

usda



Joel Berg <Joel.Berg@usda.gov>
06/19/2000 01:58:00 PM

Record Type: Record

To: MaryEllen C. McGuire/WHO/EOP

cc:

Subject: Re: NonProfit Task Force

I e-mail the attached two models over the weekend. Please confirm that you have recived this e-mail and are able to read the files.

Also, I would gladly volunteer to help review submissions.

Please fell free to contact me if you have any questions or need additional assistance.

-- Joel Berg, USDA

>>> MaryEllen_C._McGuire@who.eop.gov@i 06/19/00 05:36AM >>>
REMINDER: Submissions of model relationships to be considered for inclusion in the Nonprofits and Government Task Force's Report are due by close of business today, June 19th. We can not guarantee that submissions received after today will be considered.

----- Forwarded by MaryEllen C. McGuire/WHO/EOP on
06/19/2000 05:34 AM -----

MaryEllen C. McGuire
06/13/2000 09:57:39 AM

Record Type: Record

To: See the distribution list at the bottom of this message

cc:

Subject: NonProfit Task Force

Just a reminder, agency nominations for model nonprofit/agency relationships are due Monday, June 19th. If you would like to sit on the panel that will choose amongst the nominations please email me by Wednesday, June 14th. Thanks to all of those who have already been in touch.

----- Forwarded by MaryEllen C. McGuire/WHO/EOP on
06/08/2000 03:05 PM -----

MODEL NON-PROFIT PARTNERSHIP: USDA FOOD RECOVERY AND GLEANING INITIATIVE

On November 23, 1996, President Clinton signed an Executive Memorandum which directed USDA to lead a Federal government-wide effort to work with nonprofit anti-hunger groups to increase the recovery and gleaning of excess food for distribution to the hungry. Following up on this, Vice-President Gore convened the first-ever National Summit on Food Recovery and Gleaning --- co-sponsored by USDA and leading anti-hunger groups ---- on September 15, 1997 to generate national attention for the issue, catalyze new public-private partnerships, and announce concrete new Federal activities. As detailed below, the Administration has made significant progress meeting the goal, set by the Vice-President at the Summit, of significantly increasing the amount of food recovered and gleaned and distributed to hungry Americans.

Under the leadership of Secretary Dan Glickman, USDA has made food recovery and gleaning a top priority. The Department has not created a new Federal bureaucracy, but rather has encouraged, energized, and provided technical assistance to existing and new private, nonprofit, and corporate food recovery and gleaning efforts. The Department has:

1. Created or aided grass-roots food recovery projects in over 40 states in conjunction with farmers and ranchers, in which the USDA Farm Service Agency has facilitated the donation of over 8 million pounds of excess food to nonprofit groups. In recognition of this accomplishment, the agency has been awarded a Vice-Presidential Hammer Award.
2. Worked with the nonprofit group World Hunger Year to establish "1-800-GLEAN-IT," a toll-free hotline to provide an easy-to-reach source of information on how to become a volunteer, donate food, or get involved in a local gleaning or food recovery program.
3. Distributed over 20,000 copies of a *Citizens' Guide to Food Recovery and Gleaning*, an easy-to-use "how to manual" on how to start or expand food recovery efforts. Also distributed over 20,000 copies of an informational brochure on the Initiative, and numerous copies of an introductory video.
4. Enabled nonprofit groups to collect excess products from USDA research farms.
5. Changed USDA crop insurance regulations to allow producers receiving crop insurance to donate to nonprofit groups any product that is still wholesome from fields that are partially damaged.
6. Gave limited grants to provide seed money to help non-profit food recovery and gleaning groups expand their food security infrastructure. A key source of these funds has been the Community Food Projects program.
7. Worked with the National Restaurant Association to produce a guide for its members on how to safely donate excess food to nonprofit groups; the guide been the most requested

publication in the Association's history.

- 8.
9. Increased donations of excess food to nonprofit groups from Federal cafeterias.
10. Provided guidance to State agencies that administer the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) on how they can use TEFAP administrative funds to support the processing, transportation, and packaging of foods donated to nonprofit groups.
11. Awarded 12 school districts funds to develop "best practices" to increase the donations of excess food from school meals to nonprofit groups and to develop innovative ways to engage students in fighting hunger through community service.
12. Significantly increased the amount of "bonus buy" commodities distributed to food banks.
13. Obtained a Congressional change in the Department's authorities to increase USDA's legal ability to obtain surplus Federal food for distribution to nonprofit anti-hunger groups.
14. Worked to increase donations from farmers' markets to nonprofit groups.
15. Secretary Glickman and Education Secretary Richard Riley co-authored a letter for the nonprofit group, the National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness. The letter encourages colleges and universities across the country to donate excess food from their cafeterias to nonprofit groups and make more work-study slots available to students engaged in community anti-hunger efforts.
16. Brokered a new partnership between Hewlett Packard and America's Second Harvest to install and operate a new web-based system, *ResourceLink*, to efficiently link growers, manufacturers, processors and distributors with the America's Second Harvest food bank network, its 188 food banks and 26 million customers, as well as to an alliance of shipping companies that can provide no-cost or low-cost transportation. America's Second Harvest also committed to partner with USDA to expand food stamp outreach by distributing outreach materials. America's Second Harvest will designate 10 food banks that will work with USDA to develop food security action plans.
17. USDA and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency released a joint publication intended to help corporations, state, and municipalities both help the environment and feed hungry Americans by donating excess food to nonprofit groups.

Nonprofit group contacts:

Doug O'Brien, America's Second Harvest, (312)263-2303

John Morrill, Congressional Hunger Center, (202) 547-7022

Robert Egger, D.C. Central Kitchen, (202) 234-0707

Ken Horne, Society of St. Andrew, (800) 333-4597

USDA Contact: Joel Berg, Coordinator of Community Food Security, USDA, Room 536-A

14th and Independence, SW, Washington, DC 20250
(202) 720-5746, fax (202) 720-7489, e-mail: joel.berg@usda.gov

MODEL NON-PROFIT PARTNERSHIP: USDA COMMUNITY FOOD SECURITY INITIATIVE

Perhaps the best example of USDA efforts to work in conjunction with nonprofit groups is the USDA Community Food Security Initiative, which was discussed by President Clinton in his videotaped remarks to the National Summit on Community Food Security (October 14, 1999), which was sponsored by the Initiative:

“While the Federal government continues to be deeply involved in the fight against hunger, our nutritional safety net alone can't conquer the problem. The solution lies in new and innovative partnerships with grass roots efforts. For too long, government programs haven't done enough to capitalize on community expertise. And, likewise, community efforts have often not taken full advantage of the government resources available to them. This conference is about building stronger partnerships, about bringing all the parties to the table and forming stronger ties among the federal government; state, local and tribal governments; the private sector; nonprofit groups; the faith community; and private citizens. The more we work together, the better we can do in meeting the challenge of hunger.”

The President also discussed the Initiative in his December 23, 1999 visit to DC Kitchen, a nonprofit groups that has been helped by the Initiative:

“Our Agriculture Secretary, Dan Glickman, has gotten the whole government working on food rescue programs like this one. And now the Agriculture Department is working around the country to form new grass-roots partnerships to fight hunger, to increase local food production and to help low-income families move into independence.”

The Initiative is working with non-profit groups to target seven concrete goals:

- 1) Catalyzing or enhancing **local infrastructures** to reduce hunger and food insecurity
- 2) Increasing **economic and job security** by helping low-income people obtain living wage jobs and attain self-sufficiency
- 3) Strengthening the **Federal nutrition assistance safety net** by supporting the full and efficient use of programs such as Food Stamps, WIC, school meals, and summer feeding.
- 4) Bolstering **supplemental food provided by nonprofit groups** by aiding food recovery, gleaning, and food donation programs.
- 5) Improving community **food production and marketing** by aiding projects that grow, process, and distribute food locally
- 6) Boosting **education and awareness** by increasing efforts to inform the public about nutrition food safety, and community food security
- 7) Improving **research, monitoring, and evaluation** efforts to help communities assess and strengthen food security

The Community Food Security Initiative has already generated 87 new commitments (24 national, 22 state, and 41 local commitments) to fight hunger and strengthen local food systems

— most of which will be carried out in conjunction with nonprofit groups. Such commitments include:

* A partnership between USDA and Foodchain's national community kitchen initiative (now part of America's Second Harvest), DC Central Kitchen, and the American School Food Service Association, is starting a national program to "convert" school cafeteria's into Community Kitchens, such as DC Central Kitchen (which President Clinton has visited twice), that combine food rescue with job training. On February 14, Ms. Gore announced \$370,000 in USDA funding for this effort.

* The Congressional Hunger Center (CHC) committed to highlighting and initiating 10 new food security projects in partnership with USDA and the Mickey Leland Fellows field placement organizations across America. In addition, the CHC will redesign its Hunger-Free Community Report used by the Leland Fellows to assess the level of hunger in their field placement communities into a comprehensive Community Food Security Assessment module to be used by Fellows in the field.

* The Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC) committed to: 1) Undertaking a major new initiative with USDA to connect family farmers with school food services. CFSC will produce a report describing innovative farm to school programs, undertaking a series of training workshops regionally to stimulate new farm to school programs, and will initiate a campaign to institute a healthy foods, healthy schools approach around the country; 2) Developing and publishing a full-scale guidebook on how to assess local community food security; 3) Providing emerging food policy coalitions across the country, with assistance in coalition formation, working with city government, and outlining options for food policy councils; 4) Developing a national food security policy agenda; and 5) Partnering with USDA and farmers' markets around the country to improve farmers' market access to Food Stamp Program electronic benefits transfer (EBT).

* Share Our Strength committed to sign an MOU with USDA to expand Operation Frontline, a program that engages chefs to volunteer to teach hands-on nutrition education classes.

