



Letter No. 3620
Friday, June 10, 2011
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BROADCASTERS LETTER

#3620

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(June 10)

USDA FARM SERVICE AGENCY ACTING ADMINISTRATOR TOURS FLOOD DAMAGE IN MONTANA

Acting Farm Service Agency Administrator Bruce Nelson travels to Montana today to tour areas of the state devastated by flooding. "Severe weather this spring is making things extremely difficult for many farmers and ranchers," says Nelson. "We want producers affected by the flooding to know that we are here for them and we have several programs in place that could help them during this recovery period." Nelson, a resident of Montana, toured the Huntley Project irrigation canal that was damaged when Pryor Creek flooded, taking away more than 100 feet of the district's canal system. The Huntley Project irrigates more than 20,000 acres of land that grows six crops, including sugar beets, malt barley, spring wheat, corn, hay and grass.

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced this week that \$3 million has been allocated to the Emergency Watershed Protect Program administered by NRCS to carry out emergency restoration projects in five western states experiencing flooding or at risk for flooding.

Contact: Office of Communications (202) 720-4623

For More Story Info: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15496>

<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15495>

USDA OFFICIAL MEETS WITH HISPANIC AND WOMEN FARMERS TO DISCUSS PROCESS FOR RESOLVING DISCRIMINATION CLAIMS IN CALIFORNIA

As part of continued efforts to close the chapter on allegations of past discrimination at USDA, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights Fred Pfaeffle held a series of outreach meetings this week with farmers and ranchers to talk about the process that has been put in place to resolve the claims of Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who assert that they were discriminated against when seeking USDA farm loans. "The Obama Administration is committed to resolving all claims of past discrimination at USDA, so we can close this sad chapter in the department's history," says Pfaeffle. "We want to make sure that any Hispanic or women farmer or rancher who alleges discrimination is aware of this option to come forward, to have his or her claims heard and to participate in a process to receive compensation."

The program [USDA announced earlier this year](#) with the Department of Justice provides up to \$50,000 for each Hispanic or woman farmer who can show that USDA denied them a loan or loan servicing for discriminatory reasons for certain time periods between 1981 and 2000. This claims process offers a streamlined alternative to litigation and provides at least \$1.33 billion in compensation, plus up to \$160 million in farm debt relief to eligible Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers. Hispanic or women farmers who provide additional proof and meet other requirements can receive a \$50,000 reward. Successful claimants are also eligible for funds to pay the taxes on their awards and for forgiveness of certain existing USDA loans. There are no filing fees or other costs to claimants to participate in the program. Participation is voluntary, and individuals who decide not to participate may choose to file a complaint in court. However, USDA cannot provide legal advice to potential claimants, and persons seeking legal advice may contact a lawyer or other legal services provider.

Potential claimants in California, who were unable to attend this week's events, can register to receive a claims package by calling the Farmer and Rancher Call Center at 1-888-508-4429 or visiting www.farmerclaims.gov. Under the leadership of Secretary Vilsack, USDA is addressing civil rights complaints that go back decades and through these outreach meetings, we are taking steps towards achieving that goal. USDA is committed to resolving allegations of past discrimination and ushering in "a new era of civil rights" for the Department. In February 2010, the Secretary announced the Pigford II settlement with African American farmers, and in October 2010, he announced the Keepseagle settlement with Native American farmers.

Audio and video [public service announcements](#) in English and Spanish from Secretary Vilsack and downloadable [print and web banner ads](#) on the Hispanic and women farmer claims process are available at: http://www.usda.gov/PSAs_Print_and_WebBanner_Ads.xml.

Contact: Office of Communications (202) 720-4623
For More Story Info: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

(June 9)

OBAMA ADMINISTRATION ESTABLISHES WHITE HOUSE RURAL COUNCIL TO STRENGTHEN RURAL COMMUNITIES

The White House announced the establishment of the first White House Rural Council. While rural communities face challenges, they also present economic potential. To address these challenges, build on the Administration's rural economic strategy, and improve the implementation of that strategy, the President signed an [Executive Order](#) establishing the White House Rural Council. "Strong rural communities are key to a stronger America," says President Barack Obama. "That's why I've established the White House Rural Council to make sure we're working across government to strengthen rural communities and promote economic growth."

