participate, not just a few.

Strategy #2: Promote rural prosperity: Promote rural prosperity and economic security by connecting business owners to new markets, empowering people with modern infrastructure, and supporting community-driven opportunities and solutions to build brighter futures in rural America.

Strategy #3: Promote nutrition security: Promote nutrition security and health equity through USDA nutrition assistance programs to ensure all Americans have access to the nutrition they need.

Strategy #4: Broaden access to forest resources and outdoor experiences: Ensure equitable access to forest resources, funding opportunities, and outdoor experiences; and target wildfire prevention and conservation investments where they are most needed.

Strategy #5: Advance equity in federal procurement: Advance equity in federal procurement by providing underserved and disadvantaged businesses tools and resources to increase access to funding opportunities, and by helping promote safe and secure provision of services and supplies.

Strategy #6: Empower tribal sovereignty: Empower tribal sovereignty and uphold treaty responsibilities to Indian tribes, removing barriers to access USDA programs and incorporating indigenous values and perspectives in program design and delivery.

Strategy #7: Protect civil rights: Commit unwaveringly to civil rights by improving tools, skills, capacity, and processes to more effectively and efficiently enforce them.

These strategies update USDA's 2022 Equity Action Plan, learning from hundreds of engagements with our customers and would-be customers—through listening sessions, requests for information, outreach events, tribal consultations, and advisory committees (including, preeminently, the Equity Commission). In addition, we have ourselves observed which of the 2022 improvements are working, and which need further refinement and adjustment.

The key approaches by which we will operationalize our goals are:

- Directing USDA programs to those who need them the most.
- Reducing administrative, economic, historical, and other barriers to program access, and ensuring our programs include processes to assess, understand, and remove or mitigate such barriers.
- Partnering with trusted technical assistance providers to ensure that underserved producers and communities have the support they need to access USDA programs.
- Operating transparently and accountably, providing the information on Department programs that Congress, stakeholders, and the general public need to hold us to account on our equity agenda, and working systematically to collect and incorporate public feedback, including input from underserved communities.

Overview

This document brings together equity action planning by most of USDA Staff Offices—offices that do everything from developing and maintaining community partnerships to coordinating and directing the Department's budget, legislative, and regulatory functions. Two offices—the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, and the Office of Tribal Relations—have already posted their own equity action plans (see <https://www.usda.gov/equity/action-plan>). This Equity Action Plan covers eleven additional offices (four within USDA Departmental Administration) whose work is vital to effectuate equity in USDA's operations and program implementation. They are:

- Departmental Administration (DA)
 - Office of Contracting and Procurement (OCP) and Office of Small Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU)
 - Office of Customer Experience (OCX)
 - Office of Human Resource Management (OHRM)
- External and Intergovernmental Affairs (EIA)
- Office of Budget and Program Analysis (OBPA)
- Office of the Chief Economist (OCE)
- Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO)
- Office of Communications (OC)
- Office of the Executive Secretariat (OES)
- Office of the General Counsel (OGC)
- Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement (OPPE)

For each one, this document presents recent accomplishments, and plans for improvements.

Departmental Administration (DA)

DA provides central administrative management support to Department officials and coordinates administrative programs and services. Four offices within DA are particularly important to the Department's equity efforts: The Office of Contracting and Procurement (OCP) and the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU); the Office of Customer Experience (OCX); and the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM).

Office of Contracting and Procurement (OCP) & Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU)

As Secretary Vilsack has emphasized, “most of the work of building and supporting the economy is done by small business owners”—but small businesses have long faced obstacles to participating in federal procurement. USDA is committed to removing those barriers.

Accomplishments

- **Reducing barriers to procurement.** USDA's [Procurement Forecast webpage](#), online since June 2023, now allows small businesses to easily search and filter USDA procurement forecasts, identify the opportunities most relevant to them, and download the results for easy reference. This tool was designed to be easily accessible to any contractor or potential contractor who is interested, based on input from hundreds of small, disadvantaged businesses that they needed more timely, accessible, and understandable information on USDA contracting opportunities. More than 5,000 contracting opportunities are listed in a keyword searchable format that does not require knowledge of NAICs codes, contract types, or USDA mission areas and agency details. In its first year we saw great success with the use of this tool. This process also led to a culture shift driving mission areas to do their acquisition planning earlier, resulting in more strategic spending, earlier visibility into opportunities for small business owners, and less strain on the system in making last minute obligations at the end of the fiscal year. In September 2023, obligations were \$1 billion ahead of the prior year.
- **Working across the Department.** Once the Department-wide small-disadvantaged business goal was set by Small Business Administration (SBA) at 22.4%, OCP and OSDBU designed a process to ensure that all Mission Areas support that goal, creating a sense of shared ownership and modifying Departmental culture towards constant prioritization of small-disadvantaged business contracting goals. In FY 23, the Department obligated 28.26% of its contracts to small-disadvantaged businesses, surpassing our goal by 5.86%, and placing USDA in the top three performers in large federal agencies for small business contracting.
- **Improving Accountability.** With support from OHRM, OSDBU released a requirement that in accordance with management direction in OMB Memorandum M-22-03, Advancing Equity in Procurement (December 2, 2021), performance plans for officials of the Senior Executive Service (SES) are required to address progress towards agency achievement of the small business contracting goal, as well as each of the four socioeconomic small business goals in the Small Business Act.
- **Providing Technical Assistance.** OSDBU carried out a series of “Path to Prosperity” events in partnership with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) and the SBA. These are regional events with participation from state and local government agencies, along with private sector and non-profit partners. The events provide small businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs with resources and an opportunity to engage with experts and each other to learn best practices. The no-cost series features expert presentations about how to start a business, how to access capital, and how to do business

with the government, all tailored by a pre-event assessment sent to participants. They also include facilitated lender-small business matchmaking sessions. As a result of the 8 “Path to Prosperity” events in fiscal year (FY) 2023, nearly 2,300 small, minority, underserved, rural, urban, and other businesses have registered and received training materials. More than 100,000 business entities in over 35 States have been notified and invited to participate in the “Path to Prosperity” series.

