



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Ombudsperson



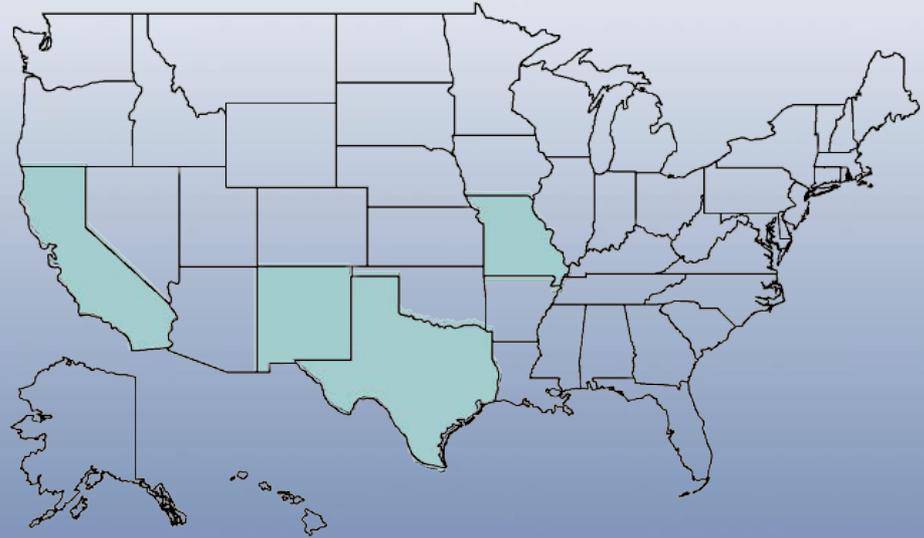


What does an ombudsperson do?

- Listens to concerns about access to USDA programs
- Identifies shared concerns and reports issues to USDA leaders
- Makes recommendations to improve access and create systemic change

Who does the ombudsperson serve?

- Hispanic and female farmers and ranchers in CA, NM, MO and TX
- Eventually, the Office will expand to include all states and historically underserved groups



How does an ombudsperson operate?

- Informal - does not replace formal USDA channels
- Independent - not part of any other USDA office or agency and works without interference
- Neutral - does not advocate for a person or office but for fair process and for improved access to USDA programs
- Confidential - will not willingly disclose the information you share unless required under federal law

Why was the Office established?



- As part of the *Keepseagle v. Vilsack* settlement
- To contribute to systemic change and improve access to USDA programs for historically underserved farmers and ranchers



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