

2017 President's Budget
Office of the Secretary
Office of Advocacy and Outreach

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OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
OFFICE OF ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH

Purpose Statement

The Office of Advocacy and Outreach (OAO) was established as an office under the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, Section 14013, P.L. 110-246 in October 2009. Section 12201 of the FY 2014 Farm Bill added new language to the Outreach and assistance for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers program to include veteran farmers and ranchers. The funds will be transferred to OAO from the Commodity Credit Corporation. OAO's purpose is to improve access to USDA programs and enhance the viability and profitability of small farms and ranches, beginning farmers and ranchers, socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers and veteran farmers and ranchers. Through these actions, OAO will support the Department's commitment to ensuring that all USDA constituents, including historically underserved groups and veteran farmers and ranchers, have the opportunity to participate in and benefit from the programs offered by the Department. OAO serves as an advocate for underserved constituents and as an avenue for them to have input into programmatic and policy decisions to improve their viability and profitability.

As of September 30, 2015, there were 39 permanent full-time OAO employees including 15 employees in Washington, DC, and 24 located in the field.

OIG Reports – Open

- 91099-0002-21 2014 StrikeForce Initiative audit - 12 of the 13 OAO recommendations are closed. OAO has requested a change in management decision for the remaining open audit recommendation. Recommendation 7 requires OAO to "require Rural Development to cancel its Economy Act agreement with OSDBU. Additionally, the recommendations require OAO to enter into a new agreement with Rural Development to properly document the transfer of the \$300,000k used to fund the StrikeForce pilot program and ensure that all related financial transactions are obligated in FMFI." OAO has requested a change in management decision which is still pending within the OIG.
- 50601-0002-31 Beginning Farmer's and Rancher's - Audit resulted in 7 recommendations. OAO has closed all of the recommendations except for 1. Recommendation 1 requires "...a review of the OAO to assess the agency's resource needs to perform the duties specified in the 2008 Farm Bill and adjust OAO resources accordingly." OAO has been working with the Office of Budget and Program Analysis (OBPA) to complete a resource justification document to request additional funding.

OIG Reports – Closed

- 91099-0001-21 Controls Over Grants Management Process of the Office of Advocacy and Outreach. Closed 2013
- 91099-0003-21 2015 Section 2501 Grants Awarded FYs 2010-2011 closed 12/18/2015

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Available Funds and Staff Years (SYs)
(Dollars in thousands)

Item	2014 Actual		2015 Actual		2016 Enacted		2017 Estimate	
	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs
Salaries and Expenses:								
Discretionary Appropriations.....	\$1,209	5	\$1,209	4	\$1,209	4	\$11,220	4
Mandatory Appropriations.....	10,000	3	10,000	4	10,000	4	10,000	4
Rescission.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sequestration.....	-	-	-730	-	-680	-	-	-
Total Available.....	11,209	8	10,479	8	10,529	8	21,220	8
Lapsing Balances.....	-61	-	-95	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal Obligations, OAO.....	11,148	8	10,384	8	10,529	8	21,220	8
Obligations under other USDA appropriations:								
1890 Initiatives.....	2,718	17	2,668	17	2,787	21	2,787	21
1994 Program.....	713	5	699	4	743	4	743	4
Hispanic Serving Institutions.....	1,889	11	1,781	10	1,890	10	1,890	10
Office of Small Farms Coordination.....	-	-	-	-	185	1	185	1
Beginning Farmers and Ranchers- Advisory Committee.....	77	-	79	-	80	-	80	-
Other OAO Reimbursable.....	1,880	-	1,899	-	2,000	1	2,000	1
Total, Other USDA.....	7,277	33	7,126	31	7,685	37	7,685	37
Total, OAO.....	18,425	41	17,510	39	18,214	45	28,905	45

Permanent Positions by Grade and Staff Year Summary

Item	2014 Actual			2015 Actual			2016 Enacted			2017 Estimate		
	Wash.		Total	Wash.		Total	Wash.		Total	Wash.		Total
	D.C.	Field		D.C.	Field		D.C.	Field		D.C.	Field	
SES.....	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1
GS-15.....	7	-	7	4	-	4	4	-	4	4	-	4
GS-14.....	4	-	4	3	-	3	3	-	3	3	-	3
GS-13.....	1	13	14	3	22	25	3	22	25	3	22	25
GS-12.....	1	7	8	1	5	6	1	5	6	1	5	6
GS-11.....	8	-	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GS-9.....	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GS-7.....	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	1
GS-6.....	3	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GS-4.....	-	-	-	2	-	2	2	-	2	2	-	2
Other Graded Pos.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Perm. Pos.....	29	20	49	15	27	42	15	27	42	15	27	42
Unfilled, EOY.....	3	5	8	-	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total, Perm. Full-Time Employment EOY.....	26	15	41	15	24	39	15	27	42	15	27	42
Staff Year Est.....	26	15	41	15	24	39	27	18	45	27	18	45

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The estimates include appropriation language for this item as follows (new language underscored; deleted matter enclosed in brackets):

Salaries and Expenses:

