

**For:** FSA Employees

**Informational Sessions and/or Training With 2501 Community Based Organizations (CBO's)**

**Approved by:** Deputy Administrator, Field Operations



**1 Overview**

**A Background**

Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, Section 2501, Pub. L. 101-624, 7 U.S.C 2279 established funding for outreach and assistance to SDA farmers and ranchers. The Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (OASDFR) Competitive Grant Program, formerly the 2501 Small Farmer Outreach Training and Technical Assistance Program, awards CBO's, higher education institutions, and eligible tribes funding to assist SDA farmers and ranchers through a competitive process. The overall goal of the OASDFR competitive grant program is to assist SDA farmers and ranchers in a linguistically appropriate manner in owning and operating farms, ranches, and non-industrial forest lands while increasing their participation in agricultural programs provided by USDA.

22-AO requires FSA employees to build and strengthen partnerships with collaborators and stakeholder groups by conducting training and informational sessions on FSA programs and services.

**B Purpose**

This notice informs employees of:

- contact information for organizations who have received OASDFR funding to conduct outreach and technical assistance
- required meetings and suggested topics for State Offices to present at outreach sessions with USDA partners.

<b>Disposal Date</b>	<b>Distribution</b>
January 1, 2014	All FSA employees; State Offices relay to County Offices

## Notice AO-1581

### 1 Overview (Continued)

#### C Contact

If there are questions about this notice, State Offices shall contact J. Latrice Hill, Acting Outreach Director by either of the following:

- e-mail at [latrice.hill@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:latrice.hill@wdc.usda.gov)
- telephone at 202-690-1700.

#### D Informational Session Overview

Informational sessions and/or meetings with OASDFR organizations shall be conducted by States before December 31 of each calendar year. These sessions should cover a general overview of FSA programs. Suggested topics include, but are not limited to:

- obtaining an FSA farm number
- what clients can expect at their first Service Center visit
- types of farm programs and services offered
- types of farm loan assistance available
- farm loan borrower training requirements
- COC and STC
- outreach initiatives and successes
- County Office contacts
- Govdelivery
- receipt for service.

**Notes:** Informational sessions and/or meetings are not limited to only OASDFR-funded organizations, but are required for all OASDFR-funded organizations.

A sample agenda with suggested topics is provided in Exhibit 1. Topics may vary but shall include, at a minimum, all topics provided in this subparagraph.

#### E OASDFR Organizations

In FY 2012, USDA's Office of Advocacy and Outreach granted new and supplemental awards to selected stakeholder groups, CBO's, and educational institutions to provide outreach and technical assistance to underserved farmers and ranchers in 32 States.

A list of USDA OASDFR-funded organizations authorized to conduct outreach and technical assistance on USDA programs is available on the DAFO SharePoint web site (Exhibit 2).

**Note:** No awards were made in FY 2013 for OASDFR.

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### 2 Other USDA Grantees and Local CBO's

#### A Overview

Many organizations receive funding from USDA to assist farmers and ranchers. Funds are awarded to groups by USDA Agencies such as RMA, NIFA, Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education, AMS, NRCS, and RD. States are encouraged to partner with all CBO's and organizations on outreach activities, especially those funded by these agencies. An informational session with similar program topics may be used where feasible.

#### B List of Grantees

A partial list of grantees is available on the DAFO Outreach SharePoint web site. See Exhibit 3.

### 3 Action

#### A County Office Action

County Offices shall continue to conduct outreach meetings with local partners and organizations. The annual informational sessions and/or meetings shall be conducted at State Offices by State Office staff.

**Note:** Outreach funding is **not** available to conduct informational meetings. States shall use existing Federal and non-Federal administrative allotments to cover any necessary costs and expenses.

#### B State Office Responsibilities

SED shall ensure that:

- all OASDFR-funded organizations located in their State are invited (Exhibit 4) to an informational session conducted by State Office Outreach and Program Specialists or DD's using a format similar to Exhibit 1 by **December 31 of each year**
- all USDA Office of Advocacy and Outreach 1890 and 1994 Program Liaisons are invited to participate (Exhibit 2)
- completion of annual informational sessions are reported to DAFO by January 15 of each year

**Note:** Negative reports are required. Report template is posted on DAFO's Outreach SharePoint web site at <https://fsa.sc.egov.usda.gov/mgr/DAFO/Outreach/default.aspx>.

- informational meetings and sessions are recorded in OTIS
- State and County Office Outreach coordinators provide a list of State OASDFR organizations to SDA farmers and ranchers who inquire about or require additional technical assistance.

## Agenda of State Stakeholder Information Session and/or Workshop

The following is an example agenda of a State stakeholder information session and/or workshop.

### State Office Stakeholder Informational Session

SED Welcome Agenda Overview  
Staff/Partner Organization Introductions

#### SED and/or State Office Representative:

- County Office Structure and State Office Roles
- State Accomplishments Fact Sheet
- County Executive Director (CED) County Listing
- Farm Loan Manager (FLM)/FLP Headquarters Listing
- District Director (DD) Listing
- County Committee Role
- State Committee Role.

#### State Program Specialists:

- Current Programs (Overview)
- Guide to Farm Loan Programs (Provide Guide)
- County Committee Elections and Secretarial Appointments
- Socially Disadvantaged Assistance Programs
- Establishing Farm (Obtaining FSN)
- Understanding EM Designations
- Outreach Initiatives [Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food, Compass Map, StrikeForce, People's Garden, Minority Farm Register, GovDelivery, USDA RegStats, Outreach SOS (*Sharing Outreach Successes*), USDA Advisory Committees, Community Needs Assessment Plans (language needs)]
- Partnership Agreements.

#### USDA Liaison Officer:

- Role
- Responsibilities.

