



Compilation of Historical Recommendations

Overview of Key Findings

Presented by: Dr. Dewayne Goldmon,
Sr. Advisor for Racial Justice & Equity, USDA

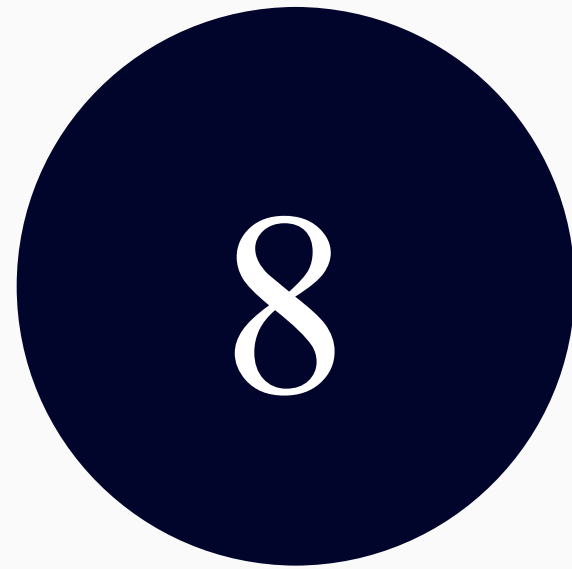
Agenda

- Summary of Historical Reports included in Assessment
- Research Methodology
- Lessons Learned
- High Level Summary Status of Recommendations
- USDA's Commitment

Summary of Reports included in Assessment

- 1965 Civil Rights Report
- 1982 Civil Rights Report
- 1996 DJ Miller Report
- 1997 Civil Rights Action Team (CRAT), The Civil Rights Implementation Team (CRIT)
- 1998 A Time to Act
- 2011 The Jackson Lewis Report
- 2012 Minority Farmers and Ranchers Advisory Committee Report (MFRAC)
- 2018 Council for Native American Farming and Ranching Report (CNAFR)
- 2020 Minority Farmers and Ranchers Advisory Committee Report (MFRAC)
- 2021 Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Report (ACBFR)
- 2021 Office of the Inspector General (OIG): USDA Oversight of Civil Rights Complaints

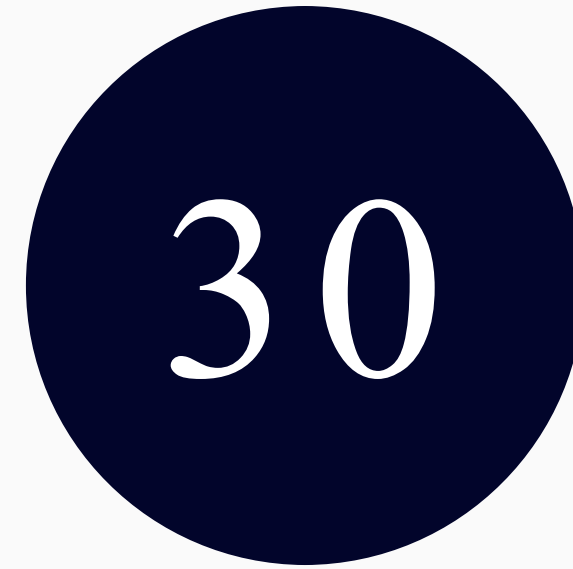
Summary of Reports (continued)



Mission Areas



Reports



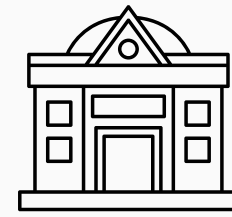
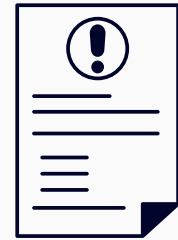
Agencies and Offices



Recommendations



Years of History



Methodology

- Recommendations were compiled into one inventory and assigned to USDA agencies and offices to provide an implementation status.
- Senior leaders were asked to select one of the following recommendation statuses:
 - Fully implemented
 - Partially implemented
 - Implemented outside of recommendation
 - Not implemented due to barrier
 - No longer applicable
- Some agencies responded by categories/themes while others responded to each recommendation.



Lessons Learned

- **Ownership Matters:** Unlike OIG and GAO Reports generally coordinated by USDA, there's a lack of ownership on all other reports. To be effectuated, reports need a clear owner.
- **Accountability and Metrics:** Many of the reports focus on specific actions rather than desired outcomes. They generally lack accountability measures to hold USDA responsible and none of the reports were binding.
- **Budget and Funding Matters:** The extent to which new resources are available to execute on recommendations is dependent both on annual appropriations and Administration priorities. These change over time.
- **Authority Matters:** Where USDA has the discretionary authority to take action on a recommendation, a clear owner with direction and authority within the institution matters. In other places, Congressional action is essential.
- **Need to Integrate Stakeholder Input into Policy Decisions:** USDA lacks a policy or evaluation shop or standard practices that would enable it to systematically incorporate stakeholder input and historical reports as well as the outcomes of program evaluations or other learnings into strategic planning, policy design, and regulatory development in a cohesive way.