Office of the Secretary

1 For necessary expenses of the Office of the Secretary, [~~\$45,555,000~~] \$64,403,000, of which not to exceed
2 [~~\$5,051,000~~] \$10,178,000 shall be available for the [immediate] Immediate Office of the Secretary, of which
not to exceed [~~\$250,000~~] \$253,000 shall be available for the Military Veterans Agricultural Liaison, and of
which not to exceed \$5,000,000 shall be available for outreach services supporting new, beginning, and
veteran farmers and ranchers; not to exceed [~~\$502,000~~] \$755,000 shall be available for the Office of Tribal
Relations; not to exceed [~~\$1,496,000~~] \$1,592,000 shall be available for the Office of Homeland Security and
Emergency Coordination; not to exceed [~~\$1,209,000~~] \$11,220,000 shall be available for the Office of
Advocacy and Outreach; not to exceed [~~\$25,928,000~~] \$28,227,000 shall be available for the Office of the
Assistant Secretary for Administration, of which [~~\$25,124,000~~] \$27,420,000 shall be available for
Departmental Administration to provide for necessary expenses for management support services to offices of
the Department and for general administration, security, repairs and alterations, and other miscellaneous
supplies and expenses not otherwise provided for and necessary for the practical and efficient work of the
Department; not to exceed [~~\$3,869,000~~] \$3,919,000 shall be available for the Office of the Assistant
Secretary for Congressional Relations to carry out the programs funded by this Act, including programs
involving intergovernmental affairs and liaison within the executive branch; and not to exceed [~~\$7,500,000~~]
\$8,512,000 shall be available for the Office of Communications: *Provided*, That the Secretary of Agriculture
is authorized to transfer funds appropriated for any office of the Office of the Secretary to any other office of
the Office of the Secretary: *Provided further*, That no appropriation for any office shall be increased or
3 decreased by more than 5 percent: *Provided further*, That not to exceed \$11,000 of the amount made
available under this paragraph for the [immediate] Immediate Office of the Secretary shall be available for
official reception and representation expenses, not otherwise provided for, as determined by the Secretary:
Provided further, That the amount made available under this heading for Departmental Administration shall
be reimbursed from applicable appropriations in this Act for travel expenses incident to the holding of
4 hearings as required by 5 U.S.C. 551- 558: *Provided further*, That funds made available under this heading
for the Immediate Office of the Secretary may be transferred to agencies of the Department of Agriculture for
outreach activities supporting new, beginning, and veteran farmers and ranchers: *Provided further*, That
funds made available under this heading for the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations
5 may be transferred to agencies of the Department of Agriculture funded by this Act to maintain personnel at
the agency level [~~]:~~ *Provided further*, That no funds made available under this heading for the Office of
Assistant Secretary for Congressional Relations may be obligated after 30 days from the date of enactment of
this Act, unless the Secretary has notified the Committees on Appropriations of both Houses of Congress on
the allocation of these funds by USDA agency: *Provided further*, That within 180 days of the date of
enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to Congress the report required in section 7 U.S.C.
6935(b)(3)].

The first and third changes are to correct grammar within the language.

The second change in language is to provide funding for the new, beginning, and veteran farmers and ranchers program, a new program for 2017.

The fourth change in language is to provide transfer authority of the new, beginning, and veteran farmers and ranchers program to agencies within the Department.

The fifth change in language is for the purpose of deleting restrictive language in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2015, that requires Congressional notification prior to funds being obligated after 30 days from the date of enactment.

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Lead-Off Tabular Statement

Budget Estimate, 2017.....	\$11,220,000
2016 Enacted.....	1,209,000
Change in Appropriation.....	+10,011,000

Summary of Increases and Decreases

(Dollars in thousands)

	2014 Actual	2015 Change	2016 Change	2017 Change	2017 Estimate
Discretionary Appropriations:					
Office of Advocacy and Outreach.....	\$1,209	-	-	+\$10,011	\$11,220

Project Statement

Adjusted Appropriations Detail and Staff Years (SYs)

(Dollars in thousands)

	2014 Actual		2015 Actual		2016 Enacted		Inc. or Dec.		2017 Estimate		
Program	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	
Discretionary Appropriations:											
Office of Advocacy and Outreach.....	\$1,209	5	\$1,209	4	\$1,209	4	+\$10,011	(1)	-	\$11,220	4
Mandatory Appropriations:											
Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers- and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers.....	10,000	3	10,000	4	10,000	4	-	-	10,000	4	
Total Appropriation.....	11,209	8	11,209	8	11,209	8	+10,011	-	21,220	8	
Rescission.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Sequestration.....	-	-	-730	-	-680	-	+680	-	-	-	
Total Available.....	11,209	8	10,479	8	10,529	8	+10,691	-	21,220	8	
Lapsing Balances.....	-61	-	-95	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total Obligations.....	11,148	8	10,384	8	10,529	8	+10,691	-	21,220	8	

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Project Statement
Obligations Detail and Staff Years (SYs)
(Dollars in thousands)

Program	2014 Actual		2015 Actual		2016 Enacted		Inc. or Dec.		2017 Estimate	
	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs
Discretionary Obligations:										
Office of Advocacy and Outreach.....	\$1,166	5	\$1,125	4	\$1,209	4	+\$10,011 (1)	-	\$11,220	4
Mandatory Obligations:										
Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers- and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers.....	9,982	3	9,259	4	9,320	4	+680	-	10,000	4
Total Obligations.....	11,148	8	10,384	8	10,529	8	+10,691	-	21,220	8
Lapsing Balances.....	61	-	95	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Available.....	11,209	8	10,479	8	10,529	8	+10,691	-	21,220	8
Rescission.....	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sequestration.....	-	-	730	-	680	-	-680	-	-	-
Total Appropriation.....	11,209	8	11,209	8	11,209	8	+10,011	-	21,220	8

Justification of Increases and Decreases

Base funds will continue to support the mission of OAO to improve access to USDA programs and enhance the viability and profitability of small farms and ranches, beginning farmers and ranchers, socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, and veteran farmers and ranchers. In addition to Departmental Administration funding used for human resources operational services, current year and budget year base funds will also be used to support expedited and enhanced classification, staffing and processing efforts.