Planned Actions

1. Continue, expand, and measure efficacy of the Path to Prosperity activities.

As a result of the “Path to Prosperity” series, businesses, including agricultural enterprises, have gained significant knowledge on access to capital, both Federal and private, programmatic resources, and relationship building. Information and resources have expanded to include opportunities in the areas of Broadband and Cybersecurity.

As a result of data analyses conducted on the FY23 series, the Path to Prosperity team continues to update and make adjustments to events, including:

- Task 1: Modifying the registration form to require businesses to provide unique entity identifier.
- Task 2: Modifying the registration form to capture past or current government activities.
- Task 3: Coordinating with OCP to modify Vendor Portal questionnaire to capture how a business learned about the Portal.
- Task 4: Developing QR Codes for the Vendor Capability Portal, USDA Procurement Forecast, and USASpending, which are available during Path to Prosperity events.
- Task 5: Expanding the agenda to include a prime contracting component, and Sam.gov and SBA Certification demonstrations.
- Task 6: Broadcasting Path to Prosperity events through GovDelivery, allowing for additional analyses and demonstrated results. By using GovDelivery and additional new technology, we will be able to better track the participation of small businesses throughout their entire engagement pipeline with the USDA; starting with their registration for an event.
- Task 7: By the end of FY24, notifying business entities in the entire Nation about the “Path to Prosperity” series; continue to expand reach in FY 2025 and 2026.

2. Protect against exploitative and illegal labor practices

Departmental leadership will continue to meet and collaborate with agricultural stakeholders to develop and implement contractual language providing USDA visibility into subcontractor’s practices. This ensures that USDA is partnering with responsible companies that have adequate experience, staffing, production capability, and technical ability to achieve successful contract performance without exploitation.

3. Continue our record of surpassing small-disadvantaged business contracting goals.

- Task 1: The FY 24 Small Disadvantaged Business Goal for USDA has been set at 27.85% by the Small Business Administration. By the end of February 2024, each Mission Area will also receive a goal for their respective contract spending to roll up to the Department wide goal.
- Task 2: As in 2023, with support from OHRM, OSDDBU will continue to ensure that appropriate Senior Executive Service (SES) performance plans address progress towards agency achievement of the small business contracting goal, as well as each of the four socioeconomic small business goals in the Small Business Act.

Office of Customer Experience (OCX)

Customer experience and equity are tightly connected; both have a goal of reducing barriers to access and meeting customer needs. OCX's work is centered around our Voice of the Customer (VOC) framework, which ensures that we put our customers first by promoting accountability in mission and program delivery and facilitating collaboration across the entire Department. In an effort to achieve our CX goals, our office has developed a number of customer-centric initiatives over the past few years, including the AskUSDA Contact Center, which provides clear, straightforward information about our programs and services to the general public via phone, chat, email, and website channels. We have worked to engage USDA staff and stakeholders through surveys, conferences, and one-on-one conversations to gather data to help us understand what USDA can do to elicit trust and satisfaction from the people we serve.

Accomplishments

- **Planning for equity.** In September 2022 and in September 2023, OCX developed and submitted annual **Department-wide Customer Experience (CX) Action Plans** in conjunction with USDA High Impact Service Providers (HISPs) annual CX Action Plans. These plans identify priorities for improving designated services, build USDA's CX management capacity, and continue to improve service delivery through digital modernization efforts, with an enhanced focus on equity.
- **Measuring capacity.** In February 2023, OCX completed the Department-wide benchmark **CX Maturity Capability Capacity Assessment**, to identify where and how CX is monitored and improved across USDA. OCX combined interviews, surveys, and questionnaires to measure levels of CX maturity within Mission Area, agency, and Staff Office capabilities. The findings from this assessment informs future strategies to address gaps and pain points.
- **Training USDA staff.** In June 2023, OCX created the **CX Impact Lab**, increasing CX capacity through our CX training offerings. OCX facilitated seven CX-focused trainings from August to November 2023 for USDA agency leadership and program managers.
- **Building and strengthening partnerships.** In July 2023, OCX launched USDA CARES—an initiative dedicated to **Create, Assist, Rebuild, Empower and Strengthen** our communities and customer relationships. As the Department grew partnerships with community-based organizations under Section 1006 of the American Rescue Plan, OCX was tasked with improving the support provided to those “cooperators,” who work to connect economically distressed and underserved communities with the USDA programs and services they need most. After over 130 hours of research that began in May 2022 and included stakeholder interviews, data and recommendation analysis, and feedback sessions at cooperator-hosted events, OCX proudly launched USDA CARES.
- **Collecting customer feedback.** In September 2023, OCX has collaborated with USDA's HISPs to draft and launch seven customer feedback surveys. These surveys are designed to assess stakeholder engagement and trust. Insights gathered from customer feedback can inform future changes and improvements to programs and services.

Planned Action

Provide tools for customer experience improvements

OCX is creating CX capacity Department-wide using a multi-faceted approach: continuing to expand the OCX Impact Lab, creating a Department-wide CX community of practice, offering training to future CX leaders, increasing OCX's own capacity, creating and outlining hiring paths for CX talent Department-wide.