* World Hunger Year committed to work with USDA to publicize and distribute "Replication Manuals" for seven of the most effective grassroots hunger and poverty programs in the U.S. The manuals include: ACENET, a coalition of small agriculture-related businesses who share a professional kitchen facility and engage in joint marketing of their specialty food products; California Emergency Food Link, which trains and employs the homeless while gleaning fresh produce for distribution to the hungry; and the Hartford Food System, which is a multifaceted model of community food security including a Community Supported Agriculture farm.

Nonprofit group contacts:

Andy Fisher, Community Food Security Coalition, 310-822-5410
Bill Ayres, World Hunger Year, 1-800-GLEAN-IT
Billy Shore/Hadley Boyd, Share Our Strength, 202-393-2925

USDA Contact:

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20250

February 17, 2000

Mary Ellen McGuire
Office of the First Lady
OEOB, Room 101
Washington, DC
20500

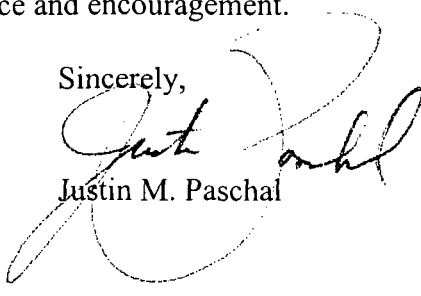
Ms. McGuire:

Please find attached USDA's submissions to the Non-Profit
Questionnaire.

As previously indicated, USDA is a large department with a broad and
diverse mission. Each of USDA's 9 agencies put significant time into
answering each of the questions presented on the questionnaire. In an
effort to illustrate how each individual agency interacts with Non
Profit Organizations I choose NOT to combine the responses into one
master document.

Thank you for all of your guidance and encouragement.

Sincerely,


Justin M. Paschal

Survey Questions for Federal Departments and Agencies

Introduction

- A. Define your relationship to non-profits - in what ways does your agency interact with non-profit Organizations?

Response:

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) has a dynamic relationship with a wide range of nonprofit groups. These FSA partners are utilized in enhancing almost all of the agency's key missions. They range from national, state, and regional community based organizations, to small local entities.

Technical Assistance/Training

- A. What types of technical assistance/training do you provide nonprofit organizations (e.g., management support)?

Response:

Training.

- B. Who provides the assistance? Provide some examples of technical assistance providers who your Agency views as models for successful TA design and delivery. What are some of the characteristics that make the providers successful? What are the limits of these providers?

Response:

In the last 20 years, new immigrants and residents of the Minnesota who are people of color, have moved in increasing numbers into Minnesota. Many of these new residents are refugees, victims of violence and political upheaval in their homeland. Many have significant roots in agriculture, both as a means for providing food for their table, and as a source of income. Minnesota's current and growing population of people from around the world has also created the need for special culturally appropriate foods and the introduction of these products into the mainstream market.

The Minnesota Food Association (MFA), a nonprofit organization with a mission of farming coalitions between urban and rural Minnesotians to build sustainable food systems. Sustainable describes a food system in which all people, regardless of income or other factors, have access to safe and high quality food which is grown, processed and distributed in a manner that supports

family farms, viable urban and rural communities, and stewardship of the land and environment. FSA funded the MFA to employ three outreach specialists representing the Asians, Hispanics, and African Americans immigrant population to address the problem facing immigrants and refugees during a time of welfare reform. The grant is still underway. However, quarterly reports reveal that many other entities, including USDA sister agencies, state and local agencies, and other nonprofit agencies have collaborated with MFA by providing much needed financial and technical assistance resources. The ability to stimulate the forming of collaborative effort is noteworthy.

As this provider is faced with a growing customer list, it cannot expand as rapidly as needed because it has to rely on funds to maintain the quality and quantity of staff persons and other administrative resources from FSA. There is a high probability of funding not being available because of current and future budget limitations and because of questionable legal authority of FSA to financially support the effort.

- C. What types of technical assistance or training are not currently being provided but should be?

Response:

FSA should provide technical assistance and training to many nonprofit grassroots organization to assist in carrying out the Agency's mission.

- D. If applicable, list other ways your Agency improves the efficacy of the nonprofit organizations it works with?

Response:

FSA in its national office role encourages and facilitates good cooperative working relationships between FSA staff offices and nonprofit. This approach enhances the potentials of success.

Relationship With Nonprofits

- A. What types of services do nonprofits that you partner with provide (health, human services)?

Response:

Outreach and Food Assistance. Food, grain, and vegetable oil are provided to nonprofit organizations for use in humanitarian food assistance under our U.S. Foreign Food Assistance programs. They also provide outreach services in areas where we have underserved farmers and ranchers

The following is a list of the nonprofit that are currently working with our agency through their involvement in humanitarian foreign food assistance.

Sponsor Name
Agri Cooperative Development
~~International Development Relief Agency~~
AFRICARE
American International Association
Aga Khan Foundation
American Red Cross
CARE
CHAMAH
Citizens Network for Foreign Affairs
COUNTERPART International, Inc.
Catholic Relief Services
Fund for Armenia's Recovery
Food For The Poor, Inc.
Feed the Children
Global Jewish Assistance & Relief
~~Agency~~ International Orthodox Christian
~~Charities~~ International Partner Human
~~Development~~ Rescue Committee
International Relief and Development
Mercy Corps International
National Rural Electric Cooperative
~~Opport~~ Community Industrial Center
Project Aid Siberia
Project Concern International
Partners for Development
Salesian Missions
Save the Children
Technoserve
United Methodist Comm Relief
US Poultry and Egg Export Council
World Food Program
Winrock International Institution for Ag
~~World~~ Vision Relief
ZOMARNO
American Jewish Joint Dist. Comm.
Caritas Bolivians
Caritas Del Peru
Doulos Community
Ethiopian Orthodox Church
Food For The Hungry
International Comm. Of Red Cross
International Emergency Fund
~~Reserve~~ World Relief

National Coop. Business Assoc.
Norwegian People's Aid
American ORT Federation
Project Concern International
PRISMA
Save The Children Federation
UN Children's Fund
World Share, Inc.

- B. Are there any model relationships that are particularly effective in achieving the critical goals of your department/agency?

Response:

FSA provided training to the Rural Coalition to increase minority and women participation in the nomination and election process of the County Committee.

FSA county committee is a significant element in providing program services to farmers and ranchers. Members of these committees have a significant influence on who does or does not received FSA assistance and have the added responsibility of assisting us in identifying underserved individuals and communities and assisting FSA personnel to conduct appropriate outreach efforts to ensure they have a equal and fair opportunity to participate in our programs and be served by the agency.

The report by the Department's Civil Rights Action Team of 1997 specifically recommended to the Secretary that a review be conducted of county committees to determine whether nepotism, conflict of interest, and/or discrimination in program delivery exists. Additionally, the team recommended changing the committee selection process; and removing county committees from any farm loan determination. The Secretary accepted both recommendations.

Historically, there has been expressed concerns of the perception of bias toward minorities and women on decisions made by county committees. Many public individuals and groups expressed beliefs that perception could be changed if more minorities and women where afforded the opportunity to be more involved in the county committee nomination and election process.

In response to the recommendation, FSA along with several other agencies provided \$141,746 to The Rural Coalition to provide outreach training on the county committee nomination and election process to its geographic, race, and cultural member groups. The Rural Coalition is composed of approximately one hundred nonprofit organizations located throughout the United States. Those organizations work at the grassroots level on a variety of rural issues including increasing the economic viability of underserved farmers and ranchers who look to USDA, and FSA, in particular, for assistance.

The training provided by The Rural Coalition was in context, Trainer training The Training. The goal of the trainer was to:

1) educate producers of the changes in the nominations and election process so they will know how and when to participate,

2) increase trust and confidence of the producers--particularly socially disadvantaged producers--in the system, in order to convince them it will be worthwhile to participate as nominees and electors, and

3) design strategies and a training program through the community-based organizations representing minority producers to increase election and program participation for 1997 and future elections, and thereby increase minority participation in all FSA programs.

4) Provide strategic feedback and recommendations to FSA on ways to improve the election and program delivery processes, and on ways community based groups may cooperate with FSA to identify critical areas for field improvements and training.

This effort resulted in increases in the percentages of minorities and women participation in the county committee and election process, with American Indians, residing on reservations, increasing the numbers of committees to a historical high.

FSA partners with land grant institutions in sponsoring training conferences, often directly involving underserved and other farmers and ranchers. In other instances FSA participates with land grant institutions, other USDA agencies and nonprofits community based organizations in providing information and technical assistance to not only farmers and ranchers, but also to individuals and organizations that assist them.

FSA has partnered with small nonprofit organizations such as North Bolivar Development Corporation in the Mississippi Delta, who provides services to small acreage farmers and to at-risk youth in the form of hands on farm work experiences, including planting, harvesting, and marketing. It has partnered with American Indian Tribal Councils in the west in media blitz to notify reservations of upcoming county committee elections with the objectives of enhancing their chances of becoming members of the county committee, where they will have an active role in decisions critical to their population.

Through FSA's relationship with the Federation of Southern Cooperatives, a regional nonprofit, many federal, state, land grant, and community based organizations have been provided valuable technical assistance in areas such as land retention and formation of cooperatives.

Often these partnerships have been productive without financial assistance from FSA.

A model relationship that demonstrates effective goal achievement is captured in comments involving the work of The Rural Coalition which were stated in the introduction.

C. Can you identify any significant obstacles that hinder more effective relationships

between federal agencies and nonprofits?

Response:

FSA faces one particular obstacle in its relationship with nonprofits, that being its inability to provide grants and/or cooperative agreements, this inability is the result of statutory prohibitions. As a rule nonprofits that partner with FSA have small operating budgets and while they have the expertise to assist farmers and ranchers, they nonetheless do not have adequate financial resources

Burdensome regulations and red tape that may significantly impair flexibility needed in unusual situations.

Public Policy

- A. Do you have a working relationship with nonprofits when it comes to developing public policy (e.g., regulatory and budgetary matters)?