Findings

Status of Recommendations by the Numbers

384

Recommendations Addressed

100

Recommendations Fully Implemented

148

Recommendations Partially Implemented

81

Not Implemented Due to Barriers

18

Implemented Outside of Recommendation

28

No Longer Relevant

9

Unknown

Number of Recommendations by Themes



Key Themes

1. Lack of Workforce Diversity
2. Cumbersome Program Processes
3. Lack of Technical Assistance
4. County Committee Impacts
5. Civil Rights Accountability and Program Complaints



Theme 1: Lack of Workforce Diversity

Past recommendation examples:

- *That the President direct the Secretary of Ag to assure equal employment opportunities and require employment, training, assignment, and promotion of all personnel be based on merit and ability without regard to race or color or the employee or clientele to be served. (Civil Rights Report, 1965)*
- *USDA should hold all managers accountable for utilizing a diverse pool of applicants for all vacancies/promotions, with limited exceptions to be approved/denied by the USDA CDO. (Jackson Lewis, 2011)*
- *The Council recommends the Office of General Counsel retain at least one (1) full time employee on staff who can advise USDA agencies on intersections of USDA policies and potential effects on tribal interests and populations. (CNAFR, 2018)*

Theme 2: Cumbersome Program Processes

Past recommendation examples:

- *The Farm Service Agency should develop new lending procedures which substantially reduce the application process and form requirements for direct and guaranteed loans so that all loans can normally be approved or disapproved within 30 days of application. (A Time to Act, 1998)*
- *The Committee recommends that FSA implement a streamlined process for FSA loans under \$50,000 consisting of a low-doc farm loan application and review process; and that this process be targeted toward SDFR's in selected areas where there are high concentrations of such underserved borrowers. (MFRVAC, 2012)*
- *Continue to utilize virtual tools to better serve Beginning Farmers and Ranchers and allow for a more streamlined, timely, and flexible application processes. (ACBFR, 2021)*

Theme 3: Lack of Technical Assistance

Past recommendation examples:

- *FSA and the County Extension office, should measure effectiveness of technical assistance programs in increasing minority and female participation in programs, and work to improve technical assistance and program participation. (DJ Miller, 1996)*
- *A consistent protocol should be created and implemented in every field office for tracking applications, informing applicants of the status of their application in writing on a regular basis, providing customers with reasons as to why they are ineligible for programs or not funded, and providing guidance for future applications. (Jackson Lewis, 2011)*
- *The Secretary should develop a National Native American Radio Broadcasting Tribal outreach strategy. (CNAFR, 2018)*

Theme 4: County Committee Impacts

Past recommendation examples:

- *Assure minority participation in local committee elections and appoint to state, area, and local committees. (Civil Rights, 1965)*
- *Change the role of County Committee members from having decision-making authority for Farm Programs to serving as technical advisors. (Jackson Lewis, 2011)*
- *The non-voting status of the minority advisor position dissuades well-qualified individuals from serving. Additionally, differential terms of service for the minority advisor are a problem. Therefore, the minority advisor position should be given voting rights and have the same terms of service as the non-minority members. (MFRVAC, 2012)*

Theme 5: Civil Rights Accountability and Program Complaint Processing

Past recommendation examples:

- *Organize the new USDA Civil Rights Office with separate employment and program civil rights components that report under separate lines of supervision. (CRAT, 1997)*
- *USDA should install and widely publicize two toll-free Hotlines (one for employees; one for customers), integrated with the Complaint System, which would log in and create files for all complaints received, and follow normal processes for investigation and closure. (Jackson Lewis, 2011)*
- *Evaluate the timeframe to process program complaints and, based on this analysis, develop and implement timeframes and a success rate to ensure program complaints are processed in a prompt and timely manner. (OIG, 2021)*

Implementation Status by Report

Report Name	Fully Implemented	Partially Implemented	Not Implemented	No Longer Relevant	Implemented Outside of Recommendation	Unknown	Total Number
1965 Civil Rights*	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1
1982 Civil Rights*	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0
1996 DJ Miller Report	17%	50%	8%	25%	0%	0%	12
CRAT/CRIT 1997	49%	29%	7%	9%	7%	0%	45
A Time To Act, 1998	14%	40%	23%	14%	9%	0%	43
Jackson Lewis 2011	24%	44%	19%	2%	7%	4%	157
MFRVAC 2012	29%	35%	35%	0%	0%	0%	17
CNAFR	25%	33%	21%	21%	0%	0%	57
ACBFR	6%	17%	72%	0%	0%	6%	18
MFRVAC 2020-2021	44%	22%	28%	0%	0%	6%	18
OIG, Oversight of Civil Rights Complaints	31%	63%	6%	0%	0%	0%	16
Total Number	100	148	81	28	18	9	384