The White House Rural Council will coordinate programs across government to encourage public-private partnerships to promote further economic prosperity and quality of life in rural communities nationwide. Chaired by Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, the Council will be responsible for providing recommendations for investment in rural areas and will coordinate Federal engagement with a variety of rural stakeholders, including agricultural organizations, small businesses, and state, local, and tribal governments. "Rural America makes significant contributions to the security, prosperity, and economic strength of our country," says Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "The Rural Council announced by President Obama shows his continued focus on promoting economic opportunity, creating jobs, and enhancing the quality of life for those who live in rural America. Together with the rest of the Obama administration, USDA has worked to support families and businesses in rural communities so that their success will pay dividends for all Americans."

In the coming months, the White House Rural Council will focus on job creation and economic development by increasing the flow of capital to rural areas, promoting innovation, expanding digital and physical networks, and celebrating opportunity through America's natural resources. For details on the Council's discussion of key factors for growth, go to <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>.

Contact: Office of Communications (202) 720-4623
For More Story Info: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>
For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15479>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15478>

MANY EVENTS COMING UP FOR NATIONAL GET OUTDOORS DAY

Several locales nationwide this weekend will allow folks to explore our nation's forest lands and parks and learn about nature. Jim Hubbard of the U.S. Forest Service explains the intent and activity surrounding the annual Get Outdoors Day celebration.

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15406>

A SMALLER THAN NORMAL INCREASE IN CHILD RAISING COSTS

How much will it cost to raise a child born last year to age 18? USDA radio's Gary Crawford finds out.

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15484>

(June 8)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MIDWEST SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS TO LEARN HOW TO PARTNER WITH FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS

There's an upcoming conference in Kansas co-hosted by the Department of Commerce that supports the White House initiative on small business contracting. This will allow Midwest small business owners an opportunity to learn how to grow and support their businesses by partnering with the USDA, the Department of Commerce (DOC) and other Federal agencies. During a business conference in Kansas, attendees will participate in a full day of workshops and panel discussions led by program and small business procurement officials. Topics include acquisition needs and opportunities, procurement methods, subcontracting opportunities, business development resources, and more. As part of a continuing effort to increase small business contracting participation by enhancing the competitive posture of small businesses and small farmer-owned cooperatives, workshops will be dedicated to contracting opportunities in rural America. Additionally, there will be opportunities to meet one-on-one with the USDA and the DOC small business contracting specialists during a half-day "matchmaking" event.

The conference, hosted by the Department of Agriculture in partnership with the Department of Commerce will be held **Tuesday, June 28, 2011, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Sheraton Overland Park Hotel, 6100 College Boulevard, Overland Park, KS 66211**. To register: fax your name, company name, full address, telephone number and email address to (202) 720-3001, or email to Janet.Baylor@dm.usda.gov by June 24, 2011. For further information please call 202-720-7117 or visit www.usda.gov/osdbu.

Contact: Office of Communications (202) 720-4623
For More Story Info: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

USDA FUNDING FOR PROJECTS TO REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IN 24 STATES

A total of \$7.4 million has been allocated to fund 9 large-scale greenhouse gas mitigation projects in 24 states through U.S. Department of Agriculture's Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG). "We want to help farmers and ranchers make important and innovative contributions to reducing greenhouse gas emissions," says Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "These grants are designed to test and verify exciting new approaches to greenhouse gas reduction that other conservation-minded producers will want to put to work on their operations."

In addition to the \$7.4 million, the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), which administers CIG, will provide \$10 million through its regular Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) to eligible producers to implement conservation practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The NRCS received 43 CIG proposals from 28 states. Nine projects were approved and will be implemented in 24 states. Grant recipients are required to provide matching funds—both cash and in-kind services.

CIG, a component of EQIP, stimulates development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies. NRCS uses CIG to invest in innovative, on-the-ground conservation technologies and approaches with the goal of wide-scale adoption to address water quality and quantity, air quality, energy conservation, and environmental markets, among other natural resource issues. Grants are awarded to state and local governments, federally-recognized Indian tribes, non-governmental organizations and individuals.

A summary of all selected proposals awarded in 2011 Conservation Innovation Grant is available below and at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/cig/2011ghgawards.html>.