- (1) An increase of \$10,011,000 for the Office of Advocacy and Outreach (\$1,209,000 and 8 staff years available in 2016).

The funding change is requested for the following items:

- a) An increase of \$11,000 for pay costs (which includes \$2,000 for annualization of the fiscal year in 2016 pay raise and \$9,000 for the anticipated fiscal year 2017 pay raise).

This increase is needed to maintain the current level of staffing to ensure OAO staffs serve as advocates for underserved constituents and as an avenue for them to have input into programmatic and policy decisions to improve their viability and profitability. This increase is needed to maintain support to the Beginning Farmers and Rancher and Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers Programs.

If funding is not received, rendered services to support the mission of the OAO may be impacted. The OAO may not have the resources necessary to adequately implement its responsibilities ensuring equal access to USDA programs and services to customers that have historically been unable to participate in USDA programs and services.

- b) An increase of \$10,000,000 with no change in staff years to expand the Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers program (2501 Program) to include military veterans and young and beginning farmers and ranchers who require training and mentoring beyond the mandatory funding provided in the 2014 Farm Bill.

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 provided \$20 million in mandatory funds for African American, Native American, Hispanic and Asian American farmers, ranchers and producers for the 2501 program for each fiscal year 2010 through 2012. The 2014 Farm Bill provided \$10 million in mandatory funding for each fiscal year from 2014 through 2018, effectively reducing in half the funding for this program at

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a time when it has undergone modification and expansion to include military veterans returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as focusing on training and mentoring young and beginning farmers and ranchers. This budget request would provide \$10 million in discretionary funds to provide a total of \$20 million for the program in 2017.

The 2501 Program has reached, mentored and assisted approximately 28,000 farmers and ranchers since 2007, helping them set up farm and ranch operations. It has served 100,000 constituents in 400 counties, across 35 States to access USDA’s credit, commodity, conservation, and other related programs. It has recently reached out to young, entrepreneurial returning war veterans and helped them receive mentorship in farm start up and operations. The additional \$10 million in funds would restore and increase OAO’s outreach and assistance to the underserved sector of the agricultural economy.

Direct Appropriation
Geographic Breakdown of Obligations and Staff Years
(Dollars in thousands and Staff Years (SYs))

State/Territory	2014 Actual		2015 Actual		2016 Enacted		2017 Estimate	
	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs
District of Columbia.....	\$1,166	5	\$1,125	4	\$1,209	4	\$11,220	4
Lapsing Balances.....	43	-	84	-	-	-	-	-
Total Obligations.....	1,209	5	1,209	4	1,209	4	11,220	4

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Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers - 2501 Program

Geographic Breakdown of Obligations

(Dollars in thousands)

State/Territory	2014 Actual		2015 Actual		2016 Enacted		2017 Estimate	
	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs	Amount	SYs
Alabama.....	\$200	-	\$695	-	\$695	-	\$581	-
Alaska.....	93	-	161	-	161	-	161	-
Arkansas.....	358	-	200	-	399	-	399	-
Arizona.....	176	-	199	-	-	-	-	-
California.....	716	-	106	-	106	-	106	-
Colorado.....	-	-	286	-	286	-	286	-
Delaware.....	200	-	376	-	376	-	376	-
Florida.....	313	-	316	-	316	-	316	-
Georgia.....	794	-	292	-	292	-	292	-
Hawaii.....	108	-	171	-	172	-	172	-
Idaho.....	91	-	94	-	94	-	94	-
Kentucky.....	199	-	200	-	200	-	200	-
Louisiana.....	199	-	200	-	200	-	200	-
Maine.....	130	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Maryland.....	143	-	182	-	182	-	182	-
Michigan.....	98	-	101	-	101	-	101	-
Minnesota.....	153	-	396	-	396	-	396	-
Mississippi.....	723	-	901	-	901	-	801	-
Missouri.....	-	-	200	-	200	-	200	-
Montana.....	313	-	231	-	231	-	231	-
Nebraska.....	105	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
New Mexico.....	220	-	200	-	200	-	200	-
New York.....	235	-	200	-	200	-	200	-
North Carolina.....	618	-	198	-	198	-	198	-
Ohio.....	176	-	200	-	200	-	200	-
Oklahoma.....	200	-	133	-	133	-	133	-
Oregon.....	109	-	63	-	63	-	63	-
Pennsylvania.....	-	-	200	-	200	-	200	-
Puerto Rico.....	179	-	-	-	-	-	200	-
Republic of Palau.....	121	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rhode Island.....	157	-	115	-	115	-	115	-
South Carolina.....	-	-	148	-	148	-	148	-
South Dakota.....	200	-	-	-	-	-	300	-
Tennessee.....	180	-	155	-	73	-	67	-
Texas.....	596	-	540	-	540	-	540	-
Vermont.....	62	-	42	-	42	-	42	-
Virginia.....	403	-	200	-	400	-	600	-
Washington.....	375	-	210	-	200	-	400	-
West Virginia.....	200	-	200	-	200	-	200	-
Wisconsin.....	253	-	486	-	423	-	420	-
Obligations.....	9,396	-	8,597	-	8,643	-	9,320	-
Administrative Cost.....	186	3	262	3	277	4	280	4
Policy Research Center.....	400	-	400	-	400	-	400	-
Lapsing Balances.....	18	-	11	-	-	-	-	-
Total, Available.....	10,000	3	9,270	3	9,320	4	10,000	4

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Direct Appropriation
Classification by Objects
(Dollars in thousands)