- Task 1: OCX Impact Lab. OCX will continue to develop the Impact Lab into a focused space where USDA staff can learn how to use CX methodologies and develop and test out models for increasing CX outcomes that, if successful, could be scaled out across the Department's Mission Areas, agencies, and staff offices. Specific activities include:
 - Launch a Department-wide CX Community of Practice that can serve as a central resource and community for all employees at USDA to learn how to frame problems, research customer needs, and implement solutions based on rigorous user centered methods. Participants will learn how to ensure customer experiences are understood and considered in decision making.
 - Provide additional CX capacity for impactful projects within the USDA and allow us to deliver on some of the high priority projects for the entire department including the HISPs. OCX is planning to deploy CX strategists and tiger teams to key projects throughout FY2024.
 - Continue to increase CX capacity through training offerings. OCX is developing lessons learned from the seven trainings hosted from August to November 2023 and identifying future opportunities to provide training to additional agency leaders and program managers of public-facing programs to learn how to value and embed user centered design and CX methods and frameworks.
- Task 2: Increase the speed and ease of hiring CX staff for Department-wide and agency-specific CX initiatives. This includes a direct hire fellowship in partnership with OCIO's Digital Service, working with OMB on their shared certification offerings as well as documenting the processes for other hiring paths that exist in USDA.
- Task 3: Continue to develop, deliver, and analyze customer feedback surveys. OCX partnering with USDA's Mission Areas, agencies, and Staff Offices to develop and launch customer surveys throughout FY2024.

Office of Human Resource Management (OHRM)

Planned Action

Incorporate equity into performance management

OHRM will advise mission area Chief Human Capital Officers (CHCOs) to incorporate equity into performance management, including consultation with mission area equity leads and inclusion of equity action assignments and other equity responsibilities into mission results performance element for non-executive level employees and appropriate leadership performance elements for executive employees.

Office of External and Intergovernmental Affairs (EIA)

EIA is housed in the Department's Office of Congressional Relations, but serves the distinct role of building trusted relationships with state, county and local elected and appointed officials, and external organizations (trade associations, philanthropic organizations, and faith-based organizations) throughout the nation to advance USDA and the Secretary's priorities and to serve as the hub for elected and appointed officials and external organizations to communicate with the Secretary and USDA officials and access programs and services. EIA's work makes vital contributions to equity at USDA, by actively educating and engaging our stakeholders and partners so that they too recognize the depth of USDA's commitment, understand what we have been able to accomplish together and what remains to be done, and work with us to help us live up to USDA's aspiration to be "the People's Department."

Accomplishments

- **Engaging with stakeholders.** EIA has assisted mission areas with a One USDA approach to external engagement and conferences, with a special emphasis on equity focused conferences and summits.
 - Facilitated USDA leadership participation in the Congressional Black Caucus Institute Mississippi Policy Conference, achieving historic engagement levels.
 - Coordinated a USDA panel at the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Convention on American Rescue Plan Act, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and Inflation Reduction Act funding opportunities available to tribal nations.
 - Coordinated a USDA panel at the League of United Latin American Citizens National Convention & Expo on American Rescue Plan Act, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and Inflation Reduction Act opportunities available to Latin American Citizens.
- **Supported equity related program rollouts.** Assisted in rollouts for the following equity focused initiatives:
 - Farm Worker Stabilization Pilot Program
 - 22007 Discrimination Assistance Program,
 - Next Gen Diverse Food and Agriculture Professionals Program, and other equity related efforts.
- **Formalizing key partnerships.** Coordinated a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Signing Ceremony with the National Urban League.
- **Creating opportunities for underserved students.**
 - Successfully recruited interns from the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU).
 - Hosted the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Fellows at USDA and programmed their visit to include networking opportunities with USDA leadership, including the Deputy Secretary.
 - Native American Bar Association Brown Bag Lunch
 - Supported the reception of the 2023 USDA E. Kika De La Garza Fellowship Program fellows.
 - Urban Transformation Network Fly-In on August 21, in Washington D.C.

Planned Actions

1. Lead and coordinate development and implementation of the USDA Equity Outreach Strategy.

- Task 1: Lead a working group to identify priority stakeholder events and engagements and create a calendar of events.
- Task 2: Collaborate with the White House Office of Public Engagement on an Advancing Equity in Agriculture Communities in Action event.
- Task 3: Support the development and implementation of an equity communications tool kit for USDA staff to better communicate with external stakeholders.

2. Provide ongoing support and assistance to Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCUs) within the 1890 land-grant institutions, spanning USDA mission areas.

- Task 1: Connect and maintain EIA's relationship with the 1890s' President Association as a key stakeholder.
- Task 2: Coordinate meetings with the 1890s' Presidents and their respective Rural Development State Directors to help facilitate potential partnerships and collaboration.
- Task 3: Coordinate a meeting with the Association and mission area leadership to provide an overview of potential partnership opportunities.

3. Coordinate Special Emphasis Months in collaboration with the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights.

- Task 1: Engage with major associations and coalitions that serve minority or marginalized groups to coordinate engagement during special emphasis months, such as Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, and Indigenous History Month. These associations include:
 - Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute
 - Congressional Black Caucus Foundation
 - Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies
 - Udall Foundation – Native American Graduate Fellowship
- Task 2: Create programming for these stakeholders during Special Emphasis months and highlight USDA's equity work.

Office of the General Counsel

The Office of the General Counsel (OGC) provides legal services and oversight required by the Secretary and USDA to achieve the Department's mission and deliver programs and services to the American people. OGC provides proactive, accurate, creative, and prompt legal services. OGC is committed to developing its employees and to serving its clients, and ultimately the public, in a way that is collaborative, transparent, inclusive, innovative, fact-based, and technology enabled.

OGC plays a central role in ensuring that USDA Mission Areas deliver their programs fairly and equitably to the public. Our legal work has contributed to using available legal authorities to improving access to funding opportunities for organizations that are led by, or primarily serve, marginalized and underserved populations; reducing language barriers that make it difficult for individuals with limited English proficiency to access Department programs or activities; and improving the Department's reporting of civil rights information across Departmental programs. Our legal work has contributed to improving access to all aspects of employment for deaf and hard of hearing employees and applicants for employment, as well as other individuals with disabilities.