Response:

The FSA Administrator chairs the National Outreach Council. This group consists of USDA employees and representatives of nonprofit organization and is empowered to advise the Secretary on appropriate policies to carrying out USDA programs of outreach to underserved individuals and communities. Approximately, 20 nonprofits that represent thousands of individuals and communities will afford the Secretary real life circumstances of underserved and suggest policies to providing service on an equitable basis to all, while targeting the traditionally underserved.

- B. If so, please provide some examples of collaborative activities and describe what worked well and why you think it worked well.

Response:

The National Small Farm Commission is a recent and successful example of nonprofit partnering with USDA and FSA to recommend policies to eradicate long termed neglect of groups meeting the definition of underserved. Holding numerous meetings throughout the country where underserved individuals and organizations representing them, the commission recommended a shopping lists of action items to improve participation by the underserved to the Secretary. The Secretary accepted all recommendations and has and/or is in the process of implementing them.

Budget constraints often is a barrier to developing more consistence working relationships with nonprofits. However, making a good case to Congress on the significance of these relationships to promoting effective and efficient policies would remedy the barrier.

- C. If not, what are the barriers to developing a working relationship with nonprofits on public policy matters?

Response:

N/A

- D. What do you think can be done to hurdle the barriers or strengthen the relationships with nonprofits when developing public policy?

Response:

FSA should involve input from nonprofits early in the formulation of developing public policy.

Foundations

- A. Do you have a working relationship with foundations or other private donors?

Response:

Yes, the National FFA is the primary example.

- B. If so, please provide some examples of collaborative activities and describe what worked well and why you think it worked well.

Response:

The objective of the Farm Service Agency's sponsorship of the National FFA Organization's "Stars Recognition Program" is to ensure development of our nation's youth for leadership positions and careers in agriculture. Sponsorship of this activity communicates positive messages to 451,000 students, their parents, and the entire agricultural community in over 7,248 communities nationwide. Thousands of young people are motivated to excel in their preparation for careers in agricultural production and agricultural business because of this award and recognition program for school-based agricultural education. Since 1984, this sponsorship relationship has provided an excellent opportunity to partner with the National FFA Organization.

- C. If not, what are the barriers to developing a working relationship with foundations and other donors?

Response:

FSA does not have a history of working with foundations and other donors. The barriers we anticipate are (1) limited budgets, (2) lack of authorities, such as, Cooperative Agreement/Grant authority, and (3) staffing.

- D. What do you think can be done to hurdle these barriers or strengthen relationships with foundations and other donors?

Utilize our Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) authority and other type agreements that would not require funding resources. Also, partnering with other agencies and organizations that should result in greater success and decrease funding requirements. Also, forming a task force specifically to determine how a relationship with foundations and other donors can be developed to promote FSA mission.

Resources

- A. What resources do you provide to the nonprofit community (e.g., grants, in-kind services-if possible give amounts)?

Response:

FSA provides monetary and non-monetary resources.

Non-monetary: These are resources such as, newsletter, pamphlets, Fact Sheets, and referrals.

Monetary: FSA does not currently have Cooperative Agreement/Grant authority nor do we have a budgetary line item that would provide specific funding for nonprofits to assist us with Outreach efforts. As such, absent this authority and a budget, we cannot actively solicit for services.

FSA does support nonprofits base on unsolicited outreach type proposals in which funding can be made available. Unsolicited proposals FSA receives are processed for approval provided the we concur that the proposal would benefit the agency and is within the agency's mission function. Also, funding from agency appropriations that are permissible to be spent for this type efforts must be made available. If this can be accomplished the agency generally completes an inter-agency transfer of funds so a cooperative agreement/grant and be issues to enact the unsolicited proposal from an agency with such authority. The following is a list of such outreach projects with nonprofits FSA has funded from FY 1997 to FY 2000:

<u>Entity</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Amount</u>
National Tribal Development Assoc./ Intertribal Ag. Council	Annual media blitz project to outreach FSA's county committee elections to Native Americans.	FY 1997 \$48,882 FY 1998 \$60,000 FY 2000 \$58,375
Intertribal Agricultural Council	A five-year project to outreach to outreach FSA programs to Native Americans and Tribal Governments throughout the Indian Country.	FY 1997 \$229,324 FY 1998 \$50,000 FY 2000 \$100,000
Sweet Potato Growers Association Cooperative.	To provide at-risk youth, jobs and Technical Assistance to develop marketing & vegetable production.	FY 1997 \$35,000
Professional Ag. Workers Conference	To discuss and address the state of Agriculture in the South.	FY 1997 \$3,000
North Bolivar County, Development Corp.	To enhance youth awareness of viable Careers in Agriculture farm and non-farming.	FY 1998 \$15,000 FY 1998 \$40,000
89 th Annual NAACP Convention	Agency Exhibit	FY 1998 \$1,500
NAACP	Project to assist Black farmers in obtaining equal opportunity to credit and land retention.	FY 1998 \$23,000
Pre-Summit of the South and Summit of the South	To plan and conduct a conference to assist small Land owners to utilize forestry programs.	FY 1997 \$2,000 FY 1998 \$18,000

Minnesota Food Assoc.	A five-year project to create partnerships And outreach to new immigrants on sustainable ag., mentoring, etc.	FY 1998 FY 2000	\$160,200 \$160,200
Virgin Island Networking	Networking project between Community Based University State Ag. and USDA.	FY 1998	\$16,535
Hmong Annual Conf.	FSA had exhibits and conducted workshops.	FY 1998	\$15,150
Cherokee Nation	Outreach training project.	FY 1998	\$30,000
Rural Development Center	Outreach effort.	FY 1998	\$40,000
CA Highlander Coop. Small	farmer training and technical assistance for Asians.	FY 1998	\$40,000
National Black Farmers Association	Training and technical assistance to Black farmers in VA.	FY 1998	\$40,000
Multi-Nonprofits	Transferred monies to USDA Office office of Outreach to fund 2501 Programs.	FY 1998	\$1,300,000
Rural Coalition	Training on FSA programs to leaders of farm groups & comm. based groups.	FY 1997	\$95,746
National Small Farm Conference	To provide current farm related info. to farmers and those who work with farmers.	FY 1999	\$15,000
RJA Social Engineer Company, Inc.	Training of inner-city youth to organize Food production, distribution, and management.	FY 1999	\$66,613
Stone Child College	A five-year project to outreach FSA's loan programs to Native Americans In Montana.	FY 1997 FY 1998 FT 2000	\$217,679 \$201,744 \$207,111
Fond du Lac Tribal & Comm. College	A three-year project to outreach FSA's loan programs to Native Americans In Minnesota.	FY 1997 FY 1998 FY 2000	\$55,085 \$51,908 \$52,750

University of Puerto Rico	A five-year project to provide outreach and technical assistance to Puerto Rico's limited resource farmers.	FY 1997 FY 1998 FY 2000	\$320,209 \$280,000 \$280,000
University of Puerto Rico	Program to motivate student to consider Agriculture as a career.	FY 1997 FY 1998	\$5,000 \$6,000
Prairie View A&M University	Expose inner-city youth to African American Ag. Business to enhance in Ag. And Ag. Business.	FY 1997	\$15,000
Tufts University	Outreach effort.	FY 1998	\$40,000

B. How can nonprofits find out about the resources that you make available to them?

Response:

We are not authorized to solicit or advertise for these services (see above).

C. Do you provide support services to help nonprofits comply with cost principals and administrative requirements (e.g., Circular A-122, Circular A-133)? If so, what are these?

Response:

Yes, agency in which we transfer the funding to enact the project/effort provides these type services .

D. What steps in the department/agency taking to comply with the new Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act, particularly in regards to streamlining grant applications and reporting requirements?

Response:

None, see "C" above.

Communication

A. How do you reach nonprofits to inform them of departmental/agency information? Do you have any form of regular communication? If so, what form does it take?

Response:

FSA has the ability to target faxes of press releases and communications to non-profits. All FSA new releases are sent via Office of Communications SpectraFax to wide variety non-profit organizations.

FSA regularly seeks opportunities to partner with non-profit organizations. For

example, last year, the Agency contracted with the Self Reliance Foundation of the Hispanic Radio Network to increase awareness and participation of our county committee election process. The FSA project used radio broadcasts, the SRF's outreach and referral service to connect with Hispanic communities nationwide.

- B. Does your web sight provide information specifically for nonprofits to use? If so, what are some examples of how your web site responds to nonprofit needs? Does your department/agency participate in the Nonprofit <<http://www.nonprofit.gov>>? If so, what types of resources does it take to keep information current?

Response:

The FSA web site has an easy to use format that allows non-profits to easily and quickly find information on programs and initiatives of interest to their organization.

The FSA web site allows non-profits to subscribe to news releases electronically. Currently of the 3814 subscribers, 74 non-profits (.org 's) subscribe via this service

The Agency had participated in the Nonprofit Gateway in the past, but has not had the resources to pursue the effort of late.

Constituency Briefings

Any major program changes or implementations are communicated via constituency briefings that are attended by trade and industry representatives, as well as non-profit organizations. These briefings usually occur quarterly, and are a good opportunity for these groups and representatives to interact with USDA officials.

Gleaning

In addition, we have encouraged FSA state and county offices to post information that would be of interest to non-profits. Currently, these efforts have focused on food gleaning. Currently there a total of 35 links on 8 separate state web pages with links to information on food gleaning.

FSA headquarters currently maintains 32 separate sites devoted to food gleaning information.

- C. What changes would you suggest to improve communication with nonprofits?

Response:

Suggested Improvements

Link on homepage designed specifically for non-profits. The link would take visitors to specific areas of the web site that would educate them to which aspects of the web site are particularly useful for their organization, and how they can make the web site work to their advantage.

In addition, the web site would provide a list of hyperlinks to non-profit web sites.

Competition

- A. To what extent does the department/agency require nonprofit participation in the delivery of services?

Response:

FSA does not require nonprofit participation in the delivery of our services. We do from time-to-time fund unsolicited proposals from nonprofits to assist us in the outreach and technical assistance for our programs.