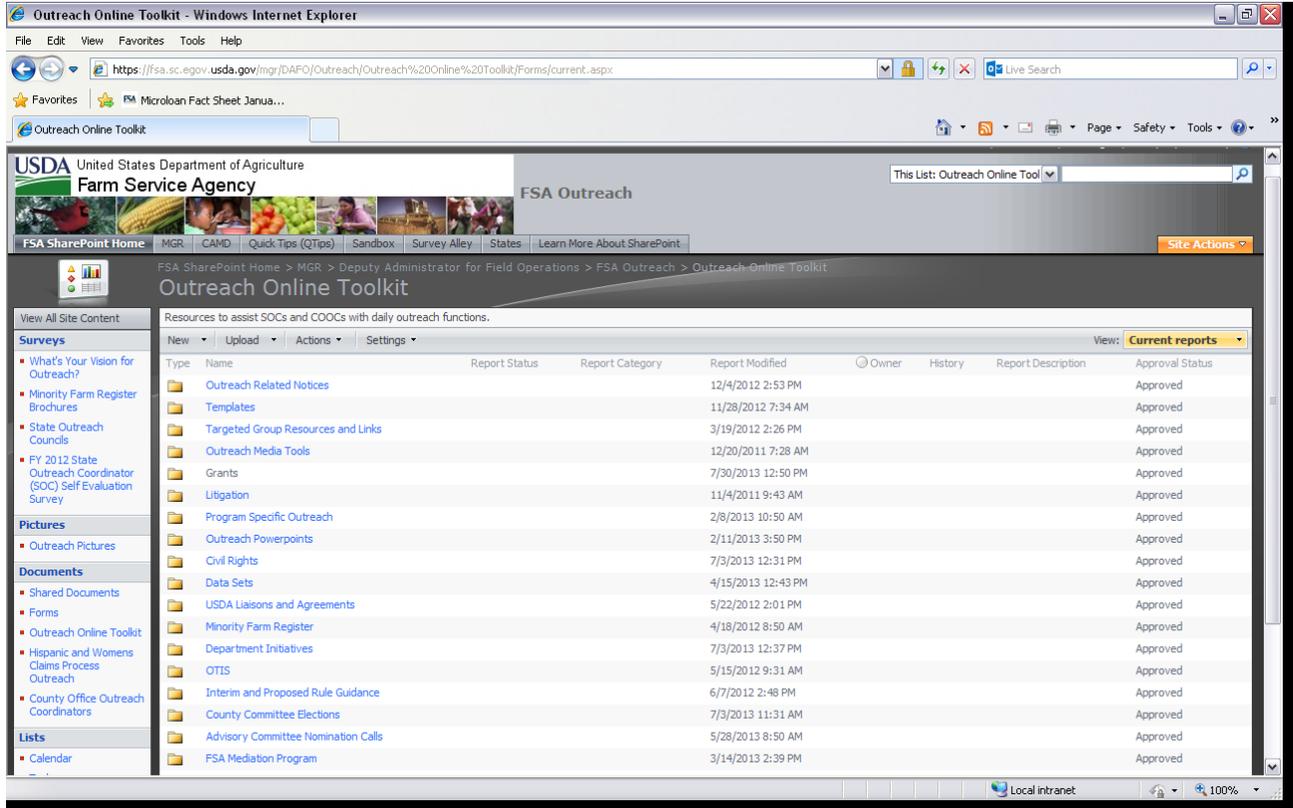
#### Partners:

- Partner Offerings (Types of Technical Assistance/Areas Covered)
- Goals
- Staff Contacts
- Questions.



List of Various USDA Grantees

The partial list of other USDA grantees are on the DAFO Outreach SharePoint web site at <https://fsa.sc.egov.usda.gov/mgr/DAFO/Outreach>. Under Documents, select “Outreach Online Toolkit” and “Grants”. Select from files posted in “Various CBO Grant Recipients” folder.



**FSA Letter to OASDFR Organizations**

Following is an example letter for States to send to OASDFR recipients. This template is available on the DAFO Outreach SharePoint web site at <https://fsa.sc.egov.usda.gov/mgr/DAFO/Outreach>. Under Documents, select “Outreach Online Toolkit”, “Targeted Group Resources and Links”, and “Section 2501 Program Community Based Organizations”.

<p>Date</p> <p>Dear USDA Partner,</p> <p>The XXX State Farm Service Agency has been informed of your selection as a USDA Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (OASDFR) grant recipient. Through this grant, your organization will work alongside USDA agencies to provide outreach and technical assistance on USDA programs to SDA farmers and ranchers in our State.</p> <p>We invite you and your staff to attend a brief informational session on USDA’s Farm Service Agency programs and services. As you work with our producers and potential applicants, it is important to be generally aware of the programs and services our agency provides in (insert State name).</p> <p>Some of the topics we will cover include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• County Office Structure (County Executive Directors, Farm Loan Managers)</li><li>• County Committees and Election Outreach</li><li>• Enrolling Your Farm with FSA</li><li>• FSA Guide to Farm Loan Programs</li><li>• Socially Disadvantaged Loans</li><li>• Outreach Initiatives (Know Your Farmer, USDA Minority Farm Register)</li><li>• Sharing Our Successes (Your role in reporting Outreach successes)</li><li>• Partnership Agreement.</li></ul> <p>We would like to also hear from you to become familiar with your organization’s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Goals</li><li>• Coverage area (which counties do you serve)</li><li>• Staff and Contact information.</li></ul> <p>As we share the same goals in creating a more sustainable rural America, we look forward to creating a productive partnership with you.</p> <p>Please contact (insert SOC name), State Outreach Coordinator, (insert name), to confirm our proposed date and time of: (insert date, time).</p> <p>SED Name Title</p>
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