Accomplishments

- **Reviewing equity work.** OGC worked with all Mission Areas to provide legal sufficiency reviews of the Department's public-facing Equity Action Plans. OGC also provided regular guidance regarding legal authority to the Department's Equity Commission as that group finalized recommendations for improving program delivery.
- **Technical Assistance.** OGC provided continual technical assistance to agencies and Congressional stakeholders on program enhancements related to legislative initiatives for the next Farm Bill, annual appropriations bills, as well as major legislation including the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the American Rescue Plan Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act.
- **Support Implementation of Major Relief Programs.** OGC provided legal counsel to support implementation of the Discrimination Financial Assistance Program and assisted the Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC) with program efforts to provide targeted assistance to farmers in financial distress.
- **Supporting Tribal Co-Stewardship Efforts.** OGC provided significant legal assistance to the Forest Service in developing a wide range of Tribal co-stewardship initiatives. OGC worked closely with Departmental and agency leadership to identify legal authorities supporting co-stewardship efforts; was instrumental in advising on the substance and parameters of co-stewardship agreements, including incorporating indigenous knowledge, identifying legal issues and offering creative solutions to maximize tribal participation developing agreement templates, and helping finalize agreements with tribes in advance of the White House Tribal Nations Summit. OGC continues to work with the Forest Service to assist tribes and Alaska Native corporations in developing opportunities to share in the stewardship over Federal lands and waters.
- **Participation in Department of Justice led Legal Aid Interagency Roundtable (LAIR).** USDA is one of 28 federal agency members to serve on LAIR that is charged with examining federal programs, developing strategies, and mobilizing resources to address the barriers to access to justice. OGC represents USDA on LAIR and has provided information about USDA actions to reduce barriers to access USDA programs and benefits for LAIR's annual report; and has attended numerous webinars that share what other agencies are doing to develop solutions for access to justice and their intersection with federal program effectiveness.

Planned Actions

1. Provide equity training to supervisors and field staff.

- OGC will assist agencies in managing their litigation risk by providing training on a variety of civil rights and employment issues. Training gives supervisors the necessary knowledge to avoid violating civil rights laws and to take prompt, corrective action to minimize liability when they become aware of a potential civil rights violation.

2. Support fair and equitable delivery of programs in accordance with legal authorities and support effective coordination, implementation, and monitoring of Departmental activities, including activities related to reducing barriers to participation in USDA programs in accordance with existing authorities.

- OGC will provide the best legal analysis to ensure that USDA agencies are taking actions consistent with law, regulations, guidance, and departmental policy. OGC works collaboratively with decision-making officials and Congress to provide legal analysis of all options so that USDA leaders have the most comprehensive presentation of choices within the confines of governing law. Once decisions are made, OGC works quickly to draft and clear regulations and guidance to ensure legal sufficiency and consistent implementation.

3. Provide legal assistance for Language Access Plans.

- OGC will continue to review and provide legal guidance for the Language Access Plans submitted by all USDA agencies.

Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement (OPPE)

The Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement develops and maintains partnerships focused on solutions to challenges facing rural and underserved communities in the United States, and connects those communities to the education, tools, and resources available to them through Department of Agriculture programs and initiatives. OPPE's equity work focuses on cultivating the next generation of agricultural leaders from underserved communities, improving participation of stakeholders from underserved communities in USDA programs and initiatives, and increasing the representation and participation of women and youth in the agriculture industry.

Accomplishments

- **Reaching Hispanic-Serving Institutions.** In October 2022, OPPE coordinated a OneUSDA Approach for the 36th Annual Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities Annual Conference. 10 USDA agencies presented potential internship and fellowship opportunities to 2,500 individuals, including 750 students. In FY2023, OPPE conducted a virtual symposium for the Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) community with information on Federal program resources available at USDA and the U.S. Department of Education with an emphasis on direct funding opportunities through cooperative agreements. Sessions also covered how USDA supports students, staff, and faculty through internships and grants at various agencies within the Department. The FY2023 symposium reached 215 attendees.
- **Engaging veterans in business development.** OPPE, in partnership with the Small Business Administration, the New England Veterans Business Outreach Center and USDA Agencies, planned and conducted the first ever Boots to Business Reboot with a focus on agricultural enterprises. 148 veterans (both women and men), transitioning service members, and

military spouses attended the program. Due to positive feedback, Boots to Business Reboot courses are expected to take place in FY 2024. In 2023, OPPE responded to and engaged over 286 transitioning, service members and veterans seeking employment opportunities at USDA. USDA provided one-on-one training on creating federal resumes and provided referrals to USDA and federal agencies. Additionally, OPPE participated in virtual and in-person career fairs that resulted in USDA information being shared with over 700 veterans. In FY 2023, the USDA hired 3,307 veterans to permanent career positions.