For More Story Info: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

FSA COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTION PROCESS SOON TO BEGIN

June 15th is the first day to submit nominations for Farm Service Agency County Committee elections.

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15468>

(June 7)

ARIZONA WILDFIRES HEADING INTO RECORD TERRITORY

Fires in Arizona are burning acreage at a record pace, with no immediate end in sight. Meantime, the forest service has efforts in battling the Arizona wildfires. Officials are hoping that coordinated efforts will stop those Arizona wildfires that have consumed over 230,000 acres.

For More Story Info: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15458>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15454>

USDA FUNDS PROJECTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO ADVANCE PEST AND DISEASE MANAGEMENT AND DISASTER PREVENTION

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is allocating \$50 million, provided by Section 10201 of the 2008 Farm Bill, for projects that prevent the introduction or spread of plant pests and diseases that threaten

U.S. agriculture and the environment. "USDA is continuing its partnership with states, industry and other interested groups under the 2008 Farm Bill to prevent the entry of invasive plant pests and diseases, quickly detect those that may slip in and enhance our emergency response capabilities," says Agriculture Secretary Vilsack. "I am pleased with the wide range and record number of project suggestions. They will provide strong protection to America's agricultural and environmental resources, and many will help nursery and specialty crop growers to flourish as the economy continues to recover."

Funding is offered to many states and U.S. territories to implement projects at universities, federal agencies, nongovernmental organizations, private companies and tribal organizations. These projects will advance the Farm Bill goals of early pest detection and the identification and mitigation of agricultural threats. The USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) made a concerted effort to engage external stakeholders, such as the National Plant Board, Specialty Crops Farm Bill Alliance and USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service and U.S. Forest Service, in designing the evaluation criteria for the suggestions. More than half of the suggestion reviewers came from outside of APHIS.

Over the last two years, Section 10201 projects have played a significant role in many USDA successes in protecting American agriculture and educating the public about the threat of invasive species. These successes include, among many others, the eradication of plum pox virus in Pennsylvania and a recent Mediterranean fruit fly outbreak in Florida, surveys for European grapevine moth in California, the 2010 national survey of honey bee pests and diseases and the production of a documentary ("Lurking in the Trees") to increase public awareness of the Asian longhorned beetle—a serious pest of hardwood trees—that has been broadcast widely on public television. For information on how selected projects were organized go to <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>. The FY 2011 funding plan and list of projects are posted at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/section10201>.

Contact: Alyn Kiel (301) 734-5222 or Lyndsay Cole (970) 494-7410
For More Story Info: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

(June 6)

PROMOTING AGROFORESTRY AS A MEANS TO IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT, HELP LANDOWNERS FIND OTHER SOURCES OF REVENUE AND MAKE BETTER USE OF LAND

The USDA's plan will help farmers, ranchers and woodland owners enhance productivity, profitability and environmental stewardship. This is being done by using the practice of agroforestry. Agroforestry like the name suggests combines agriculture and forestry to create integrated and sustainable land-use systems that take advantage of the interactive benefits from combining trees and shrubs with crops and/or livestock.

The [USDA Agroforestry Strategic Framework](#) is a guide to advance agroforestry knowledge, practices and assistance that lays the roadmap to influence the long-term health and sustainability of all lands for future generations. USDA Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan says, "Agroforestry does not sacrifice farmland for forests or forests for farmland. Rather, agroforestry is the marriage of disciplines that, in the end, will protect our natural resources, benefit our communities and allow for the development of other sources of income for farmers, ranchers and woodland owners. Agroforestry can enhance values for any landowner."

An example of how agroforestry works – managed forest canopies in a woodland area can protect a range of crops grown for food, landscaping, and medicinal use to include plants such as shiitake mushrooms, ramps, ginseng, goldenseal, curly willow and Galax. Farmers and ranchers who plant pine trees on land used for livestock and forage production can add to their profits by selling pine straw and high-value saw logs.

Andy Mason works with the U.S. Forest Service and is a leader of the [Interagency Agroforestry Team](#) that developed the framework with input from diverse stakeholders. Mason says, "The foundation of agroforestry is putting trees to work in conservation and production systems. Agroforestry begins with placing the right plant, in the right place, for the right purpose. This framework will help USDA focus its

efforts on developing the highest priority science and tools while expanding its educational, training, and partnership activities so that America's farmers, ranchers and woodland owners have the greatest opportunity to consider agroforestry for their operation."