- B. Please provide examples of contracts/grants/services that your agency formerly provided through nonprofits contractors/grantees but that are now provided by for-profit grantees/contractors. Why did this change.

Response:

FSA does not have examples as we are unaware of any situation where this has happened.

FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE

1. INTRODUCTION

A. Define your relationship with nonprofits – in what ways does your agency interact with nonprofit organizations?

As USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) does not by law deliver services directly to recipients, public-private partnerships are essential to the agency in its mission to ensure that hungry Americans have access to its nutrition assistance programs. To serve its clients, the agency depends on State and local governments as well as the private sector, particularly nonprofit organizations.

The programs that FNS administers include the Food Stamp Program, the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, the Summer Food Service Program, the Special Milk Program, the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, the Nutrition Program for the Elderly, the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, and the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP).

As part of its ongoing work, FNS consults with nonprofit experts, advocates, and professional organizations when thinking through research topics and questions related to FNS programs, using the nonprofits' research as appropriate; invites nonprofit groups to participate in advisory bodies that help define its research and analysis agenda; and makes information and analysis for Federal policies and programs available extensively to nonprofits.

Perhaps most importantly, FNS actively solicits and seriously considers the views of nonprofits in framing policy options and developing program initiatives.

An extremely important undertaking has been going on in the agency since March 1999, when the Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition, and Consumer Services Shirley Watkins first convened a group of Federal agencies and grassroots organizations to find solutions to end poverty and hunger throughout the country. The group, which has been meeting since then and now has 10 Federal agency members and four nonprofits, has four key objectives:

- **Accessibility** - improving access to information about Federal programs to grassroots organizations;
- **Simplification** - simplifying the grant application process for community-based groups;
- **Replication** - supporting grassroots groups whose projects have been successful and are now swamped with requests to explain their work; and
- **Best Practices** - sharing the best examples of Federal-State-grassroots partnerships that

benefit communities throughout the country.

The group is now working on a web site for nonprofit groups to have a central place to find information about many Federal programs. And for better networking, regional Best Practices/Grassroots Listening Sessions are going on around the country

FNS is actively involved with nonprofits in the administration of its programs as well. For example:

- FNS programs interact with national and local organizations such as the American School Food Service Association, the National Child Care Association, the Food Research and Action Center, the Children's Foundation, the National Association of WIC Directors, National Association of Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs, Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Food Research and Action Center, American Academy of Pediatrics, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, American Dietetic Association, Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine, National Grocers Association, March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation, National Association on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, and the Society for Nutrition Education. These various organizations represent their constituents and areas of program interest to the agency. Agency representatives regularly attend meetings with national associations that represent the partners in agency programs. These meetings serve as information exchanges through which the agency shares its policies and initiatives and receives feedback on the same.
- FNS authorizes some nonprofits to accept and redeem food stamp benefits from recipients who are certified to receive them.
- In FY 1999, FNS awarded five grants to nonprofits for projects to provide nutrition education through the Food Stamp Program. The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 mandated that USDA set aside funds in each fiscal year 1998 through 2001 to provide nutrition education grants. The five projects selected are one-time awards that will provide funds to the projects through December 2002. The grants awarded to nonprofits are:
 - The Farmers' Market Trust, Philadelphia, PA
 - The Community Food Resources Center, New York, NY
 - Contra Costa County Health Services, Martinez, CA
 - Harvesters Community Food Network, Kansas City, MO
 - Food Bank of Delaware, Newark, DE
- In the administration of the child nutrition programs at the local level, nonprofit organizations are often involved. Nonprofit private schools participate in all the child nutrition programs; nonprofit day care centers and sponsors of day care homes participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; and entities such as boys and

girls clubs, boy scouts and girl scouts, various United Way organizations, and religious groups all operate feeding sites and camps in the Summer Food Service Program. This relationship is one of partnership in delivering program benefits to their intended recipients.

- Nonprofits are also extremely important to the success of the agency's food distribution programs. Many commodities are distributed in packages or in congregate feeding sites that nonprofit organizations operate locally. FNS' interaction with these groups is largely indirect in the delivery of commodities, and hands-on only through the monitoring process.
- Under the WIC Program, FNS is authorized to use private, nonprofit health or human service agencies to administer the program at the local level. These nonprofit entities enter into contractual agreements with State health departments to operate the WIC Program and either State health or agriculture departments to operate the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP).

B. What types of technical assistance/training do you provide nonprofit organizations?

- FNS field offices throughout the country train nonprofit organizations authorized to receive and redeem food stamp benefits in proper procedures for handling benefits and provide technical assistance to nonprofits applying for authorization. In FY 1998, a total of 4165 nonprofit organizations were authorized to accept food stamp benefits, and they redeemed a total of \$33.15 million in benefits.
- While FNS' child nutrition programs develop a considerable amount of material and training packages, the delivery of training and technical assistance to organizations participating in these programs is accomplished primarily by State agencies. State agencies, using materials and training packages that they or FNS has developed, provide group training for local level sponsors and on-site assistance visits to individual sponsors. FNS materials range from "how-to" materials governing the sponsor approval process to some that are focused specifically on individual program issues.
- FNS convenes WIC and FMNP conferences and participates in meetings to provide training and technical assistance to State and local agencies, which include nonprofit organizations, on a variety of issues involving the administration and operation of the WIC Program and FMNP. The types of assistance provided to nonprofit WIC local agencies include, for example, program operational guidance and handbooks, management support, and materials such as publications, posters, and videos to assist in their efforts to educate WIC participants about health and nutrition issues and conduct outreach to the potential eligible WIC population.
- FNS works with nonprofit organizations as a means of reaching program partners and stakeholders with technical assistance and training to improve nutrition services and

promotion in FNS programs. It conducts information briefings, provides training on implementing policies and procedures, and distributes information resources to nonprofit professional associations, advocacy groups, and other key nonprofit stakeholders.

- FNS has completed a number of projects that provide tools to nonprofits and others to measure the extent of hunger and food insecurity in local communities, and to improve the effectiveness of Federal nutrition assistance programs at the local level.
- The agency occasionally provides technical assistance on the design or execution of evaluations carried out by others—often by members of the nonprofit sector.
- Technical assistance is provided through national meetings or as requested.

C. Who provides the assistance? Provide some examples of technical assistance providers who your agency views as models for successful TA design and delivery. What are some of the characteristics that make these providers successful? What are the limits of these providers? What types of technical assistance or training are not currently being provided but should be?

FNS' technical assistance to nonprofits is typically conducted by staff located at FNS headquarters in Alexandria or its regional and field offices. In running FNS programs in the States, the State agencies carry out the technical assistance.

D. If applicable, list other ways your agency improves the efficacy of the nonprofit organizations it works with?

In general, the most important contribution that FNS makes in improving the efficacy of nonprofit organizations that it works with is to carefully consider their views, and, as appropriate, their analytical work, in developing policy options and program initiatives for consideration, approval, and implementation as part of FNS programs.

Relationship With Nonprofits

A. What types of services do nonprofits that you partner with provide (health, human services)?

Most of the nonprofits are advocates for recipients of agency programs and work to obtain access to agency programs as well as help out, as in the case of the food distribution programs, in the administration of the programs.

The nonprofits authorized to receive and redeem food stamp benefits provide the following services:

- **Food Buying Cooperatives:** They allow persons to pool their funds to maximize their food purchasing power. There were 430 nonprofit cooperatives were authorized in FY 1998.
- **Alcoholic/Drug Addiction Treatment and Rehabilitation Programs:** There were 841 treatment programs authorized in FY 1998.
- **Public or Private Nonprofit Meal Delivery Services:** They deliver prepared meals to shut-ins. There were 947 such meal delivery services authorized in FY 1998.
- **Public or Private Communal Dining Facilities:** They provide prepared meals in a communal dining site for elderly who are able to congregate at such locations for meals and other activities. There were 1518 public and private nonprofit communal dining facilities authorized in FY 1998.
- **Group Living Arrangements:** Provide a residential setting for no more than sixteen blind or disabled persons. There were 253 group living arrangements authorized in FY 1998.
- **Homeless Meal Providers:** There were 155 such meal providers authorized in FY 1998.
- **Battered Women's Shelters:** There were 21 battered women's shelters authorized in FY 1998.

The nutrition education project grantees provide education programs on diet and health, food safety, and budgeting skills for migrants, the working poor, and low-income households with children.

Nonprofit organizations participating in the child nutrition programs provide educational services, day care services, social services and health services.

B. Are there any model relationships that are particularly effective in achieving the critical goals of your department/agency?

FNS' productive working relationship with nonprofit organizations such as the National Association of WIC Directors have contributed greatly to FNS' ability to carry out the kind of strong research and analysis important to improving the program. At the same time, such relationships further the goals of nonprofits by giving them a "seat at the table" as policy options impacting their members are developed.

C. Can you identify any significant obstacles that hinder more effective relationships between Federal agencies and nonprofits?

The Federal Advisory Committee Act adds great burden to the process of garnering consensus opinion from advocacy groups and other nonprofit organizations, limiting the agency's ability to consult such organizations as a group.

III. PUBLIC POLICY

A. Do you have a working relationship with nonprofits when it comes to developing public policy (e.g. regulatory and budgetary matters)?

Yes, FNS actively solicits and seriously considers the views of nonprofits in framing policy options and developing program initiatives.

FNS program staff participate in numerous meetings at the national and regional levels where they interact with State and local program administrators and advocates, including nonprofit organizations, and receive input on policy and regulatory matters. In addition, program regulations are subject to the public comment process. Finally, FNS has convened a number of task forces over the years to deal with specific policy areas and issues. Nonprofits have been well represented in those activities.

In administering the WIC Program and the FMNP, FNS uses, to the fullest extent possible, nonprofit groups and organizations to coordinate efforts such as health issues, develop appropriate nutrition education messages and materials, breastfeeding promotion and support, and assist FNS in developing legislative, regulatory, and policy proposals for the WIC Program and the FMNP.