- **Developing strategy for reducing barriers.** In March 2023, OPPE convened a public meeting with the Advisory Committee on Minority Farmers (ACMF) to consider USDA programs, services, and policies, and how they impact farmers from historically underserved communities. The purpose of ACMF is to recommend action-oriented strategies that maximize the participation of minority farmers in USDA programs and services. ACMF's deliberations and engagement with stakeholders resulted in the report [Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers 2023 Farm Bill Recommendations \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov).
- **Promoting leadership through HSIIs.** USDA is committed to ensuring that minority-serving institutions have equitable access to USDA grant opportunities and can provide strategic direction in areas that most impact underserved communities. To strengthen USDA partnerships with HSIIs, USDA renewed the USDA-HACU Leadership Group in October 2022. Composed of an equal number of USDA representatives (appointed by the Secretary) and HSI President from state institutions (nominated by the HACU President and confirmed by the Secretary), this advisory group meets to discuss oversight and implementation of programs/initiatives. The advisory group also helps to support the USDA E. Kika De La Garza Program, which provided 28 fellowships for faculty and staff representing 28 HSIIs from 8 states and Puerto Rico in FY 2023.
- **Collaborating with HBCUs.** To revitalize efforts to improve collaboration with 1890 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) Land Grant Institutions, USDA established the USDA-1890 Task Force. Task Force membership is composed of an equal number of USDA representatives and 1890 HBCU Land Grant Institution Presidents. The USDA-1890 Task Force serves as an advisory body for partnership initiatives and ensures the realization of mutual benefits and interests.
- **Targeting technical assistance.** OPPE provides targeted technical assistance to nonprofit organizations that serve underserved producer communities by focusing on understanding USDA grant programs, funding technical assistance efforts, and enhancing capacity to submit quality, competitive grant proposals. In 2022, OPPE participated in the Farmer Veterans Coalition Stakeholders Conference. USDA presented guidance on beginning farming and ranching as well as employment and educational opportunities to over 250 veterans, veteran farmers, transitioning service members, and military spouses.
- **Creating career opportunities.** OPPE partnered with the National High School Equivalency Program (HEP) and the College Assistance Migrant Program (MEP) Association to create a 10-week summer internship program in Washington, DC for students from farmworker backgrounds. This new annual program offers USDA an opportunity to provide work experience to aspiring young leaders, increase diversity and promote awareness of the various career opportunities within USDA. In 2023, USDA hosted 8 interns within NRCS, FSA, and other agencies.
- **Training students on legislative activities.** In July 2023, OPPE participated in the National Future Farmers of America (FFA) youth summit which welcomed 300 FFA members and over 50 advisors. OPPE helped students prepare for legislative activities by conducting mock interviews and networking.
- **Cultivating the next generation of leaders.** OPPE aims to introduce the next generation of young leaders to a world in which agriculture is about more than just farming. Faces of Agriculture, a monthly virtual speaker series, exposes students

to diverse career paths, such as engineering and zoology, and how those fields contribute to the agricultural sector. The series spotlights USDA employees and the important work they carry out every day, from conducting global economic analysis for beef and cattle trade to managing tribal nurseries in Colorado. As of FY2022, OPPE hosted 34 episodes resulting in 1,482 registrants, all of which have access to recorded episodes.

- **Building an agricultural work force.** The USDA 1890 National Scholars Program provides scholarships to students attending 1890 Land-Grant Universities while pursuing academic degrees in agriculture, food, or related disciplines. The program increases the number of students studying agriculture and offers career opportunities. Through enhanced outreach efforts and the introduction of a streamlined, e-application, USDA has increased the number of applicants and recipients under the program. In FY 2022 and FY 2023, OPPE awarded 126 scholarships and 99 scholarships, respectively, or an average 35 percent increase when compared to 71 scholarships awarded in FY 2021.

Planned Actions

1. Cultivate the next generation of agricultural leaders from underserved communities.

- Task 1: Develop a USDA fellowship program that will emphasize practical and skill-based learning for stakeholders from underserved communities.
- Task 2: Develop a USDA scholarship program for Hispanics, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders majoring in agriculture-related fields.
- Task 3: Develop training opportunities for stakeholders from underserved communities on key challenges facing agriculture today, to include sustainable and organic farming, climate-smart commodities, nutrition security, food safety, land access/land tenure, and more.
- Task 4: Increase awareness of USDA scholarship, fellowship, and internship programs by increasing outreach to 1890 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Land Grant Institutions, Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI), Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISI), community-based organizations (CBO), and other non-governmental organizations (NGO).

2. Improve participation of stakeholders from underserved communities in USDA programs and initiatives.

- Task 1: Organize town halls and listening sessions in underserved communities to identify emerging and existing barriers that prevent stakeholders from underserved communities in participating in USDA programs and initiatives.
- Task 2: Hold advisory committee meetings to gather stakeholder feedback and to discuss findings from community needs assessments, report on progress made in USDA programs and initiatives, and share evidence-based resources to improve USDA programs and initiatives.
- Task 3: Develop mechanisms for USDA programs and initiatives to engage in multidirectional communication with stakeholders from underserved communities to proactively address issues concerning inequitable participation, and work internally to develop and implement solutions to resolve those issues.
- Task 4: Collaborate with non-governmental organizations to improve participation rates of stakeholders from underserved communities in USDA programs and initiatives.
- Task 5: Develop mechanisms to monitor participation, service delivery, and geographic service areas to identify potential underserved communities.

- Task 6: Develop data and evaluation capacity to make data-informed decisions that provide more equitable access to USDA programs and initiatives.

3. Increase the representation and participation of women and youth in the agriculture industry.

- Task 1: Partner with non-governmental organizations to provide information and resources to women interested in starting agriculture-related enterprises and/or pursuing careers in the agriculture industry, including developing third-party scholarship, fellowship, and internship programs.
- Task 2: Partner with youth-serving organizations to provide information and resources to young people interested in starting agriculture-related enterprises and/or pursuing careers in the agriculture industry, including developing third-party scholarship, fellowship, and internship programs.
- Task 3: Build awareness of the reach and importance of the agriculture industry, across a diversity of fields and disciplines, through outreach activities to students from underserved communities.
- Task 4: Develop recommendations to improve the participation of women in USDA programs and initiatives by collecting and analyzing data regarding the participation of women in those programs and initiatives.
- Task 5: Consolidate oversight and management within OPPE for all USDA scholarship, fellowship, and internship programs, including third-party programs.

Office of Budget and Program Analysis (OBPA)

OBPA provides centralized coordination and direction for the Department's budget, legislative and regulatory functions. It also provides analysis and evaluation to support the implementation of critical policies. OBPA administers the Department's budgetary functions and develops and presents budget-related matters to Congress, the news media, and the public.

With respect to equity, OBPA works with USDA agencies to identify equity-focused budgetary needs and runs the equity action planning and tracking process. It coordinates work on the Biden Harris Administration's Justice 40 Initiative, which aims to direct 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain Federal investments to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution.