	2014	2015	2016	2017
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Enacted</u>	<u>Estimate</u>
Personnel Compensation:				
Washington D.C.....	\$611	\$556	\$567	\$575
11 Total personnel compensation.....	611	556	567	575
12 Personal benefits.....	118	133	145	148
13 Benefits for former personnel.....	-	6	-	-
Total, personnel comp. and benefits.....	729	695	712	723
Other Objects:				
21.0 Travel and transportation of persons.....	27	75	30	30
23.1 Rental payments to GSA.....	-	1	1	1
23.3 Communications, utilities, and misc. charges.....	24	32	26	26
24.0 Printing and reproduction.....	10	3	11	11
25.1 Advisory and assistance services.....	-	-	-	10,000
25.2 Other services from non-Federal sources.....	264	201	299	301
25.3 Other purchases of goods and services from Federal sources.....	27	77	30	30
26.0 Supplies and materials.....	45	21	50	50
31.0 Equipment.....	40	2	50	48
42.0 Insurance Claims.....	-	18	-	-
Total, Other Objects.....	437	430	497	10,497
99.9 Total, new obligations.....	1,166	1,125	1,209	11,220
Position Data:				
Average Salary (dollars), SES Position.....	\$175,200	\$175,200	\$175,200	\$175,200
Average Salary (dollars), GS Position.....	\$95,919	\$103,000	\$103,000	\$104,000
Average Grade, GS Position.....	13.3	13.5	13.5	13.5

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Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers - 2501 Program

Classification by Objects

(Dollars in thousands)

	2014	2015	2016	2017
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Enacted</u>	<u>Estimate</u>
Personnel Compensation:				
Washington D.C.....	\$123	\$211	\$213	\$215
11 Total personnel compensation.....	123	211	213	215
12 Personal benefits.....	63	51	64	65
Total, personnel comp. and benefits.....	186	262	277	280
Other Objects:				
21.0 Travel and transportation of persons.....	-	3	4	4
23.3 Communications, utilities, and misc. charges.....	-	24	25	26
24.0 Printing and reproduction.....	-	-	-	-
25.2 Other services from non-Federal sources.....	-	9	10	10
25.3 Other purchases of goods and services from Federal sources.....	42	133	150	155
26.0 Supplies and materials.....	-	1	2	2
31.0 Equipment.....	-	-	-	-
41.0 Grants.....	9,754	8,827	8,852	9,523
Total, Other Objects.....	9,796	8,997	9,043	9,720
99.9 Total, new obligations.....	9,982	9,259	9,320	10,000

Position Data:

Average Salary (dollars), SES Position.....	-	-	-	-
Average Salary (dollars), GS Position.....	\$101,914	\$101,914	\$102,932	\$102,932
Average Grade, GS Position.....	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5

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Shared Funding Projects

(Dollars in thousands)

	2014	2015	2016	2017
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Enacted</u>	<u>Estimate</u>
Working Capital Fund:				
Administration:				
Beltsville Service Center.....	\$4	\$4	\$6	\$6
Mail and Reproduction Management.....	21	21	32	21
Procurement Operations.....	8	1	1	1
Financial Management Services.....	219	368	276	338
Integrated Procurement System.....	3	2	2	2
Subtotal.....	<u>255</u>	<u>396</u>	<u>317</u>	<u>368</u>
Communications:				
Creative Media & Broadcast Center.....	4	-	25	-
Finance and Management:				
NFC/USDA.....	14	12	11	11
Financial Systems.....	17	15	16	17
Internal Control Support Services.....	1	-	-	-
Subtotal.....	<u>32</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>
Information Technology:				
NITC/USDA.....	53	46	4	3
Telecommunications Services.....	182	192	244	248
Subtotal.....	<u>235</u>	<u>238</u>	<u>248</u>	<u>251</u>
Correspondence Management.....	18	9	12	12
Total, Working Capital Fund.....	<u>544</u>	<u>670</u>	<u>629</u>	<u>659</u>
Departmental Shared Cost Programs:				
Advisory Committee Liason Services.....	3	4	4	4
E-GOV Initiatives HSPD-12.....	-	1	1	1
Total, Departmental Shared Cost Programs.....	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>
E-Gov:				
Grants.gov.....	-	-	5	12
E-Training.....	-	-	1	-
Total, E-Gov.....	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>12</u>
Agency Total.....	<u>547</u>	<u>675</u>	<u>640</u>	<u>676</u>

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Status of Program

The Office of Advocacy and Outreach (OAO) office was established by Section 14013 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill), P.L. 110-246.

The OAO supports and advances U. S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) commitments to "cultural transformation" and ensures that all USDA constituents, including historically underserved groups, have the opportunity to participate in and benefit from the programs offered by USDA. It serves as an advocate for historically underserved groups, providing an avenue for them to have input into and participate in USDA programs and policy; and it provides outreach on behalf of USDA to engage historically underserved groups.

The Agricultural Act of 2014 (P.L. 113-79) broadened the OAO's responsibilities to include advocacy and outreach for veteran farmers and ranchers.

As in previous years, in fiscal year (FY) 2015, the OAO engaged in myriad activities which directly and indirectly assisted rural communities to create prosperity so that they are self-sustaining, repopulating, and economically thriving by improving outreach and increasing the awareness and accessibility of USDA programs and services. In FY 2015, the OAO focused on extending its reach and its effectiveness. Toward that end, the OAO's priorities over the course of the year were coordination, collaborative, cultivated many new relationships, and maximized use of limited resources.