B. If so, please provide some examples of collaborative activities and describe what worked well and why you think it worked well.

Among the most successful collaborations with the nonprofit sector in which FNS has been involved are:

- **The Food Security Measurement Project** – which drew on the experience of public and private researchers, policy advocates, and the academic community to develop a

rigorous and widely accepted approach to measuring food insecurity and hunger.

- **The RISC Group** – A collaborative effort between FNS and the National Association of WIC Directors that succeeded in developing a set of voluntary science-based standards for nutrition risk in the WIC Program ensuring that WIC benefits were targeted consistently to those facing a real nutritional risk, no matter where they live.
- **“Promoting Healthy Eating: An Investment in the Future” Report** – A report to Congress offering recommendations in support of a comprehensive, integrated nutrition education approach at FNS. Extensive input from key nonprofit groups and other stakeholders resulted in a broad range of useful strategies to improve nutrition education in the agency.
- **Comprehensive management guidance** - FNS is in the process of developing and issuing comprehensive management guidance for all levels of administrators in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Nonprofit program sponsors and representatives from the advocacy community participated actively in this work.
- **Coordination with the National Association of WIC Directors** - FNS has coordinated with the National Association of WIC Directors in developing, for example, proposed funding formulas for the allocation of WIC funds to State agencies, minimum data set for State agencies reporting of WIC participant and program characteristics, and other proposals and strategic plans to improve the operation and administration of the WIC Program. Such collaborative efforts result in consensus on WIC policy which aids in ensuring acceptance in the WIC community and timely and successful implementation at the State and local agency levels.

C. If not, what are the barriers to developing a working relationship with nonprofits on public policy matters?

As noted above, the Federal Advisory Committee Act adds a great burden to the process of garnering consensus opinion from advocacy groups and other nonprofit organizations, limiting the agency’s ability to consult such organizations as a group. However, FNS believes that the relationships between its program administrators and nonprofits on an ongoing basis are satisfactory and beneficial.

D. What do you think can be done to hurdle the barriers or strengthen the relationships with nonprofits when developing public policy?

The Federal Advisory Committee Act should be amended to permit broader consultation and collaboration with nonprofit groups, while still protecting the public’s right to information about, and involvement in, the public policymaking process.

Additional administrative resources for FNS would permit the agency to pursue greater

interaction with the nonprofit community and other stakeholders.

IV. FOUNDATIONS

A. Do you have a working relationship with foundations or other private donors?

Though there is some potential for collaboration, FNS' relationship with the foundation and private donor community is limited.

In some States, some local agencies that operate the WIC Program, which are subgrantees, are foundations such as public health foundations.

What are the barriers to developing a working relationship with foundations or other private donors?

Limits on administrative resources hinders development of these relationships. In addition, there are legal barriers that make working in coordination with foundations in areas of shared interest difficult.

What do you think can be done to hurdle the barriers or strengthen the relationships with nonprofits when developing public policy?

Additional administrative resources for FNS would permit the agency to pursue greater interaction with the foundation community.

RESOURCES:

A. What resources do you provide to the nonprofit community (e.g., grants, in-kind services-if possible give amounts)?

Authorized nonprofits redeemed \$33.15 million in Food Stamp Program benefits during FY 1998 that they then used to purchase food and prepare meals for recipients. The five nutrition education projects receive \$507,000 a year in grant money for five years.

FNS provides a small number of grants to nonprofit organizations as part of a study project. It also makes available to nonprofits and others in-kind resources such as studies and evaluation reports, policy information, technical guides, and educational materials.

FNS provides program reimbursement on a per-meal basis to organizations participating in its child nutrition programs. These reimbursement payments are adjusted on an annual basis to reflect changes in the Consumer Price Index.

FNS provides Federal grants to WIC and FMNP State agencies and not directly to private, nonprofit local agencies. Nonprofit WIC and FMNP local agencies receive

Federal funds to operate the WIC Program from State health departments or Indian Tribal Organizations, and from primarily State health or agriculture departments to operate the FMNP, who are authorized by FNS to oversee the administration of the WIC Program and FMNP in each State.

B. How can nonprofits find out about the resources that you make available to them?

Information on grants and in-kind informational resources is made available on the FNS website (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns>). For information about these resources, the agency's public information staff at headquarters and its regions can also be contacted.

Resources available to potential program sponsors are available on FNS' web site, through State administering agencies, and through various outreach activities the agency conducts.

C. Do you provide any support services to help nonprofits comply with cost principles and administrative requirements (e.g. Circular A-122, Circular A-133)? If so, what are these?

Those receiving grants from FNS receive some technical assistance on conforming to appropriate administrative requirements on request.

In 1999, FNS issued a "WIC Cost Allocation Guide" which is a resource guide for WIC State and local agencies to assist them in complying with cost principles and administrative requirements in operating the WIC Program.

D. What steps is the department/agency taking to comply with the new Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act, particularly in regard to streamlining grant applications and reporting requirements.

FNS is now looking at how the requirements of the Act apply to the kinds of grant agreements the agency typically enters.

COMMUNICATION:

A. How do you reach nonprofits to inform them of departmental/agency information? Do you have any form of regular communication? If so, what form does it take?

The FNS web site contains instructions for all retailers and nonprofits on basic eligibility requirements and how and where to file an application to become authorized to accept food stamp benefits.

The other agency programs also communicate through the agency web site as well as

through various Federal and State-level outreach activities, including public service announcements and written communications with national organizations representing local-level nonprofits.

FNS also communicates with nonprofits through study reports and other publications that are offered through and augmented by the FNS web site. FNS staff attend research and program stakeholder conferences to provide briefings, make speeches and presentations, and interact with attendees. FNS also makes contact lists available to allow nonprofits and others to reach staff with questions or seek technical assistance in specific areas.

We created a mailing list of organizations, including nonprofits. These organizations are notified, for example, when WIC Program or FMNP regulations are issued or meetings are scheduled such as the National Advisory Council meeting.

B. Does your web site provide information specifically for nonprofits to use? If so, what are some examples of how your web site responds to nonprofit needs? Does your department/agency participate in the Nonprofit Gateway (<http://www.nonprofit.gov>)? If so, what types of resources does it take to keep information current?

While FNS offers a wide range of information on its web site, most of it is not targeted specifically or exclusively to nonprofits. The agency does not participate in the Nonprofit Gateway.

C. What changes would you suggest to improve communications with nonprofits?

FNS is working to expand the depth and accessibility of the information offered on its web site. In addition, the agency is working to make further use of interactive communications strategies, such as list-serves, to alert and inform nonprofits and others of its work.

VII. COMPETITION

A. To what extent does the department/agency require nonprofit participation in the delivery of services?

None. Eligibility for program benefits is established in the applicable statutes.

B. Please provide examples of contracts/grants/services that your agency formerly provided through nonprofit contractors/grantees but that are now provided by for-profit grantees/contractors. Why did this change occur?

None

Survey Questions for Federal Departments and Agencies On Nonprofit Groups

Introduction

A. Define your relationship to nonprofits - in what ways does your agency interact with nonprofit organizations?

The Department of Agriculture has built a wide range of effective partners with nonprofit groups to better carry virtually every key mission of the Department.

The USDA Community Food Security Initiative

Perhaps the best example of USDA efforts to work in conjunction with nonprofit groups is the **USDA Community Food Security Initiative, which was discussed by President Clinton** in his videotaped remarks to the National Summit on Community Food Security (October 14, 1999), which was sponsored by the Initiative:

“While the Federal government continues to be deeply involved in the fight against hunger, our nutritional safety net alone can't conquer the problem. The solution lies in new and innovative partnerships with grass roots efforts. For too long, government programs haven't done enough to capitalize on community expertise. And, likewise, community efforts have often not taken full advantage of the government resources available to them. This conference is about building stronger partnerships, about bringing all the parties to the table and forming stronger ties among the federal government; state, local and tribal governments; the private sector; nonprofit groups; the faith community; and private citizens. The more we work together, the better we can do in meeting the challenge of hunger.”

The President also discussed the Initiative in his December 23, 1999 visit to DC Kitchen, a nonprofit groups that has been helped by the Initiative:

“Our Agriculture Secretary, Dan Glickman, has gotten the whole government working on food rescue programs like this one. And now the Agriculture Department is working around the country to form new grass-roots partnerships to fight hunger, to increase local food production and to help low-income families move into independence.”

In conjunction with the President's visit to DC Central Kitchen, the White House released a fact sheet making new announcements about the Initiative:

"Today the Clinton Administration announced a strengthened Community Food Security Initiative to reduce hunger, improve nutrition, and help families become self-sufficient. The Community Food Security Initiative includes three important actions: launching a new "2000 in 2000 Campaign" to generate 2,000 public and private commitments to fight hunger over the next year; releasing a new guide for communities to improve nutritional access for under served groups; and unveiling a new handbook from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on how communities can reduce hunger and pollution by improving food recovery efforts."