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For More Story Info: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>

EFFORTS URGED TO FEED MORE HUNGRY CHILDREN THIS SUMMER

The USDA Kicks-off First-Ever National Summer Food Service Program Awareness Week

The *National Summer Food Service Program Week: "Food That's In When School Is Out,"* is a week-long awareness campaign promoting the USDA's [Summer Food Service Program](#) (SFSP) and other initiatives across the country to feed low-income children during summer when school is out. The SFSP, a federally funded program designed to alleviate hunger during the summer, operates through partnerships between the USDA, state agencies and local organizations.

"When it comes to our children, we must do everything possible to provide them the nutrition needed to be healthy, active and ready to win the future," says Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. "But we also recognize that government cannot address this challenge alone, which is why this week we join our valued partners to raise awareness about the nutrition gap low-income children face when school is out of session. Working together, government, non-profit and faith-based organizations, as well as the public, can make sure children have access to nutritious food year round."

For information on the campaign's plan for the summer go to <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>.

There are at least 17 million children in the United States at high risk for hunger during the summer. Although more than 20 million children nationwide receive free and reduced-priced meals through the [National School Lunch Program](#) during the regular school year, little more than 3 million kids are fed in summer meal programs.

To find a summer feeding site in your community, call the National Hunger Hotline at 1-866-3-Hungry or 1-877-8-Hambre." To find more ways you can help, search for volunteer opportunities at www.serve.gov/endlhunger.

Contact: Office of Communications (202) 720-4623
For More Story Info: <http://www.usda.gov/newsroom>
For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15462>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15460>

NATURAL DISASTER PROPERTY LOSS COULD MEAN TAX DEDUCTION

For property owners not covered by insurance, a tax deduction could be one way to help recover from property damage suffered by a natural disaster. Also, good record keeping is key in natural disaster related tax deduction. Property owners need a variety of records to take tax deductions related to damage from a natural disaster says Brenda Proctor of University of Missouri Extension.

For Radio Story: <http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15413>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15414>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15416>
<http://audioarchives.oc.usda.gov/radnewsdetail.asp?ID=15417>

For more agriculture news go to www.usda.gov and click Newsroom on the toolbar.
Also, check out the [USDA Blog](#)



FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA CD # 24.11 – For almost twenty years the government has been using a pyramid symbol to express basic nutrition advice, but that pyramid is being partially replaced by a new and more simple icon. On this edition of AGRICULTURE USA, Gary Crawford takes a look at the new My Plate symbol.

CONSUMER TIME CD # 24.11 – A New Symbol To Deliver Nutrition Advice. It's Farmers Market Time. Bedbug Problem Still Growing. Summer Fun On The Pond Begins With Spring Maintenance. Health Benefits To Go Nuts About.

AG UPDATE CD # 24.11 – Russian Grain Export Ban Almost Over. Prolonged Flooding Along The Missouri River. A Tax Deduction For Natural Disaster Loss. Reaping From USDA's R.E.A.P. Are New Greenhouse "Green" Plant Containers Really Green?

UPCOMING ON THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE – June 14– Crop Weather (WAOB). June 15 – Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry Outlooks (ERS-WAOB). June 17 – Cattle On Feed Reports (NASS). June 20 – Crop Progress Report (WAOB). **These are USDA reports we know about in advance. The Radio Newsline carries many stories every day that are not listed in this lineup.**

Access the Radio Newsline at 202-720-6776, 5PM ET or go to www.usda.gov, click on Newsroom at top of page, scroll down on right side of page to Radio and TV.

Then click on Daily Radio News Service or Weekly Radio Feature Service.

