



# Louisiana State Civil Rights Committee Newsletter

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## LOUISIANA CIVIL RIGHTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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Michael Cooley – Asian American/Pacific Islander SEPM and Newsletter Editor

Tania Nanna – Hispanic SEPM

John Pitre – Limited Resource & Small-Scale Farmers & Socially Disadvantaged Producers Coordinator

Robert Spears – Black SEPM

John Rogers – Native American/Alaskan Native SEPM

David Williams – Veterans SEPM

Randolph Joseph – CR Committee Area Advisor

Mandy York – CR Committee Member

Michael Perry – CR Committee Member

Jason Salisbury – CR Committee Member

## AUGUST 26, 2009 IS WOMEN'S EQUALITY DAY?- Timeline of Women in the Natural Resources Conservation Service - Submitted by Dawn Newman

This brief timeline highlights incidents in NRCS's history. It is not intended to be complete; in fact, it is merely a beginning of listing the important contributions of women to NRCS's history.

1864 - Two years after the creation of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Commissioner received authority to employ women as clerks.

1891 - 169 women in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, constituting about 12 percent of the employees. Throughout the government about 14 percent of the government typists were women.

1901 - Miss Julia Pearce was appointed to one of the first U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Survey field parties (Hanford, CA) as an assistant in the Soil Survey (Macy Lapham, Crisscross Trails). She copied maps. A short time later, she was transferred to Washington to work in the physical laboratory.

1920's Mary Baldwin, the wife of soil inspector Mark Baldwin (USDA Soil Survey, 1912-1944) described mapping with her husband in Northern Wisconsin. She and her husband mapped during the summer months, camping and using a small boat to go from island to island.

1933 - Lillian H. Wieland was the first female employee of the Soil Erosion Service when she followed Hugh Hammond Bennett's transfer from USDA to the Department of the Interior to head the Soil Erosion Service. Among the 12 employees in the Washington office in October 1933 were Wieland, Laura G. Fitzhugh, and Alberta Stanback.

Mid 1930's - Charlotte Whitford (Coulton) graduated with a M.S. in botany from Ohio State University before taking a job as a secretary for the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) field soil's staff in Zanesville, OH. She was recruited to work as an assistant soil technologist in Washington, D.C. on a series of soil erosion reports. She later worked as an editor on soil surveys and eventually became head of the publications staff of the SCS.

1935 - Verna C. Mohagen joined the Soil Conservation Service and pro-

gressed until she was the director of the Personnel Division in 1946.

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1937 - Miss Lois Olson and Dr. Arthur Hall spoke on studies in erosion history as part of a series of research seminars to the Soil Conservation Service. Some of today's thinking on interpretations of the soil survey and field practices to control erosion is attributed to this series of lectures between 1936-37. Miss Olson, a geographer by training, was the head of the Erosion History section of the Soil Conservation Service.

1946 - Officially, the first woman soil scientist in the field for the Soil Conservation Service was Mary C. Baltz (Tyler). Mary Baltz graduated from Cornell University and joined the soil survey as a "junior soil surveyor" in Madison and Oneida Counties, N.Y. W.W.II labor shortages provided an opening for her to work in a job that, up to that time, appeared to be reserved for men. Mary Baltz worked for the SCS until about 1965.

1964 - Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited sex discrimination in federal employment.

1964 - Ermine F. Bates became the first black female hired in North Carolina when she joined the state office staff in Raleigh. She remained until her retirement in 1984.

1967 - Martha Marbury became the first black personnel officer and the first black branch chief in the personnel division in the national headquarters.

1975 - Roberta Stevenson became the first woman district conservationist at Welton, Arizona.

1978 - The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 required that the federal work force reflect the nation's diversity.

1980 - Maxine Barron was the first GS-14 black female program analyst.

1983 - Jackie Sutton moved from the USDA administration to become associate deputy for administration in 1983, and was the first female to occupy a Senior Executive Service job in SCS.

1988 - Carol Wettstein was the first woman state soil scientist with the Soil Conservation Service (NRCS) - USDA (SCS Maryland 1988-89) and later was state soil scientist in Colorado (1990-95).

2004 - Dana York was selected as NRCS Associate Chief becoming NRCS's highest ranking female leader and first female associate chief.

## REFERENCES

Helms, Douglas. Women in the Soil Conservation Service. <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/about/history/articles/WomenInSCS.html>

Levin, Maxine J. Women in Soil Science - 1895 to Present. <http://www.womeninsoils.org/womensci.html>

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## **SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED, BEGINNING, AND LIMITED RESOURCE FARMERS/RANCHERS - Submitted by John Pitre**

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) continues to address the unique circumstances and concerns of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, as well as beginning and limited resource farmers and ranchers. It provides for voluntary participation, offers incentives, and focuses on equity in accessing U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs and services. Enhancements include streamlined delivery of technical and financial assistance; improved programs and services; and flexibility in decision making (with most decisions made at the Tribal, State, or local level).

A Beginning Farmer or Rancher means an individual or entity who has not operated a farm or ranch, or who has operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 consecutive years. This requirement applies to all members of an entity, and will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm or ranch. In the case of a contract with an individual, individually or with the immediate family, material and substantial participation requires that the individual provide substantial day-to-day labor and management of the farm or ranch, consistent with the practices in the county or State where the farm is located. In the case of a contract with an entity, all members must materially and substantially partici-

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participate in the operation of the farm or ranch. Material and substantial participation requires that each of the members provide some amount of the management, or labor and management necessary for day-to-day activities, such that if each of the members did not provide these inputs, operation of the farm or ranch would be seriously impaired.