The Initiative is targeting seven concrete goals that the Department is working on in tandem with nonprofit groups:

- 1) Catalyzing or enhancing **local infrastructures** to reduce hunger and food insecurity
- 2) Increasing **economic and job security** by helping low-income people obtain living wage jobs and attain self-sufficiency
- 3) Strengthening the **Federal nutrition assistance safety net** by supporting the full and efficient use of programs such as Food Stamps, WIC, school meals, summer feeding, and TEFAP.
- 4) Bolstering **supplemental food provided by nonprofit groups** by aiding food recovery, gleaning, and food donation programs.
- 5) Improving community **food production and marketing** by aiding projects that grow, process, and distribute food locally
- 6) Boosting **education and awareness** by increasing efforts to inform the public about nutrition food safety, and community food security
- 7) Improving **research, monitoring, and evaluation** efforts to help communities assess and strengthen food security

The Community Food Security Initiative has already generated 87 commitments new commitments to fight hunger and strengthen local food systems --- most of which will be carried out in conjunction with nonprofit groups: 24 national, 22 state, and 41 local

commitments. Such commitments including:

- * In partnership with USDA and Foodchain's national community kitchen initiative and DC Central Kitchen, the American School Food Service Association, commits to launching a national program to "convert" school cafeteria's into Community Kitchens, such as DC Central Kitchen, which President Clinton has visited twice.
- * In partnership with Hewlett Packard and USDA, America's Second Harvest will install and operate a new web-based system, *ResourceLink*, to efficiently link growers, manufacturers, processors and distributors with the America's Second Harvest food bank network, its 188 food banks and 26 million customers as well as to an alliance of shipping companies that can provide no-cost or low-cost transportation. Second Harvest also commits to partner with USDA and other key national anti-hunger organizations to expand food stamp outreach by distributing outreach materials through their 188 member food banks and in turn through their food banks member agencies. America's Second Harvest will designate 10 food banks in states where there are above average levels of community food security and work with local agencies to develop food security networks and local community food security action plans.
- * America the Beautiful commits to supplying all individuals and organizations interested in establishing community gardens with free seeds and technical assistance in coordination with USDA's "millennium gardens campaign" and other key community garden organizations.
- * The Congressional Hunger Center (CHC) commits to highlighting and initiating 10 new food security projects in partnership with USDA and the Mickey Leland Fellows field placement organizations across America. In addition, the CHC will redesign its Hunger-Free Community Report used by the Leland Fellows to assess the level of hunger in their field placement communities into a comprehensive Community Food Security Assessment module to be used by Fellows in the field. In addition, the CHC's Beyond Food AmeriCorps Program commits to implementing a Community Food Security partnership project in each of their five sites (rural Vermont, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., North Carolina, and the Mississippi Delta) in conjunction with other anti-hunger groups in those communities.
- * The Community Food Security Coalition (CFSC) commits to: 1) Undertaking a major new initiative with USDA to connect family farmers with school food services. CFSC will produce a report describing innovative farm to school programs, undertaking a series of training workshops regionally to stimulate new farm to school programs, and will initiate a campaign to institute a healthy foods, healthy schools approach around the country; 2) Developing and publishing a full-scale guidebook on how to assess local community food security; 3) Providing emerging food policy coalitions across the country, with assistance in coalition formation, working with city government, and outlining options for food policy councils; 4) Developing a national food security policy agenda; and 5) Partnering with USDA and farmers' markets around the country to improve farmers' market access to Food Stamp Program electronic benefits transfer (EBT) and develop innovative solutions.
- * In conjunction with USDA, the Corporation for Enterprise Development (CFED) commits to

offering all its resources, including the forthcoming IDA Design Handbook, the "soups to nuts" guide to starting an IDA program, state IDA policy design handbook, newsletter, website (www.idanetwork.org) and listserve (idanetwork@cfed.org) and our annual conference (March 5-7 in Austin) to all persons and organizations interested in developing a IDA program.

* The Food Research Action Center (FRAC) commits to addressing the issue of hunger and food insecurity through the dissemination of information, influencing national opinion and policy-makers, and by working together with local and state organizations and USDA. Specifically, FRAC will:

1. Make the Food Stamp Program more accessible to working families through outreach, improved state and federal practices and procedures and improved national policies--especially for immigrants, working families, childless adults, and poor families leaving TANF;
2. Expand the availability of the School Breakfast Program and the Summer Food Program for all eligible children. FRAC will work to ensure that the Child and Adult Care Food Program is used to the maximum extent possible to provide nutritious meals and bolster quality care for low-income preschoolers in family child care homes and child care centers and to children in homeless shelters;
3. Expand the availability of after school snacks and meals for eligible children through the Child and Adult Care Food Program and the National School Lunch Program;

* The National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness will commit to develop both technical assistance manuals and community food security workshop curriculum, in coordination with the Community Food Security Coalition and USDA, for regional student food security training sessions and will conduct five student training sessions.

* The Society of St. Andrew commits to working with USDA in establishing a field gleaning program in every state in the continental US over the next five years. The program will, when fully developed, include a staff of sixty and approximately sixty thousand volunteers per year. This network of programs will glean approximately 30,000, 000 pounds of produce annually and be financially self sufficient by the fifth year. Partial seed funding has been secured from the United Methodist Church and matching funds are being sought. In addition, Society of St. Andrew will work to create a inter-faith/interdenominational working council on community food security to create a national multi-organization action plan aimed at creating innovative food security solutions through religious organizations in coordinated fashion.

* Share Our Strength commits, in partnership with USDA, to drafting a MOU on Operation Frontline, and expand nutrition education efforts at the local level in coordination with other anti-hunger, health, nutrition and community development organizations. Share Our Strength will also develop a referral system which educates grant seekers on federal and private programs in coordination with USDA/WHY inter-agency working group.

* The Welfare to Work Partnership commits to work with USDA to expand food stamp outreach by distributing to its 12,000 Business Partners information that educates both employer and employee on the benefits of food stamp usage and access. These food stamp outreach materials

will be distributed via brochures, faxes, and the web as part of larger campaign to promote job retention and career advancement for the many Americans leaving the welfare rolls.

* World Hunger Year commits to work with USDA to:

1. To publicize and distribute "Replication Manuals" for seven of the most effective grassroots hunger and poverty programs in the U.S. The manuals include: ACENET, a coalition of small agriculture-related businesses who share a professional kitchen facility and engage in joint marketing of their specialty food products; California Emergency Food Link, which trains and employs the homeless while gleaning fresh produce for distribution to the hungry; and the Hartford Food System, which is a multifaceted model of community food security including a Community Supported Agriculture farm.
2. Place its national grassroots database of over 6,000 organizations on the World Wide Web in an interactive fashion to allow greater response to needs. This database features best practices and tools for replication of model programs.
3. Expand its promotional and educational activities to emphasize the role of "Community Food Security" in the fight against hunger and poverty, including new PSA's and interviews during its week-long Hungerthon radio and TV promotion on six metropolitan New York stations, expanding WHY's national Artists Against Hunger & Poverty Program that will connect artists to appropriate grassroots groups, offering WHY's monthly newsletter -What's "Moo" at the Clearinghouse, and provide the "800-GLEAN-IT" number for outreach and referrals.

* Youth Service America commits to partner with USDA and other key national anti-hunger organizations to dramatically increase the number of anti-hunger volunteers and volunteer opportunities nationwide. YSA will utilize ServeNet's Volunteer Now! locator box, a web-based volunteer database, to direct hundreds of interested volunteers and organizations into service opportunities in local and national anti-hunger/poverty organizations. YSA will also partner with anti-hunger organizations to utilize the Presidential Student Service Awards, to recognize the contributions of young hunger fighters while encouraging other young Americans to serve their communities.

* In partnership with USDA Rural Development, state, county and municipal economic development offices, the Association of Arizona Food Banks commits to increase food security in Arizona by working to develop a manufacturing plant on the grounds of a rural food bank facility constructed as a for-profit corporation, which will develop a label and produce a product that utilizes locally grown raw materials and produces a highly marketable retail item.

* Occidental College commits to: 1) Developing and expanding, in conjunction with Eco-Oxy/Eco-L.A. and Occidental's Campus Volunteer and Community Service Center (CVSC), the Occidental Market Basket Program, a direct marketing program/farm-to-school, and the CVSC Glassell Park Partnership, a school garden and green landscape program, as well as an active environmental and nutrition education program for low-income students; 2) Participating in a new effort to include healthy meals and nutrition and environmental education in the new

After-School Enrichment program launched by the Los Angeles County Department of Social Services in more than 225 schools throughout Los Angeles County; 3) Launching, in partnership with USDA, a Farmers' Market Fruit and Salad Bar program in the Los Angeles Unified School District; 4) Establishing, in partnership with the California Department of Health Services, an innovative program of gardens and other community food security projects for domestic violence victims at shelters and transitional housing programs. Ten domestic violence shelters will be funded through this program; 5) Exploring the possibility of a Certificate program to provide community health workers and other community members with advanced training in nutrition and community food security.

* The Field to Family Community Food Project commits in partnership with ISU Extension, USDA, and the Hotel, Restaurant and Institution Management Department at Iowa State University to integrate locally grown foods into one or more school food programs in Story County, Iowa. Specifically, the Field to Family Community Food Project commits to:

- “ In partnership with a local coalition of churches, providing \$5000 worth of food vouchers to low-income families to be used towards fresh produce obtained at local farmers markets and grocery stores. Field to Family will also expand their fresh produce donation program.
- Publishing a report which can be used by local farmers to increase their capacity to market their products directly to local grocery stores, hotels, restaurants and institutions.
- Help 15-20 low-income families join a local Community Supported Agriculture Project while offering two Family Basic nutrition education programs.
- Organizing and expanding the Community Food and Nutrition Team.

* Working with USDA, Minnesota FoodShare commits to initiating a new “Community Initiatives: Creating Food and Economic Security in your community.” This initiative will address the issue of hunger on a community by community basis. Pilots will be launched in St. Cloud and “Near North” Minneapolis. Key elements of the project include a community assessment, the creation of community task forces and the development of a anti-hunger/food security plan.

* The Montana Food Bank Network, in partnership with USDA Rural Development, and the Montana State Prison, commits to initiating a Cannery Project which will be used to can donated fresh and frozen food for hungry people. The cannery will produce 240,000 cans of food each year, process confiscated wild game meat and provide job training opportunities for inmates.

* Working with USDA, the NJ Cooperative Gleaning Network commits to the collection and distribution of over 2 million pounds of fresh in the year 2000. The Network's members are the Community Food Bank, Food Bank of Monmouth/Ocean County, Camden Food Bank, Mercer Street Friends, Tri-County Community Action Agency, NORWESCAP, Farmers Against Hunger, and Rutgers Cooperative Extension.