Accomplishments

- **Formalizing equity work.** OBPA worked with all Mission Areas to support their development and finalization of the Department's public Equity Action Plans.
- **Creating reporting mechanisms.** OBPA has developed a regular cadence of cross-Department equity success reporting and coordinated the revamping and weekly updating of the Department's Equity webpages.
- **Developing an accountability tool.** OBPA launched an Equity Action Tracker, an accountability tool that brings all the equity work across the Department into one place and allows us to track progress.
- **Aligning equity planning with budget planning.** OBPA refined its planning process to ensure equity actions are highlighted prior to the release of the Chapter 11 guidance for the FY 2025 budget in Spring 2023.

Planned Actions

1. Leverage budget formulation process to seek resources for Department-wide equity activities.

- Task 1: Produce clearer guidelines for Mission Areas to take equity into account during their yearly budgeting processes.
- Task 2: Examine proposals offered by the agencies and offices to identify opportunities for further investments and/or more effective engagements.

2. Ensure effective tracking, monitoring, and execution of activities related to the Justice40 Initiative.

- Task 1: Develop Departmental guidance in compliance with M-23-09, Addendum to the Interim Implementation Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative, M-21-28, to ensure agencies are leveraging CEQ's Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) to identify disadvantaged communities.
- Task 2: Track Justice40 Implementation Plans across USDA.
- Task 3: Develop and implement USDA's White House Campaign for Environmental Justice Engagement Plan.
- Task 4: Ensure agencies are aware of, have guidance on, and respond to OMB Budget Data Requests on a timely basis.

Office of the Chief Economist (OCE)

OCE advises the Secretary on the economic situation in agricultural markets and the economic implications of policies and programs affecting American agriculture and rural communities. OCE serves as the focal point for the Department's economic intelligence and analysis related to agricultural markets, energy and environmental policy, sustainable development, agricultural labor, new uses of agricultural products, risk assessment and cost-benefit analysis related to Departmental regulations affecting food and agriculture, and for pesticide and pest management policies. OCE supports efforts to advance equity considerations in policy, program and regulatory actions.

Accomplishments

- **Equipping agencies with equity resources.** Identified data and tools to aid agencies in identifying underserved communities and provided technical support and economic expertise to help agencies achieve congressionally mandated updates to USDA program guidelines, including programs that serve lower-income Americans and underserved communities.
- **Assessing economic impact.** Supported agency efforts to include qualitative or quantitative assessment of regulatory impact on underserved communities in regulatory impact analyses and informed rulemaking by providing assessments of the economic conditions and challenges underserved producers face in agricultural markets. Additionally, OCE provided training (short courses, webinars) on use of tools to support equity in regulatory impact assessments.
- **Improving access and ensuring representation in USDA materials.** The OCE-Office of Pest Management Policy (OPMP) [pest management webinar series](#), hosted a workshop on language justice basics to help eliminate barriers that prevent communities with limited proficiency in English from achieving meaningful access to programs and activities. The workshop highlighted speakers representing underserved communities (e.g., farmworkers, tribal communities).

Additionally, OCE also provided public Food Loss and Waste educational materials for consumers in multiple languages online.

- **Supporting environmental justice.**

- Continued to integrate equity and environmental justice into USDA's efforts to address the causes and consequences of climate change—including through planning and policy efforts. OCE coordinates climate change policy analysis, long range planning, research, and response strategies consider how underserved communities and those with environmental justice concerns are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change. OCE works to ensure that these communities have equitable opportunity to participate in and benefit from USDA-supported climate solutions.
- Supported integration of environmental justice and equity across USDA Climate Hubs, which are a USDA Justice40 Covered Program. The Climate Hubs began identifying climate risks to disadvantaged communities through their vulnerability assessments, and began co-developing tools and technologies with disadvantaged communities including Tribes, rural communities, and underserved communities.

- **Increasing equity in USDA support of academic institutions.** Improved diversity of academic entities that receive extramural funding from OCE, and potential USDA job opportunities for candidates in historically underserved groups:

- Partnered with the Center for Environmental Farming Systems in the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (and HBCU) to explore how underserved producers can prosper in the rapidly expanding bioeconomy.
- Increased engagement with under-represented groups in undergraduate, graduate and in professional societies in an effort to increase diversity in Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) careers.

Planned Actions

1. Continue supporting agency efforts to advance equity considerations in policy, program, and regulatory actions.

- Task 1: Continue to support Department efforts to include qualitative or quantitative assessment of regulatory impact on underserved communities in regulatory impact analyses and inform rulemaking by providing assessments of the economic conditions and challenges underserved producers face in agricultural markets.
- Task 2: Initiate new research with land grant universities, including those that serve historically underserved populations, to evaluate how economic and climate shocks affect USDA program participants, including lower-income Americans.
- Task 3: Improve USDA understanding of underserved stakeholders' pest management needs, and improve stakeholder understanding of pesticides and biotechnology. Advocate for including these needs/gaps in research, education, and extension agendas.
- Task 4: Use the OCE-OPMP pest management webinar series to continue to highlight speakers working with or representing underserved communities (e.g., farmworkers, tribal communities) and make recordings available to the public on the OPMP website to increase and promote awareness.
- Task 5: Make critical information available in languages other than English, either by translating existing USDA resources or by leveraging existing resources from organizations that work with and are trusted by underserved and non-English

speaking communities.

2. Provide support for equity in the Department's climate change activities.

- Task 1: Continue to integrate equity and environmental justice into USDA's efforts to address the causes and consequences of climate change. OCE's coordination of climate change policy analysis, long range planning, research, and response strategies will consider how historically underserved communities will be disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change and work to ensure that these communities have equitable opportunity to participate in and benefit from climate solutions.
- Task 2: Continue to support integration of equity and environmental justice throughout the work of USDA's Climate Hubs. The Hubs will continue to identify climate risks to historically underserved communities, co-develop tools and technologies that are useful and useable in these contexts, and strive to provide accessible and inclusive outreach, training, and support. Equity and environmental justice will be included in annual priority planning, long-term strategic planning, and periodic program reviews of the Hubs.