Current Activities:

The OAO is responsible for five USDA programs:

1. Socially Disadvantaged and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers Program;
2. Small Farms and Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Program;
3. Farm Worker Coordination Program;
4. Higher Education Institutions Program (including programs for 1890 Land-Grant institutions, 1994 Land-Grant institutions, and Hispanic-Serving institutions); and
5. The Community Engagement Program.

With respect to these programs, the OAO provides management, direction, guidance, and supervision. It conducts strategic planning; coordinates, and implements outreach and other activities; and it measures program performance. Additionally, the OAO promotes and keeps the public informed about these programs.

The OAO administers grants under the Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers Program (Section 2501, Public Law 101-624, 7 U.S.C 2279). The grant program was funded through the 2014 Farm Bill for fiscal years 2014-2018. The OAO is responsible for management of grants awarded under this program.

The OAO also supports the following Federal Advisory Committees: the Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers; the Minority Farmer Advisory Committee; and the Office of Small Farms Coordination.

Selected Examples of Recent Progress:

The Minority Farmers Advisory Committee:

- The Minority Farmers Advisory Committee was renewed in FY 2015. New members were selected by the Secretary in June 2015 for 2-year terms ending in June 2017. The first public meeting was held in September 22-24, 2015, in Savannah, Georgia. As a result of this meeting, the committee submitted two letters of recommendations in the best interest of ensuring socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers have equal access to USDA programs. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for late January 2016.

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Socially Disadvantaged Farmers Program:

- In response to a FY 2012 Office of Inspector General (OIG) audit, the OAO implemented several corrective actions to address the audit findings and to improve the implementation of the Section 2501 Program. The FY 2012 audit resulted in OIG accepting and closing all 10 responses to their recommendations.
- The OAO implemented and led the internal and external teleconferences to ensure stakeholders received the most updated programmatic and funding opportunity information.
- In FY 2015, 54 projects were funded for \$8.4 million in 35 states. An additional \$400,000 was obligated to establish the Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Policy Center at Alcorn State University in Lorman, Mississippi.
- To help our community-based organizations, higher education institutions, industry leaders, stakeholders, partners, and grantees keep abreast of USDA programs, services, and funding opportunities; the OAO maintains a database with these organizations' contacts to send periodic notifications, events, and information useful to the socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers;
- The OAO hosted its first Annual 2501 Partners Symposium in Jackson, Mississippi. There were over 300 attendees which was a major success for the program. Attendees included representatives from current and past 2501 grantees, non-profit and agricultural organizations, USDA personnel, educational institutions, congressional officials, and veterans, farmers, and ranchers.
- On March 18, 2015, the OAO provided a group capacity building training session for all potential grantees during the open period of the Funding Opportunity Announcement in order to address any clarifying questions perspective applicants might have.
- Managed the Minority Farm Register to maintain a database of minority farmers and keep them informed of current USDA activities and funding opportunities.
- Conducted a public listening session on the next phase of implementation for the Minority Farm Register. This included the approval of the new poster to be displayed at all USDA Service Centers informing the public of the new requirement upon visits.

Small Farms and Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Program:

- The OAO collaborated with the USDA Performance Improvement Officer and Performance Improvement Council to develop an Agency Priority Goal for Beginning Farmers.
- Collaborated with USDA agencies to establish a work plan with milestones to evaluate the Beginning Farmers program goal effectiveness.
- The Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers' Subcommittee on Land Tenure was formed to consider issues involving access to land, farm business transition, and land tenure. The members met in June 2015 and performed preliminary work on recommendations that were submitted to the parent committee for deliberations during their meeting in August 2015 to arrive at a complete set of recommendations to be forwarded to the Secretary.

Farm Worker Coordination Program:

- Ensured representation on the Minority Farmers Advisory Committee which in turn is finalizing recommendations regarding farm worker issues.
- Developed partnerships with local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to maximize the use of all USDA programs within the farmworker community.

1890 Land-Grant Institutions National Program:

- Coordinated and assisted with three on-site USDA pathways recruitment events.
- Supported the Georgia Conference of Black Mayors; and coordinated the appearance of the Assistant Secretary for Administration as a guest speaker.
- Worked with the Future Farmers of America and the 4-H to host agriculture-based events for more than 80,000 K-12 and college level students from the southeast and the mid-west.

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- Provided technical assistance to the University Extension Staff resulting in USDA Grants and Cooperative Agreements totaling \$2,915,126.
- Collaborated with the Forest Service and the Secretary's office to facilitate the re-signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the USDA and the 1890 Council of Presidents to support the Land-Grant Colleges and Universities.
- Secured 36 internships and research positions for students attending Southern University.
- Secured more than \$37,000 worth of excess property for use by the University of Maryland at Eastern Shore.
- Served as the chairs of the Ag Outlook Forum Student Diversity Program and secured \$22,000 in sponsorships to fund the program and support the 30 students selected to participate.
- Executed five cooperative agreements between Southern University; the Agricultural Marketing Service; the National Agricultural Statistics Service; the Forest Service; the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration; and Natural Resource Conservation Services. These agreements enable the University to recruit and train K-12 students during the Beginning Agricultural Youth Opportunities Unlimited summer program.
- Conducted more than 1,500 presentations to community-based organizations, university staff and faculty, local middle and high schools, churches and parent groups. The presentations covered the gamut of scholarships, internships, pathways opportunity, and career options; as well as programmatic and funding information.
- Managed and coordinated the selection of 20 Scholars and 83 Thurgood Marshall College Fund interns.
- Worked collaboratively to stage 13 small farms conferences. More than 4,500 small farmers and extension agents attended the conferences.