* Colorado Hot Houses, Inc., in Torrance County, New Mexico commits to donating up to 2,000 pounds of surplus tomatoes two times a week to the Road Runner Food Bank. This donation will

be distributed to 250 agencies served by the food bank in the Albuquerque area.

- * The Navajo Agriculture Products Industry (NAPI), Farmington, NM, in partnership with the Northern Arizona Food Bank, commits to providing transportation to move potatoes through the Navajo Reservation in New Mexico and Arizona. The NAPI will place potatoes in bins to distribute an estimated 2,000,000 pounds of excess produce to hungry families.
- * In partnership with USDA, Cincinnati Business Incubator, Inc., commits to training alternative agriculture entrepreneurs. With produce grown utilizing new methodology, farmers will sell produce at Findlay Market, Ohio's oldest public market, to both consumers and WIC coupon recipients.
- * Oikos Community Development Corporation which operates Dayton and Montgomery County's, Ohio IDA program "Asset Fund", commits to double the number of individuals involved in the IDA program in 2000 and 15 fold over the next three years through a joint public-private action plan.
- * The Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank is committed to working with USDA to build community support for local agriculture to eliminate hunger by expanding its Farm Stand Project, FEMA/Farmers' Market Coupon Program and Urban Gardening Initiative to improve people's access to locally produced fruits and vegetables.
- * The Pennsylvania Hunger Action Center commits to working within the state of Pennsylvania to disseminate two new food security/anti-hunger guides, "Food and Nutrition in Pennsylvania: A Resource Guide" and "Hunger in Halcyon Days". The Pennsylvania Hunger Action Center also commits to conducting six workshops across the state to help local communities assess and evaluate food security among low-income households as well as promote community actions which strengthen the local food system by July 2000.
- * The Southwestern Pennsylvania Food System Council commits to launching a major Initiative to enhance the Pittsburgh area's long-term food security by improving people's access to fresh, locally-grown produce. The Allegheny County Food Security 2000 Initiative will support local produce stands and urban gardens and will bring together the government, business and non-profit sectors to develop a strategic plan to respond to regional long-term food security issues.
- * The RI Community Food Bank commits to creating a Kid's Café which provides 500-600 meals to Boys & Girls Clubs through their Community Kitchen job training program; increasing their fresh produce and drop site distribution to member agencies; establishing Hunger Action Teams; and helping food pantries to move to a client choice model for food distribution.
- * Southside Community Land Trust (SCLT) in Providence, Rhode Island committed to promoting community gardening, facilitating environmental education and acting as a catalyst for community food security. SCLT will work to expand its community gardens programs which currently serves over 200 low-income families in South Providence, its organic working farms

and its school based environmental education program for children.

* The Galveston County Senior Citizen Program commits to working with USDA and other local and state anti-hunger organizations to initiate a food stamps outreach program aimed at increasing food stamps utilization in Galveston County and starting a food bank.

The Lopez Community Land Trust commits to improve community food production and marketing with small farmers and supporting organizations of the San Juan Islands in Washington State by implementing a county-based non-profit food processing infrastructure for both meat and plant products. This project will link producers and markets directly. The Lopez Food Processing Center is being supported by USDA's Rural Development Office and Community Food Projects program of USDA's Cooperative Research Education and Extension Service.

* The Hunger Task Force of Milwaukee commits to improving community food security in the city through a comprehensive economic development initiative that includes a new public market hall, a kitchen incubator project and a small business program; expanding WIC and food stamp outreach; expanding the Milwaukee Farmers Market Association; and developing a new curriculum for an Urban Food Systems Planning course at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Additionally, the Food Recovery and Gleaning Initiative, started by the Administration in 1997 as a forerunner to the broader Community Food Security Initiative, worked with nonprofit groups to recover over 8 million pounds of excess food for distribution to the hungry.

Furthermore, in conjunction with the USDA Community Food Security Initiative, USDA manages the Community Food Security Project Grant Program. The Community Food Project program provides \$2.5 million a year in one-time grants to nonprofit local infrastructure, economic and job security, the Federal nutrition assistance safety net, food recovery and gleaning, local food production and marketing, education and awareness, and research and monitoring. groups to support projects that undertake comprehensive, multi-pronged, responses to local food, farm, and nutrition issues. Only 501(c)3 nonprofit groups can receive these grants. These grants are designed to increase food security in communities by coordinating the efforts of the whole food system, to assess the strengths, establish linkages, and create systems which will improve the self-reliance of community members. This form of self-sufficiency will be achieved by increasing each individual community's access to fresher, more nutritious food supplies and by promoting comprehensive responses to local food, farm, and nutrition issues. These grants are for private non-profit organizations. Grant Awards are funded from \$10,000 - \$250,000 with an annual amount of \$2.5 million total, and require a 50% match in non-Federal funds- in-kind are allowable). Grants are from one to three years in duration. Some examples of the grants:

* The Tohono O'odham Community Food System, Jubilee Agriculture Ministries, Sells,

Arizona--\$80,000. Program goals include the development and expansion of community gardens, organization of a desert food collection program, redevelopment of traditional flood-based farming practices, development of direct-to-customer and wholesale markets for traditional Tohono O'odham foods, initiation of culturally sensitive nutrition education programs, and support for the development of agriculture-based micro-enterprise projects.

* Community Enterprise and Food Security Project--\$145,000. San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners, San Francisco, CA. The San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners (SLUG) has built crop-scale urban gardens on abandoned lots adjacent to public housing developments, and runs youth job-training and employment programs at each of the sites.

* The Topeka Common Ground Project--\$115,000. Kansas Rural Center, Inc., Whiting, KS. Joint activities will promote sustainable farming practices, economic interdependency, youth leadership, community gardening, and agricultural entrepreneurship.

Lastly, it is vital to note that the Administration FY2001 budget will propose \$5.25 million for a new USDA program to give grants for grants to faith-based organizations and other nonprofit groups to fight hunger and bolster community food security. The funds would go to faith-based organizations, non-profit groups, school districts, local government agencies, and other grass-roots entities for projects that reduce hunger, improve nutrition, bolster community food security, and help families move from poverty to self-sufficiency. Funds would be given out through grants, cooperative agreements, and other forms of assistance. Priority would be given to innovative public/private partnerships that comprehensively tackle local programs, as well as for the replication of successful model programs.

Other USDA Programs That Work with Nonprofit Groups

TEFAP - The USDA Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) provides commodities for hungry people. The vast majority of food in this program is ultimately distributed by faith-based organizations and other nonprofit groups that run food banks, food pantries, homeless shelters, and hot meals programs.

Summer Feeding Program - Nonprofit groups play a critical role in helping children obtain nutritious lunches during Summer months, when schools are typically out of session.

Child and Adult Care Feeding Program - {ED/FNCS — need details on nonprofit roles in program}

Resource Conservation and Development Districts and Conservation Districts
{NRCS needs to provide information on nonprofit links}

Forest Service Trail Work {FS needs to provide info on how scout groups, trail clubs, and conservation corps build and repair trails}

Empowerment Zones/Enterprise Communities {Need information from OCD on nonprofit partnerships}

Rural Housing {Need information from RHS on nonprofit involvement in self-help housing program and community facilities grants and loans}

Cooperatives {Need information from RBCS on partnerships such as the tomato co-op in Arkansas that the President visited}

Farmers Markets/ Direct Marketing {Need information from AMS on how nonprofits get funds from FSMIP program}

Cooperative Research - {Need information from ERS on how nonprofit groups such as Second Harvest partner in food security research}

Young farmers - {Need information from Farm Service Agency on their partnership with the Future Farmers of America}

Technical Assistance/Training

B. What types of technical assistance/training do you provide nonprofit organizations (e.g., management support)?

Under the leadership of Secretary Glickman, USDA has made it a top priority to help nonprofit groups expand food recovery and gleaning to distribute excess food to hungry Americans. The Department has not created a new Federal bureaucracy, but rather has encouraged, energized, and provided technical assistance to existing and new private, nonprofit, and corporate food recovery and gleaning efforts. The Department has:

- “ Created or aided grass-roots food recovery projects in over 40 states in conjunction with farmers and ranchers, in which the USDA Farm Service Agency has facilitated the donation of over 6 million pounds of excess food. In recognition of this accomplishment, the agency has been awarded a Vice-Presidential Hammer Award.
- “ Worked with the nonprofit group World Hunger Year to establish “1-800-GLEAN-IT,” a toll-free hotline to provide an easy-to-reach source of information on how to become a volunteer, donate food, or get involved in a local gleaning or food recovery program.
- “ Distributed over 20,000 copies of a *Citizens' Guide to Food Recovery and Gleaning*, an easy-to-use “how to manual” on how to start or expand food recovery efforts. Also, distributed over 10,000 copies of an informational brochure on the Initiative, and

numerous copies of an introductory video.

- “ Enabled community groups to collect excess products from USDA research farms.
- “ Changed USDA crop insurance regulations to allow producers receiving crop insurance to donate any product that is still wholesome from fields that are partially damaged.
- “ Given limited grants to provide seed money to help non-profit food recovery and gleaning groups expand their food security infrastructure. A key source of these funds has been the Community Food Projects program.
- “ Worked with the National Restaurant Association to produce a guide for its members on how to safely donate excess food; the guide been the most requested publication in the Association's history.
- “ Provided guidance to State agencies that administer the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) on how they can use TEFAP administrative funds to support the processing, transportation, and packaging of foods donated through food recovery and gleaning projects.
- “ Awarded 12 school districts funds to develop “best practices” to increase the donations of excess food from school meals and to develop innovative ways to engage students in fighting hunger through community service.
- “ Helped The Chef and The Child Foundation of the American Culinary Federation to create a training program on food safety for gleaned foods.
- “ Conducted a study on the extent of food waste in the country, which obtained wide-spread national media coverage when Secretary Glickman announced it in 1997.
- “ Significantly increased the amount of “bonus buy” commodities that were distributed to food banks and other nonprofit groups.
- “ Conducted a study of food recovery organizations in the Mid-Atlantic states, clarifying both their successes and their significant infrastructure needs.
- “ Obtained a Congressional change in the Department's authorities to increase USDA's legal ability to obtain surplus Federal food for distribution to nonprofit anti-hunger groups.
- “ Utilized a USDA report which correlated the location of farmers' markets to the location of food banks and other food recovery groups to begin actively working to increase donations from farmers' markets to food banks and other recovery groups throughout the country.
- “ Began the first-ever large-scale study of the emergency feeding system.