3. Improve diversity of academic institutions, entities that receive extramural funding from OCE, and potential USDA job opportunities for candidates in historically underserved groups.

- Task 1: Engage in professional outreach to academic leaders and liaisons at minority serving and Hispanic serving institutions to discuss potential cooperative agreement topics and areas where USDA and the institution would mutually benefit from new research.
- Task 2: Increase engagement with under-represented groups in undergraduate, graduate and in professional societies in an effort to increase diversity in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) careers.
- Task 3: Support educational opportunities to introduce historically under-represented groups to USDA and OCE. OCE will again partner with the OPPE to implement the Future Leaders in Agriculture Program to provide real-world training experience to undergraduate and graduate students in agribusiness, scientific research, and agricultural policy, and provide them openings to discuss career opportunities with agriculture leaders in academia, government, and industry. This will include engagement at the USDA 2024 Agricultural Outlook Forum, a unique opportunity to learn about the latest trends and developments in agriculture from leading experts and industry professionals and to engage with senior OCE and USDA leadership.

Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO)

OCIO has the primary responsibility for the supervision and coordination of the design, acquisition, maintenance, use, and disposal of information technology by USDA agencies. OCIO's strategically acquires and uses information technology resources to improve the quality, timeliness and cost-effectiveness of USDA services. Its equity work focuses on two issues: ensuring full access for people with visual disabilities to USDA digital resources under Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and providing technical support for improving the infrastructure and analysis of equity-related data.

Accomplishments

- **Fostering a culture of equitable data.** The Chief Data Officer led USDA's participation in interagency equity data processes, including:

- Equity Data Working Group, a senior-level team tasked with creating Administration-wide recommendations on data equity (see <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/eo13985-vision-for-equitable-data.pdf>).
- Consideration of updates to Statistical Policy Directive No. 15 (SPD15), which sets the standard for how federal agencies collect race and ethnicity data.
- **Improving USDA staff awareness of 508 Compliance.** Launched quarterly training on Document Remediation for Section 508 Compliance and Accessibility, Procurement, and Market Research. Trained 1,237 USDA employees and contractors in OCIO. Facilitated 34 Section 508 Trainings courses via AgLearn.Organized USDA Section 508 Awareness Annual Event for USDA and other federal agencies (750+ participants).
- **Reviewing documents for compliance.** Provided guidance and support for 508 Compliance for the opening of the Department's Discrimination Financial Assistance Program application period. Reviewed documents, training, and accessibility for multiple language documents: 38 documents required 508 remediation.

Planned Actions

1. Increase the quality of USDA's equity data and its analysis.

- Task 1: Work with National Agricultural Statistics Service and affected agencies to transition USDA's Race/Ethnicity/Gender Statistics (REGStat) data to the Department's Enterprise Data Analytics Platform and Toolset (EDAPT). Transitioning REGStat to EDAPT will make the data capture for REGStat a routine and automatic process greatly improving the utility of future data. It will enable USDA to implement much more robust, user-friendly data query tools and also provide additional capability to evaluate this data using improved IT infrastructure.
- Task 2: Provide technical expertise as USDA develops improves data collection, analysis, and use, and augments public access.
- Task 3: Lead the Department-level implementation of equity-related data analysis dashboards, including for the Equity Action Tracker, REGStat, and language access.

2. Improve access for people with disabilities to the Department's digital resources and tools.

- Task 1: Maintain and report Section 508 information for the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) annual assessment, and Information Resource Management Center Customer Profiles, and work to implement responsive OMB and U.S. Access Board recommendations.
- Task 2: Continue providing technical assistance and remediation on Section 508 issues within the Department.
- Task 3: Work to increase Section 508 testing across websites, software, documents, multimedia and other Information and Communication Technology (ICT) by 5% in FY24.
- Task 4: Provide support and coordination between mission areas/agencies and the Departmental Section 508 Program Office.
- Task 5: Host the Annual Section 508 Awareness event.

Office of Communications (OC)

OC is USDA's central source of public information. The office provides centralized information services using the latest, most effective and efficient technology and standards for communication. It also provides the leadership, coordination, expertise, and counsel needed to develop the strategies, products, and services that are used to describe USDA initiatives, programs, and functions to the public.

Accomplishments

- **Communicated with the media and the public the main equity initiatives of the Department.** This includes issuing press releases and background on the findings, recommendation and implementation of the Equity Commission and its members, as well as supporting regular updates to the department's Equity webpage.
- **Implemented and rolled out the Discrimination Financial Assistance Program application.** Created a comprehensive communication and rollout plan to ensure potential applicants were aware of the program and application process for compensation made available by the Inflation Reduction Act, including supporting the availability of these materials in multiple languages.
- **Increased engagements with multi-language and community-specific media for Secretary, Deputy Secretary and senior leaders at the Department.** OC built on its communication to coalition media and outlets most frequented by USDA stakeholders, prioritizing meeting people where they are and where they get their news.
- **Updated USDA style guide for more inclusive language.** At the beginning of FY23, USDA incorporated our Gender Inclusive Language Guidebook into the USDA Styleguide and hosted multiple trainings across the Department facilitated by our LGBTQI+ Employee Resource Group, Out and Equal.
- **Monitored documents for plain language submission.** In 2023, the two editors in the Office of Communications reviewed more than 400 manuscripts 1,500 pages, to ensure plain language and other requirements. The Office of Communications acts as a final arbiter for reconciling USDA staff comments on many of these publications and ensures adherence to plain language requirements, USDA brand compliance, and GPO standards through simplification and clarification of complex content.