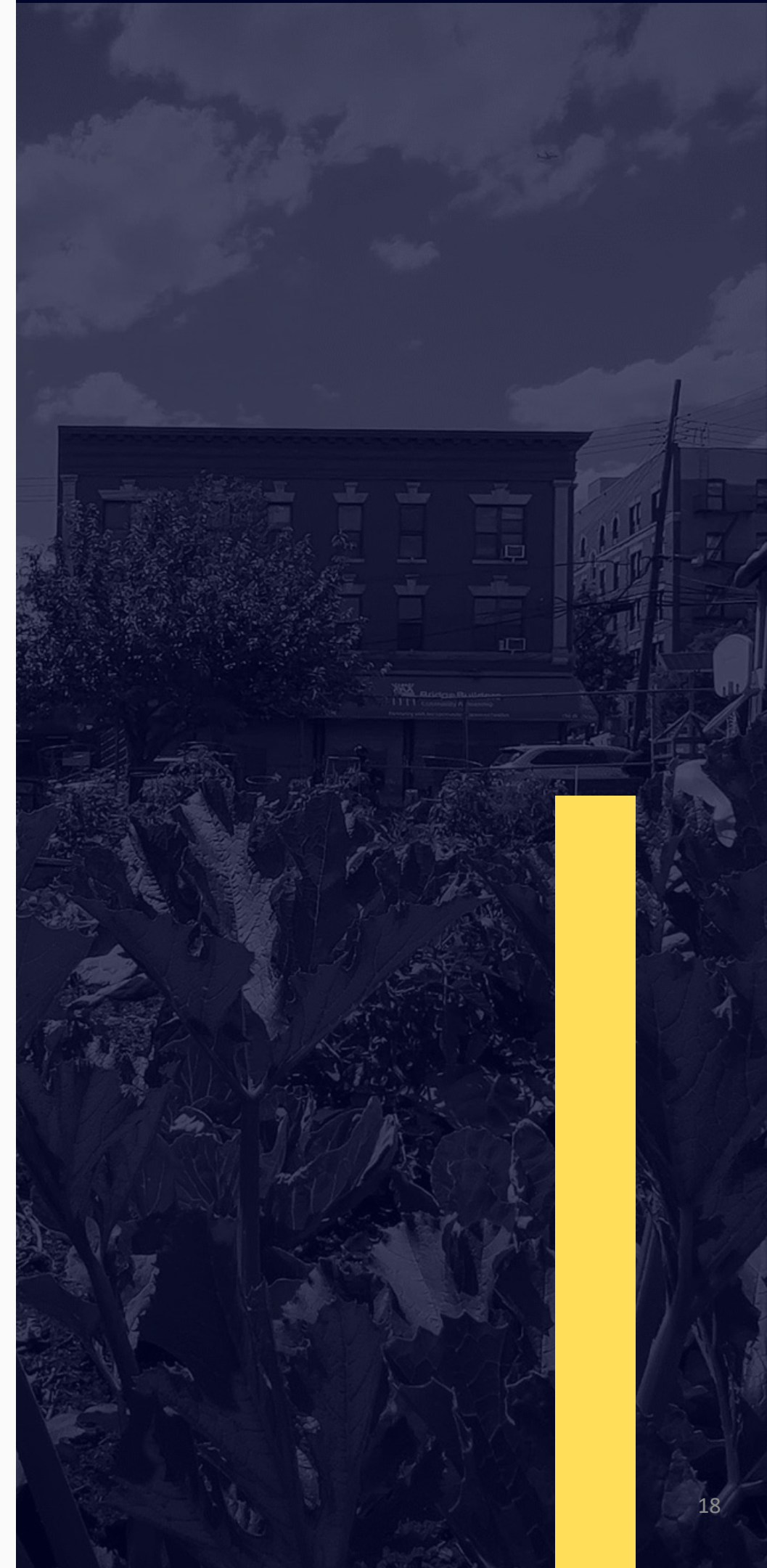
*USDA determined it was important to include and address the 1965 and 1982 Civil Rights Reports. However, the 1965 report provided 13 recommendations and the 1982 report provided only one recommendation. These recommendations tended to be more difficult to translate to modern USDA programs, in turn, the data for these reports is not as comprehensive as the other reports.

Implementation Status by Theme

Theme	Fully Implemented	Partially Implemented	Not Implemented	No Longer Relevant	Implemented Outside of Recommendation	Unknown	Total Number
DEIA	19%	53%	18%	0%	3%	7%	72
Equitable Representation	25%	51%	18%	1%	3%	1%	67
Tribal	26%	31%	19%	24%	0%	0%	42
Program	22%	31%	34%	6%	3%	3%	108
Governmental Processes	10%	38%	21%	7%	24%	0%	29
Civil Rights	60%	28%	2%	8%	2%	0%	50
County Committee	6%	25%	25%	25%	19%	0%	16
Total Number	100	148	81	28	18	9	384

USDA's Commitment – Looking Ahead

- **FY2022** Measure early accomplishments and progress.
- **FY2023** Further strengthen Equity Action Plans with these historical reports in mind, build greater accountability, and start to institutionalize deeper in agencies and field structure.
- **FY2024** Integrate equity and historical gaps in budget planning. Ensure USDA has the organizational norms and readiness to consider and implement Equity Commission's reports and recommendations.





Questions?