



FACT SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FARM SERVICE AGENCY

May 2013

The USDA Minority Farm Register (MFR)

Overview

What is the MFR?

The Minority Farm Register (MFR) is a tool to promote equal access to USDA farm programs and services for minority producers that are farmland owners, farm or ranch operators, tenants and other individuals with an agricultural interest. Participants may receive information or be personally contacted through USDA outreach efforts. USDA programs include direct and guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans, direct and guaranteed housing and rural business loans and grants, marketing loans, as well as conservation and risk management programs.

What Authorized the MFR?

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (the Act) amended Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, Section 2501(e) and states, "The Secretary of Agriculture shall carry out an outreach and technical assistance program to encourage and assist socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in owning and operating farms and ranches and in participating, equitably, in the full range of agricultural programs offered by the Department." The MFR was developed as a tool

to allow producers to voluntarily provide personal information for outreach and assistance.

Is Participation Mandatory?

Participation in the MFR is voluntary.

USDA oversees the MFR outreach program and through the Farm Service Agency (FSA) participants may voluntarily provide their name, residential address, telephone number, email address, ethnicity, race, gender and the location of their farm or ranch on form AD-2035, USDA Minority Farm Register, or form AD-2035SP, Registro De Agricultores Minoritarios del USDA, to receive USDA information.

How Will the Register Be Used?

By joining the MFR, participants authorize the USDA Office of Advocacy and Outreach (OAO) to release voluntarily submitted information to other USDA agencies and approved outreach partners. Participants may receive outreach materials, newsletters and program announcements from USDA agencies. They may also receive information and assistance from other USDA-approved outreach partners, such as community-based organizations (CBOs), other government agencies, faith-based

organizations and minority-serving educational institutions. USDA will carefully control access to and use of the MFR.

Producer's names and farm records are already at the local USDA Service Center. Why should they participate in the MFR?

Under the Privacy Act, a producer must voluntarily authorize release of his or her name, race, ethnicity and contact information before USDA can share it with other USDA approved outreach partners.

Producers are already signed up for GovDelivery News Alerts. Is this the same thing?

No. GovDelivery allows producers to select and receive information electronically based on agency, state, county, programs, press releases and other news. In addition to USDA departmental announcements, participation in MFR allows USDA's OAO to share the producer's information with partner organizations in that producer's area offering assistance, localized opportunities and event information.

How Do Producers Benefit From Joining the MFR?

USDA is committed to ensuring that every eligible person is

equally informed of and given access to all USDA programs. While other governmental organizations, universities, nonprofit and community-based organizations often desire to provide outreach services targeted to distinct minority and ethnic constituencies, they often lack suitable contact information. By joining the MFR, producers authorize the release of their name, address, telephone number, email address and minority/ethnic status to USDA agencies and USDA outreach partners.

Does Signing Up for the MFR Make Producers Eligible for USDA Programs?

No. Each agency within USDA has its individual sign-up procedures and eligibility requirements. USDA's FSA, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Rural Development (RD) and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA, formerly named the Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service) have local service centers in most counties. To sign up for a USDA program, producers must directly contact the agency responsible for that program.

Does FSA release the MFR Participant Information?

No. The USDA OAO oversees all information and authorizes release. FSA only collects the information for the Department and promotes participa-

tion in the MFR. FSA has no authority to release information from the MFR. All requests to receive information from the MFR must be sent to and approved by: USDA Office of Advocacy & Outreach, 1400 Independence Ave SW Stop 0601, Washington, D.C. 20250-9821 or email advocacyandoutreach@osec.usda.gov.

Who Receives Requested MFR Information from USDA's Office of Advocacy and Outreach Office?

- USDA Agencies
- Federal government agencies, other than USDA
- Community Based Organizations
- Educational Institutions

How Do Producers Participate in the MFR?

Minority producers interested in joining the MFR can find registration forms available in English (AD-2035) and Spanish (AD-2035SP) on the USDA Service Center Agencies eForms website (www.forms.sc.egov.usda.gov). Completed forms may be mailed to: USDA Minority Farm Register, USDA Stop Code 0539, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-0539, or dropped off at any local FSA office for mailing.

An individual may remove his or her name from the MFR at any time by writing to the Minority Farm Register, USDA Stop Code 0539, 1400 Independ-

dence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-0539.

For more information, visit FSA's website at www.fsa.usda.gov or www.fsa.usda.gov/outreach.

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Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or e-mail at program.intake@usda.gov.

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