Planned Actions

1. Language Access: Develop and implement a plan for a more language-inclusive usda.gov, including translation of vital posted documents and webpages.

- Task 1: Work with OCIO, implement a language access tool on usda.gov to provide translations of web pages from English to multiple other languages, with a mechanism to facilitate human translation of "vital" web pages.
- Task 2: Ensure appropriate translation of Departmental communications, such as press releases and statements, that target populations for whom where English is not the primary language.
- Task 3: Maintain and host language access information and resources on usda.gov.

2. Continue to formalize processes and promote engagement with multi-language media and outlets that reach specific regional or cultural communities.

- Task 1: Work with agency public affairs staff to identify multilingual speakers who can interview in languages other than English, and work to media train these spokespeople so they can help share program news and information.
- Task 2: Formalize outreach to niche media outlets as a standard part of communications planning, to help ensure information about USDA's programs and opportunities reaches those who need or will be impacted by them most.

3. Equity Commission: Uplift the Equity Commission Final Report and the Departments accomplishments in addressing previous recommendations.

- Task 1: Highlight Equity Commission recommendations in Department and agency level communications.

Office of the Executive Secretariat (OES)

USDA's Office of the Executive Secretariat (OES) serves the Office of the Secretary of Agriculture by processing official correspondence and other documents on behalf of the Secretary and Deputy Secretary and maintains their official records. OES's performance measures are designed to avoid backlogs and focus on its contribution to public service with timely documents and well-organized processes.

The OES works with USDA agencies to promptly deliver reports and other documents requested by the White House, Congress, the Office of Management and Budget, the Government Accountability Office, the USDA Office of the Inspector General, other Federal agencies, governors, tribal leaders, and many other government entities.

The OES prepares or supports preparing briefing materials, proclamations, reports, responses to correspondence, letters and certificates of thanks, congratulations, condolences, and many other documents. OES receives and analyzes all documents addressed to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary and assigns them to the appropriate workflows and agencies or staff offices for action. The OES's work, governed by more than thirty laws and Departmental regulations, directly impacts USDA's image and policymaking.

Accomplishments

The Plain Language Forum was established in the summer of 2023 with over 150 USDA employees on the routing list. The lively discussions are focused on a variety of writing and communication issues, including the misuse of acronyms that interfere with automated screen readers for individuals who are visually impaired. Upcoming meetings include speakers on Section 508-compliance, gender-sensitive communication, policy-writing, writing articles for AskUSDA, the publication clearance process, and more.

OES has also updated its training slides on plain writing to include points on using plain language as an approach to ease the use of language translation software and online tools; as well as tips on common style requirements for Government writing.

The USDA Plain Language website and the USDA glossaries and acronyms pages have been updated; with additional improvements planned for early FY24, including release of the FY23 Annual Compliance Report. (<https://www.usda.gov/plain-writing>)

OES's new content management system, AgWrite, reached the stages for certifications with OCIO and data migration from the legacy system in FY23. The system is scheduled to go live in the spring of 2024.

OES collaborated with USDA's Food and Nutrition Service to update form letters to the public on frequent questions on emergency Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. OES is also working on a form letter to redirect the public to AskUSDA, or to external resources when they have mistakenly contacted USDA for a matter that it not within USDA's jurisdiction.

Planned Actions

1. Improve USDA's implementation of its plain language program.

- Task 1: Lead in development and updating of Department-wide processes and resources for best plain language practices; coordinate with digital accessibility leads to incorporate accessibility as well as readability.
- Task 2: Build community of USDA professionals with a stake in plain language guidance and applicability (e.g., web masters, writer-editors, program leaders). Integrate communications with this group into OES Community of Practice to discuss topics such as tools for readability and accessibility, new writing tips, Federal-wide communications.
- Task 3: Bring USDA's Plain Language website up to date, including the USDA Glossary.
- Task 4: Update USDA Style Guide and training slides to include concepts from the broader plain writing community.

2. Tracking equity-relevant communications.

- Task 1: Complete development of AgWrite, including features (such as natural language processing) to assist in flagging records by topics of interest to individual USDA experts and further facilitate collaboration.
- Task 2: Review the need to establish form letters and automated responses for the general public on frequent topics to ensure speedy responses and guide the public in understanding how to engage with USDA on our decision making.

Selected Equity Resources and Information

A. USDA Equity-Related Summary Reports and Guidance

- Programmatic Equity at USDA:
 - [Equity Website](#)
 - [Equity Accomplishments](#)
 - [Equity Action Plans](#)
- Equity Commission
 - [Equity Commission Website](#)
 - [2023 Interim Report | USDA Response \(English\) \(February 2023\)](#)
 - [Informe Interino 2023 | Respuesta al Informe Interino de la Comisión de Equidad del USDA | \(En Español\) \(Febrero 2023\)](#)
- [USDA Environmental Justice Scorecard](#)
- [USDA Advisory Committees](#)
- [Get Started! A Guide to USDA Resources for Historically Underserved Farmers and Ranchers \(July 2022\)](#)

B. Selected Equity-Related Executive Orders and White House Resources

- [White House Equity Page](#)
- [Executive Order 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government \(January 2021\)](#)
- [Executive Order 14091, Further Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government \(February 2023\)](#)
- [Executive Order 14096, Revitalizing our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All \(April 2023\)](#)
- [Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments \(November 2000\)](#)
- [Presidential Memorandum on Tribal Consultation and Strengthening Nation-to-Nation Relationships \(January 2021\)](#)
- [The Path to Achieving Justice⁴⁰ \(July 2021\)](#)

C. Staff Office Equity-Related Resources

- [AskUSDA](#)
- [Language Access](#)
- [USDA Partner Portal](#)
- [Plain Language](#)
- [Procurement Forecast Tool](#)
- [Section 508 Accessibility](#)



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USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.