A socially disadvantaged group is a group whose members have been subject to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of a group, without regard to their individual qualities. These groups consist of; American Indians or Alaskan Natives, Asians, Blacks or African Americans, Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders, and Hispanics. Gender alone is not a covered group for the purposes of NRCS conservation programs. A socially disadvantaged applicant is an individual or entity who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group. For an entity, at least 50 percent ownership in the farm business must be held by socially disadvantaged individuals. One member of an eligible entity may certify for all members rather than have each member self-certify.

A Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher or Forest Owner is an applicant with direct or indirect gross farm sales not more than the current indexed value in each of the previous 2 years, and who has a total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of four, or less than 50 percent of county median household income in each of the previous 2 years. An entity or joint operation can be a Limited Resource Farmer or Rancher if all individual members independently qualify.

#### **Limited Resource Farmer Self-Determination**

The purpose of this self determination tool is to enable potential limited resource farmers and ranchers to ascertain eligibility for various USDA programs and benefits.

[On-Line Limited Resource Self-Determination Tool](#)

#### **Indian Tribes**

Indian Tribe means any Indian Tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska Native village or regional or village corporation as defined in or established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.) that is Federally recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.

NOTE: "Indian Entities Recognized and Eligible to Receive Services from the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs" available at: <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/pdf/E8-6968.pdf>

#### **Additional Information**

2008 Farm Bill Fact Sheet details assistance available.

[http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/farbill/2008/pdfs/SDRBF\\_At\\_A\\_Glance\\_062608final.pdf](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/farbill/2008/pdfs/SDRBF_At_A_Glance_062608final.pdf)

**USDA Small Farmers Website.** This web site is intended to be a one-stop gateway to resources, benefits and services offered by USDA for small farmers. <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/smallfarms.cfm>

#### **Program Contact**

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## CIVIL RIGHTS COMMITTEE MEMBER Monthly Pick



**Robert A. Spears**  
District Conservationist

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District Conservationist  
Black SEPM

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## SOME CIVIL RIGHTS DEFINITIONS

**EEO** (Equal Employment Opportunity). Under EEO law, only job related factors can be used to determine if an individual is qualified for a particular job. As a result, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was created.

**Title VII** (of the Civil Rights Act of 1964). Ensures nondiscrimination in employment on the basis of color, race, religion, sex, national origin, or reprisal for previous EEO activity. This title, as amended, established the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) to enforce law.

**Discrimination.** The word is often used to mean illegal discriminatory acts. It simply means noticing the differences between things or people that are otherwise alike; and making decisions based on those differences. We discriminate when we buy one product over another, when we choose our friends, and when we make personnel decisions based on merit related factors. All these forms of discrimination are legal and necessary.

**Civil Rights.** The nonpolitical rights of a citizen; especially, the rights of personal liberty guaranteed to U.S. citizens by the 13th and 14th amendments of the Constitution and by acts of Congress.

**Title VI** (of the Civil Rights Act of 1964). Ensures nondiscrimination in the delivery of any program, service, or activity funded by the Federal government.

## MONTH-LONG CELEBRATIONS

### REGIONAL AND CULTURAL CELEBRATIONS AND COMMEMORATIONS

August 1st	Confederation Day Emancipation Day	Switzerland Trinidad & Tobago
August 2nd	Illinden (or National Day)	Macedonia
August 3rd	Independence Day Independence Day Verslunarmannahelgi	Jamaica Niger Iceland
August 5th	Independence Day	Burkina Faso
August 6th	Independence Day	Bolivia
August 9th	National Day	Singapore
August 10th	Independence Day	Ecuador
August 11th	Independence Day	Chad
August 13th	Independence Day O-Bon	Central African Japan
August 14th	Independence Day V-J Day	Pakistan U.S.
August 15th	Brazzaville (National Day) Independence Day Korea Liberation Day	Congo India North and South Korea
August 16th	Restoration of the Republic	Dominican Republic
August 17th	Proklamasi Kermerdekaan (Independence Day)	Indonesia
August 24th	Independence Day	Ukraine
August 25th	Independence Day	Ukraine

August 26th	Independence Day	Germany
August 26th	Women's Equality Day	U.S.
August 27th	Independence Day	Moldova
August 30th	Victory Day	Turkey
August 31st	Independence Day	Trinidad & Tobago
	Merdeka (Freedom) Day	Malaysia
	Solidarity Day	Poland

## RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

August 1st	Lughnasadh (or Lammas Day)	Celtic, Pagan
August 5th	Shab-e-Barat	Islamic
August 14th	Janmashtami	Hindu
August 15th	Assumption of the Virgin Mary	Christian
August 21st	Ramadan (sundown)	Islamic
August 22nd	Ramadan	Islamic
August 23rd	Ganesh Chaturthi	Hindu

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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**Questions or Comments? Email [dawn.newman@la.usda.gov](mailto:dawn.newman@la.usda.gov) or [juanita.hoffpauir@la.usda.gov](mailto:juanita.hoffpauir@la.usda.gov)**

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