1994 Land-Grant Institutions National Program:

- Coordinated with the Department's On the Spot Recruitment Initiative focused on 1994 Land-Grants with the American Indian Higher Education Consortium Student Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico in March 2015. As a result, nearly 100 Pathways internships were used to recruit students at the conference with significant involvement from the Indian Health Service and Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs.
- Implemented a plan for webinars for Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) on Pathways positions to familiarize them more with USDA career opportunities. The webinars contained information on the Pathways positions advertised at the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) and Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences; and there was a presentation that provided an overview of USDA Mission Areas and Agencies, activities and services; and Student coordinators at each of the 34 land-grants received information to help their students increase their competitiveness for Pathways Internships.
- Coordinated the Tribal Colleges and Universities/Volunteers in Service to America (TCU/VISTA) Program that serve rural, high poverty Tribal communities through its highly trained, college graduate volunteers, known as VISTAs. VISTAs serve participating TCUs to assist the institution's capacity building efforts benefitting tribal communities and the education of American Indian students.

Hispanic-Serving Institutions National Program:

- In FY 2015, Hispanic-Serving Institutions National Program (HSINP) staff participated in over 1,200 activities, conducted 754 presentations/workshops, performed 221 visits to 145 Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), 17 emerging HSIs, and 59 K-12 schools. Overall, the HSINP directly engaged with nearly 26,000 students; 2,800 parents; and over 2,500 University staff, faculty, and administrators.
- Managed the USDA Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) National Internship Program leading to 184 student interns during the 2015 fiscal year representing an increase from 2014 totals. In FY 2015, 49 students were placed in eight agencies for the spring session; 82 students in 13 agencies for the summer session; and 53 students in 6 agencies for the fall session.
- Executed the 2015 E. Kika De La Garza Fellowship Program which consisted of 12 fellows, 7 education, 4 science, and 1 high school. These fellows represented 4 states and 12 different institutions and were selected from 52 applicants representing 37 different HSIs.

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- Collaborated with agencies to develop sustainable talent pipelines and develop USDA focused initiatives and programs at HSIs:
 - Partnered with the California State University Water Resource Institute/Water Resources and Policy Initiatives to promote 2014-2015 Watershed Management Experiential Learning Program funded by USDA NIFA. Identified student applicants throughout the state along with USDA agency partners for intern placements.
 - Partnered with the Forest Service-Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie and Morton College to host “Experience the Prairie—A Day of Environmental Stewardship” to introduce college students to careers in natural resource conservation at USDA.
 - Developed a partnership between NRCS, Rural Development, Agricultural Research Service and the Academic Leadership Alliance, Summer Education Externship program to have USDA agencies serve as host to high school teachers for 3 weeks. The program allows educators to learn about the types of careers at the agency and skills needed for different jobs. The teachers then return to their schools with real-life workplace skills lessons for students.

Cultural Transformation:

- Participated in assessments for outreach efforts by USDA agencies with the Office of Civil Rights and the Office of Cultural Transformation.
- Provided information on USDA regulations status via a Database Tool, which displays farm-related program utilization data on the OAO website for public access.
- Established partnerships for collaboration and outreach with Peace Corps, AmeriLand Trust, Federal Communications Commission, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, Women in Ag, Intertribal Agricultural Council, and the National Food and Agriculture Council.

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Summary of Budget and Performance
Statement of Agency Goals and Objectives

The Office of Advocacy and Outreach (OAO) was established as an office under the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, Section 14013, P.L. 110-246. The Director of OAO reports to the Assistant Secretary for Administration. The mission of OAO is to increase access to programs of the Department and increase the viability and profitability of small farms and ranches, beginning farmers or ranchers, and socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers.

OAO has one strategic goal and one strategic objective that contribute to USDA's strategic goal.

USDA Strategic Goal 5: *Create a USDA for the 21st century that is high-performing, efficient, and adaptable*

USDA Strategic Objective 5.1: *Develop a customer-centric, inclusive, and high-performing workforce by investing in and engaging employees to improve service delivery*

USDA Strategic Objective 5.3: *Maximize the return on taxpayer investment in USDA through enhanced stewardship activities and focused program evaluations*

Agency Strategic Goal	Agency Objective	Programs that Contribute	Key Outcome
Increase access to programs of the Department, and increase the viability and profitability of small farms and ranches, beginning farmers or ranchers, and socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers, and veteran farmers and ranchers.	Ensure the Department and its programs are open and transparent.	Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers and veteran farmers and ranchers Competitive Grants Program.	Increase the viability and profitability of small farms and ranches, beginning farmers or ranchers, socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers and veteran farmers and ranchers.

Key Performance Measures:

Annual Performance Goals, Indicators, and Trends	Actual				Target	Actual	Result	Estimate/Target	Target
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015			2016	2017
Increase the number of minority, underserved, socially disadvantaged persons served by key programs	4%	10%	1%	3%	3%	3%	Met	3%	8%
Cost (thousands)	\$21,329	\$21,174	\$1,277	\$11,148	\$11,217	\$10,479		\$10,529	\$21,220

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Select Past Accomplishments Toward Achievement of the Key Outcome:

- Worked with all USDA agencies to ensure timely and consistent communication with underserved communities on funding, grant, and programmatic opportunities.
- Received and processed 165 applications for the 2501 Program, awarding grants to 54 community-based and non-profit organizations, and educational institutions to conduct training, outreach and technical assistance for socially disadvantaged (including tribal) and veteran farmers and ranchers. These awards are distributed through the Outreach and Assistance to Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers Program, also known as the “2501 Program.”
- Created the Center for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Policy Research at an 1890 Land-Grant Institution as mandated in the 2014 Farm Bill. The Center will provide a national hub for analysis and development of policy recommendations to improve engagement and promote the interests of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.
- Organized and executed the inaugural Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers Program (2501 Program) Symposium.
- Recouped in excess of \$300,000 in unused grant and cooperative agreement funds, contributing to the successful closure of 1 audit and the closure of an additional 12 recommendations out of 13 from a second audit.
- Administered and coordinated the USDA outreach program in collaboration with USDA agencies and staff offices.
- Held quarterly teleconference meetings for community-based organizations to inform them of grant and funding opportunities internal and external to USDA, and providing an open forum for feedback and questions.
- Conducted technical assistance and grant writing workshops for community-based organizations to improve grant-writing capacity at a grass-roots level.
- Participated in numerous outreach meetings and events across the country as the featured speaker promoting USDA’s programs and services.
- Worked with a variety of parties to ensure small farmers or ranchers, and socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers have access to, and equitable participation in, programs and services of the Department.
- Hosted monthly USDA Outreach Coordinators meetings to provide a forum for all outreach coordinators at the National level to share information, best practices, and any outreach opportunities.
- Conducted quarterly the OAO/USDA Partners Meetings for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers, as well as our CBO’s, stakeholders, partners and grant recipients.
- Approved the final implementation plan and poster for the Departmental Accountability Initiative “Receipt for Service.”
- Conducted teleconference meetings with internal and external partners to announce the implementation of phase II of the Receipt for Service initiative to begin in FY 2016.
- Coordinated and provided oversight of the New and Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Advisory Committee
- Solicited and processed applications for the Advisory Committee for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers resulting in the selection of 20 members appointed by the Secretary.
- Hosted 2 “open to the public” Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Advisory committee (Davis, CA and Austin, TX).
- Coordinated and organized the subcommittee on Land Tenure out of the Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers.
- Provided guidance and direction to the subcommittee on Land Tenure as they completed preliminary work on recommendations to be submitted to their parent committee (the Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Advisory Committee).
- Worked with agencies responsible for implementing the Land-Tenure subcommittee recommendations to provide a written impact report to the Secretary.
- Reestablished, provided meeting coordination and administrative of the Minority Farmer’s Advisory Committee.

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- The Minority Farmer’s Advisory Committee’s public meetings resulted in the committee submitting multiple recommendations to the Secretary for review and action.
- As a standing member of the Department’s Performance Improvement Council, OAO provided significant contributions to the development of the Agency Priority Goals.
- Provided assistance in the strategic planning and development of performance measurements for coordinating outreach activities, monitoring goals and objectives, and evaluation of Departmental programs and activities involving small farms or ranches and beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers.
- Provided significant contributions as a standing member of the Department’s Environmental Justice Task Force.
- Worked with each agency across the Department to ensure continued opportunities for interns and scholars contributing to a diverse workforce.
- Administered the USDA/1890 Land-Grant Colleges and Universities Program, including the 1890 Liaison Officer program.
- Administered the USDA/1994 Land-Grant Tribal Colleges Programs.
- Administered the Hispanic Serving Institutions National Program.
- Partnered with the Thurgood Marshall College Fund to place 79 HBCU interns throughout the Department in FY 2015.
- Partnered with the WINS internship program producing 12 internship opportunities for Native American students across the Department.
- The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) Internship Program produced internship opportunities for 182 Hispanic students throughout the Department.
- Met with 1994 University Presidents, Tribal Leaders, and community leaders for the purpose of sharing collaborative information about USDA programs.
- Collaborated with the Bureau of Indian Affairs on a variety of joint projects.
- Coordinated and hosted 2015 the USDA/1890 Task Force meeting. All of the 1890 University Presidents and an unprecedented number of Agricultural Deans and Research Directors attended the meeting, as well as members of the Association of Public Land-Grant Universities.
- Sponsored several University-based events leading up to the 1890 Colleges and Universities National Convocation celebrating the 125th Anniversary of the signing of the Second Morrill Act.
- Conducted more than 300 presentations in K-12 schools on the advantages of careers in agriculture.
- Performed more than 400 recruitment visits to K-12 schools and tribal communities to promote USDA grant opportunities, programs, activities and resources.
- Participated in events hosted by the Future Farmers of America and 4-H reaching more than 40,000 K-12 and college level students from 10 states.
- Participated in career fairs events across the country speaking with over 25,000 students about the 1890 University opportunities as well as career opportunities with USDA.
- Conducted Agricultural summer programs on 1890 campuses for more than 250 students.
- Coordinated, Hosted, and moderated student visits from Florida A&M, Fort Valley State, and the University of Maryland Eastern shore in a series of briefings by USDA agencies promoting their programs and opportunities as well as coordinating tours of the Secretary’s office for each group.
- Hosted and moderated the HACU Leadership Group meeting.
- Participated in the annual American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) Leadership Group meeting.
- Coordinated the Department-wide data call and consolidated more than 26 Narratives and explanatory cost tables for the FY 2014 Minority Serving Institutions Report for the White House Initiative on HBCU’s.
- Offered HSI faculty and staff the opportunity to work collaboratively with USDA to gain insight and understanding of the federal government through the E Kiko De Le Garza Fellowship Program.

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- Assisted Students in attaining in depth knowledge of the life cycles of plants and animals through scientific inquiry methods during field and laboratory investigations through the USDA/HSI Future Scientist Program.