Questions on USDA Radio's Features, fax name, station, and address to 202-690-2165.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

ACTUALITIES – Secretary Vilsack Comments On White House Rural Council

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack comments on the establishment of the first White House Rural Council. He will serve as chairman of the White House Rural Council that will address economic and quality of life issues in rural communities.(June 9, 2011)

New actualities are available on the USDA FTP site

Filename: Vilsack Rural Council

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Agriculture Secretary, Virginia Governor And Movie Star Advocate For Feeding Programs

Child feeding programs got a boost from an Oscar-winning actor,
the Agriculture Secretary and the Governor of Virginia

YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x0XGTO_HWZo

Windows: <mms://ocbmtcwmp.usda.gov/content/bmtc/vnr/hungryCAP.wmv>

A new TV feature is available on the USDA FTP site

Filename: No Kid Hungry

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New MyPlate Food Guidelines Unveiled At USDA

USDA's new MyPlate healthy eating guidelines were presented as ways
to help make the U.S. healthier and stronger

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZgeS6VcdIVI>

Windows: <mms://ocbmtcwmp.usda.gov/content/bmtc/vnr/myplateCAP.wmv>

A new TV feature is available on the USDA FTP site

Filename: my plate feature

Download instructions:

The host: <ftp://ocbmtcmedia.download.akamai.com>

User name: usdanews

Password: Newscontent1

The new file is in QuickTime Movie (H.264) MPEG 4, MPEG2 and HDV
Please email bob.ellison@usda.gov if you have problems or suggestions

Also, use this free ftp client if you have problems.

<http://filezilla-project.org/download.php?type+client>

OFF MIKE



WILDFIRE COVERAGE TOPS THE NEWS IN WACO, TEXAS – This, as the drought keeps its firm hand on the state. To stay atop of the coverage, **Curt Lancaster** (Texas Farm Bureau – Waco. Texas <http://www.txfb.org>) says the network has added a new show to the program lineup entitled the Texas Wildlife Radio Show hosted by **Nathan Smith**. “It covers hunting and fishing, plus how to prepare and cook your catches or trophies as it were. This program also talks about how wildlife effects our environment.”



TFB has also added the new consumer website Texas Table Top
<http://tabletop.texasfarmbureau.org>. Tabletop is designed a one stop source for Texans to learn about

where their food and fiber comes from. The site features food and fiber news, recipes, restaurant reviews, calendar of Texas food events and festivals across the Lone Star state.

GOOD NEWS FROM SOME VIRGINIA HAY FARMERS – Some are reporting record yields this spring. **Jeff Ishee** (WSVA Radio 550 – Harrisonburg, Virginia <http://www.onthefarmradio.com>) reports timothy, alfalfa, mixed grass, and orchard grass hay are all looking good due to plentiful soil moisture and excellent conditions for harvesting hay. “This is good news as the winter of 2010-2011 caught a lot of farmers with a hay deficit due to low hay yields in 2010 and a cold winter.”



This is the view outside the "On The Farm Radio" studio in the Shenandoah Valley.

NEW LEADERSHIP AT THE HELM IN THE USDA'S OC OFFICE– On Monday media relations and public affairs veteran **Matt Paul** took the reins as the USDA's new **Director of the Office of Communications**. **Paul** has an extensive resume bringing 20 years of experience. He started his career as a reporter in television and radio in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. In 1994, he joined the staff of Cedar Rapids Mayor Larry Serbousek, serving as the city's primary spokesperson. He then carried out similar duties for Mayor Lee Clancey from 1996-1998. It was later in 1998 that **Paul** connected with then Iowa Governor-Elect Tom Vilsack, serving on his transition team. Following inaugural activities, he joined the staff serving in several positions over the next 8 years including Press Secretary, Communications Director and Senior Advisor.

After leaving the Governor's office, **Paul** managed Senator Harkin's re-election campaign in 2008 and joined the Des Moines, Iowa-based Link Strategies where he oversaw the firm's new business focus and managed public affairs activities on behalf of business, non-profit and coalition group clients. Most recently from 2010 forward, **Paul** oversaw the development of Link Strategies' sister firm, LPCA Public Strategies.

Since landing in the Nation's Capital **Paul** hit the ground running. “I'm excited to be here serving in the department and touching lives of Americans across the country.” Like Secretary Vilsack, **Paul** says he too has high expectations and will be “involved and committed to making sure the work of the Agency and its impact on Americans is showcased.”

Broadcasters if you have any humanitarian or community service events you'd like to share please forward to susan.carter@oc.usda.gov.

We love to hear about what you're doing and share it with others in the farm broadcaster family.

From all of us to all of you ... thank you for what you do



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call (800) 795-3272 (voice), or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).*