

## **FEATURE – U.S. FARMING GROWING, BECOMING MORE DIVERSE**

INTRO: The just released U-S-D-A Census of Agriculture shows a growing and more diverse farm population in the United States. The USDA's Bob Ellison has more. (1:46)

THE NUMBER OF FARMS HAS INCREASED BY FOUR PERCENT IN THE U-S SINCE TWO THOUSAND TWO ACCORDING TO THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE'S FIVE YEAR CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE. THE TWO THOUSAND SEVEN CENSUS CONDUCTED BY U-S-D-A'S NATIONAL AGRICULTURE STATISTICS SERVICE SHOWS AN INCREASE OF SEVENTY FOUR THOUSAND SMALL FARMS IN THE U-S.

Tom Vilsack, Agriculture Secretary: I think it is a reflection of the farm programs that we have instituted at USDA at the direction of Congress to encourage organic farming, to encourage conservation practices, to look at ways in which farmers can be more productive with their land

AS FOR LARGE FARMS, THE CENSUS SHOWED AN INCREASE OF FORTY SIX THOUSAND. VILSACK NOTED THE INCREASE AND RISK IN LARGE-SCALE, PRODUCTION AGRICULTURE.

Vilsack: About five percent of farmers in this country produce about seventy five percent of the crops and commodities we grow.

Far too few Americans fully appreciate and understand the difficult challenges, the hard work, the financial risk that's involved in production agriculture.

THE CENSUS ALSO SHOWED THE CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS OF U-S AGRICULTURE WITH THE NUMBERS OF WOMEN AND MINORITY FARMERS INCREASING. VILSACK SAID THIS IN PART REFLECTED IMPROVED U-S-D-A OUTREACH EFFORTS.

Vilsack: That people of all colors, of all cultures, of all persuasions from all geographic areas of this country ought to be participating and ought to be able to join this rural opportunity.

FOR MORE CENSUS RESULTS GO TO AG CENSUS DOT U-S-D-A DOT GOV. IN WASHINGTON FOR THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, I'M BOB ELLISON.