Selected Accomplishments Expected at the 2017 Proposed Resource Level:

OAO will continue to perform the following activities:

- Work with USDA agencies to ensure communication aimed at underserved communities on funding, grant, and programmatic opportunities is timely and consistent.
- Serve as an advocate for underserved constituents and as an avenue for them to have input into programmatic and policy decisions to improve the viability and profitability of their farming operations.
- Work to ensure the agencies outreach plans are inclusive of the Department's goals and objectives to increase minority and underserved communities participation in programs and available services as well as the New and Beginning Farmer goals.
- Work with outreach partners to ensure maximum participation in all USDA programs.
- Providing significant contributions as a standing member of the Department's Environmental Justice Task Force.
- Serve as a member of the Department's Performance Improvement Council ensuring economically and community relevant goal development and achievable measures of success.
- Monitoring and evaluating agency success on achieving the established outreach goals and objectives involving small farms or ranches and beginning or socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers.
- Working with community-based organizations to provide training to small and beginning farmers and ranchers, and veteran farmers and ranchers on sustainability, business farming.
- Oversight of the Departmental Accountability Initiative - Receipt for Service.
- Providing guidance and direction for agencies implementing limited English proficiency plans.
- Consulting with appropriate entities to integrate farmworker interests into Department programs.
- Working with USDA agencies to coordinate departmental outreach activities.
- Administering the grants for the Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers by:
 - Reaching out to current and prospective socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers and veteran farmers or ranchers in an appropriate manner.
 - Improving the participation of disadvantaged farmers and ranchers and veteran farmers and ranchers in USDA's programs.
- Administering a grant program for the Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Policy Center by:
 - Coordinating with the successful institution to ascertain issues of concern amongst minority farmers and ranchers nation-wide.
 - Collaborating on strategies to increase the awareness of and participation in USDA's programs and services in minority communities.
- Conducting bi-monthly meetings with 2501 Outreach grantees, connecting them with USDA program leaders to better assist underserved communities.
- Automating and managing the Minority Farm Register to maintain a database of minority farmers and keep them informed of current USDA news, activities and funding opportunities.
- Hosting quarterly teleconferences for community-based organizations to provide information about funding and grant opportunities both within and outside of USDA, as well as providing an open forum for their questions and feedback.

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- Partnering with other USDA agencies to conduct technical assistance and grant writing workshops for community-based organizations, stakeholders, agricultural organizations and new and existing farmers and ranchers.
- Continue meetings with the Advisory Committee for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers to finalize a complete set of recommendations for the Secretary on how to improve on the assistance provided to new and beginning farmers and ranchers.
- Continue meetings with the Minority Farmers and Ranchers Advisory Committee meetings to assist the committee with framing a new set of recommendations for the Secretary on strategies to meet the goal of assisting minority farmers and ranchers in owning and successfully sustaining their farms and ranches.
- Meeting with farm workers and women farmers to provide a forum for discussing increased opportunities to participate in USDA programs and exploring other opportunities across the federal government.
- Continue the bi-annual USDA/1890 Task Force meetings to develop mutually beneficial projects and initiatives, which enhance USDA's future workforce planning.
- Continue collaborating with the Agricultural Associations whose mission is to provide opportunities for young people to enter the field of agriculture or an agriculture related sciences.
- Hosting the HACU Leadership Group to advance the mutual concerns of USDA and the Hispanic Serving Institutions.
- Participating in the AIHEC Leadership Group meetings to identify mutually beneficial priorities and opportunities for future collaboration.
- Continue to identify opportunities to assist and provide training to Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) on available and upcoming funding opportunities.
- Recruit scholars and interns to contribute to workforce diversity and cultural transformation goals.
- Continue the Department-wide coordination and consolidation of the Minority Serving Institutions Report for the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities.
- Work with agencies to prepare the annual Agency Performance Plans on actions to assist Minority Serving Institutions as required by the Department of Education under the White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities.
- Continued oversight and administration of the E. Kika De La Garza Fellowship Program.
- Continued oversight and administration of the HSI Future Scientist program.
- Work with farmworkers and farm work community based organizations.
- Working with USDA agencies to coordinate departmental outreach activities.
- Provide training and mentoring to military veterans returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- Reach out to young, entrepreneurial returning war veterans and help them receive mentorship in farm start up and operations
- Increase OAO's outreach and assistance to the underserved sector of the agricultural economy.
- Increase subscription of applicants.

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Strategic Goal Funding Matrix
(Dollars in thousands)

Program/ Program Items	2014 Actual	2015 Actual	2016 Enacted	Increase or Decrease	2017 Estimate
Department Strategic Goal 5: Create a USDA for the 21st century that is high-performing, efficient, and adaptable.					
Department Strategic Objective 5.1: Develop a customer-centric, inclusive, and high-performing workforce by investing in and engaging employees to improve service delivery					
Office of Advocacy and Outreach.....	\$11,209	\$10,479	\$10,529	+\$10,691	\$21,220
Staff Years.....	8	8	8	-	8

Full Cost by Department Strategic Goal
(Dollars in thousands)

Department Strategic Goal 5: Create a USDA for the 21st century that is high-performing, efficient, and adaptable.

Program/ Program Items	2014 Actual	2015 Actual	2016 Enacted	2017 Estimate
<u>Office of Advocacy and Outreach</u>				
Administrative costs (direct).....	915	957	\$989	\$1,003
Indirect costs.....	10,233	9,407	9,540	20,217
Total Costs.....	11,148	10,364	10,529	21,220
FTEs.....	8	8	8	8
Performance Measure:				
disadvantaged persons served by key programs.				
Measure.....	3%	3%	3%	8%
Cost per measure (unit cost).....	\$11,148	\$10,364	\$10,529	\$21,220