“ USDA and Second Harvest have teamed-up to provide Food Stamps outreach materials to the estimated 21 million Americans receiving food through the Second Harvest network.

Building on the Food Recovery and Gleaning Initiative, USDA new Community Food Security Initiative is providing using four basic methods help nonprofit groups achieve those goals:

- Catalyzing the development of new **partnerships** on the local, State, and Federal levels to help communities reduce hunger and food insecurity.
- Improving the **coordination** between existing USDA programs--such as nutrition assistance programs, community food grants, ongoing research, farmers' markets, and food recovery projects--and related Federal, State, and community initiatives.
- Expanding **technical assistance** to States, communities, and nonprofit groups to utilize the resources of the Federal government to build long-term local structures to increase food security.
- Educating the public by using the "bully pulpit" to increase **public awareness** of the causes of food insecurity and highlight innovative community solutions to hunger.

The Initiative has also now named Community Food Security Liaisons in all states and territories to provide “one-stop-shopping”for nonprofit groups. Soon the Department will release a comprehensive resource guide which will be available on the Internet and hard copy.

C. Who provides the assistance? Provide some examples of technical assistance providers who your agency views as models for successful TA design and delivery. What are some of the characteristics that make these providers successful? What are the limits of these providers? What types of technical assistance or training are not currently being provided but should be?

On Community Food Security, USDA provide much technical assistance directly, both by staff in Washington and through the newly-named Community Food Security Liaisons in all states and territories to provide “one-stop-shopping”for nonprofit groups. USDA also provides technical assistance through grants and cooperative agreements with such groups as World Hunger Year, the National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness, and the Community Food Security Coalition.

Perhaps the best example is the National Hunger Clearinghouse, which is a program of World Hunger Year under contract with USDA. They operate the gleaning and food rescue hotline "1-800-GLEAN-IT." The database contains information on gleaning and food recovery groups as well as organizations covering many other facets of the anti-hunger and anti-poverty fields:

hunger, nutrition, agriculture, food security, sustainable agriculture, community development, micro credit, and job training. World Hunger Year works closely with USDA on highlighting and replicating "model programs" that focus on self-reliance. The Clearinghouse encourages donations and volunteering by making referrals to organizations through the United States.

The providers of most successful in reflecting the needs of local communities and other nonprofit groups, but often are too small and struggling too much to pay their bills to be able to provide comprehensive services nationally. Also, occasionally, nonprofit groups have suffer from turf consciousness or ideological biases that hamper their ability to provide braod-based assistance to others.

Most of the nonprofits provided technical assistance on relatively narrow areas of focus. There needs to be a focus on more holistic approaches.

D. If applicable, list other ways your agency improves the efficacy of the nonprofit organizations it works with?

One example is how USDA facilitated a partnership between Hewlett Packard and America's Second Harvest to install and operate a new web-based system, *ResourceLink*, to efficiently link growers, manufacturers, processors and distributors with the America's Second Harvest food bank network, its 188 food banks and 26 million customers as well as to an alliance of shipping companies that can provide no-cost or low-cost transportation.

Relationship With NonprofitsA. What types of services do nonprofits that you partner with provide (health, human services)?

As explained in detail in answer "introduction A," the Department of Agriculture has built a wide range of effective partners with nonprofit groups to better carry virtually every key mission of the Department.

B. Are there any model relationships that are particularly effective in achieving the critical goals of your department/agency?

See answers above on model relationships related to community food security food recovery and gleaning

C. Can you identify any significant obstacles that hinder more effective relationships between federal agencies and nonprofits?

The Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) hinders the ability of the government to consult collaboratively with non-profit groups. Grants and contracts regulations are also unduly burdensome.

Public Policy

A. Do you have a working relationship with nonprofits when it comes to developing public

policy (e.g., regulatory and budgetary matters)?

On Community Food Security matters, we do everything possible under the law to obtain full input from nonprofit groups on the national, state, and local levels on all key issues, decisions and procedures.

B. If so, please provide some examples of collaborative activities and describe what worked well and why you think it worked well.

In developing the USDA Community Food Security Initiative, staff traveled to conferences and meetings through the country to develop the main action areas of the Initiative, as well as a detailed action plan.

C. If not, what are the barriers to developing a working relationship with nonprofits on public policy matters?

As stated above, the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) hinders the ability of the government to consult collaboratively with non-profit groups. Grants and contracts regulations are also unduly burdensome.

D. What do you think can be done to hurdle the barriers or strengthen the relationships with nonprofits when developing public policy?

The Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) needs to be amended to increase the ability of the government to consult collaboratively with non-profit groups. Grants and contracts regulations and applications need to be dramatically reinvented and streamlined. burdensome.

Foundations

A. Do you have a working relationship with foundations or other private donors?

USDA has been working hard to involve foundations in the USDA Community Food Security Initiative, but efforts are still preliminary.

B. If so, please provide some examples of collaborative activities and describe what worked well and why you think it worked well.

USDA worked hard to involve as many foundations as possible in the first-ever National Summit on Community Food Security.

C. If not, what are the barriers to developing a working relationship with foundations and

other donors?

Foundations are not legally eligible to participate in most USDA grant programs.

B. What do you think can be done to hurdle these barriers or strengthen relationships with foundations and other donors?

One idea would be to enable the government and foundations more ability to work together jointly in making funding decisions on areas of mutual interest.

Resources

A. What resources do you provide to the nonprofit community (e.g., grants, in-kind services- if possible give amounts)?

See above descriptions of grants and technical assistance.

B. How can nonprofits find out about the resources that you make available to them?

The Initiative has also now named Community Food Security Liaisons in all states and territories to provide “one-stop-shopping” for nonprofit groups. The Initiative has an easy-to-use web site aimed at nonprofit groups: http://www.reeusda.gov/food_security/foodshp.htm

Soon the Department will release a comprehensive resource guide which will be available on its web site and in hard copy.

C. Do you provide any support services to help nonprofits comply with cost principles and administrative requirements (e.g., Circular A-122, Circular A-133)? If so, what are these?

We cover these issues in technical assistance we sponsor, however there is a great need to do more. The entire government should band together to provide technical assistance workshops and materials to nonprofit groups to help them better apply for – and manage – Federal funds.

D. What steps is the department/agency taking to comply with the new Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act, particularly in regards to streamlining grant applications and reporting requirements?

We have begun work on this issue, but it requires better government-wide coordination to tackle joint technology, administrative, legal, and regulatory issues.

Communication

A. How do you reach nonprofits to inform them of departmental/agency information? Do you have any form of regular communication? If so, what form does it take?

For the Community Food Security Initiative, we have begun developing a e-mailing list to rapidly

send groups updated information about the Initiative. We also regularly hold meetings and conference calls with such groups.

B. Does your web site provide information specifically for nonprofits to use? If so, what are some examples of how your web site responds to nonprofit needs? Does your department/agency participate in the Nonprofit Gateway <<http://www.nonprofit.gov>>? If so, what types of resources does it take to keep information current?

The Initiative has an easy-to-use web site aimed at nonprofit groups:

http://www.reeusda.gov/food_security/foodshp.htm

The Department does participate in the Nonprofit Gateway, but the gateway is very outdated and needs to be overhauled and become more user-friendly.

C. What changes would you suggest to improve communications with nonprofits?

We need all Federal web sites to divided up by subject, not by agency turf.

Competition

A. To what extent does the department/agency require nonprofit participation in the delivery of services?

One good example is the USDA Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) provides commodities for hungry people. The vast majority of food in this program is ultimately distributed by faith-based organizations and other nonprofit groups that run food banks, food pantries, homeless shelters, and hot meals programs.

B. Please provide examples of contracts/grants/services that your agency formerly provided through nonprofit contractors/grantees but that are now provided by for-profit grantees/contractors. Why did this change occur?

{I know of no instances in which USDA did this -- OSEC should check with agencies}

Survey Questions for Federal Departments and Agencies on Supporting the Role of Nonprofit Organizations

Research, Education, and Economics Mission Area at the U.S. Department of Agriculture

INTRODUCTION

The Research, Education, and Economics (REE) mission area is assigned Federal leadership and responsibility for the creation and dissemination of knowledge spanning the biological, physical, and social sciences related to agricultural research, economic analysis, statistics, extension, and higher education. The four USDA agencies that implement the research, education, and economics mission are the Agricultural Research Service (ARS); the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES); the Economic Research Service (ERS); and the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). These agencies have unique missions, but also interact and cooperate in the work they do.

ARS is the principal in-house physical and biological science research agency in USDA dedicated to solving high-priority agricultural problems through research, information access and dissemination. CSREES is the Federal partner in the USDA-supported system of extramural scientific research, higher education, and extension in the United States. The mission of CSREES is to benefit people, communities, and the Nation through efforts with its partners and customers to advance research, extension, and higher education in the food and agricultural sciences, and related environmental and human sciences. ERS, USDA's principal intramural social science research agency, provides economic and other information and analysis for public and private decisionmaking relating to agriculture, food, natural resources, and rural development. NASS provides the official USDA production, economic, and environmental forecasts and estimates on agriculture and rural America with accuracy and objectivity.

The REE agencies relate to non-profit organizations in many ways. Specifically at CSREES, it relates in the following ways:

As **STAKEHOLDERS**: CSREES staff look for input from non-profit organizations, for example, input on how research, education and Extension programs are administered, what the content of our research solicitations should be, and the content of our Extension programs.

As **GRANT RECIPIENTS**: In some of the research programs including the National Research Initiative (NRI) (for research oriented non-profits) and the Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program (CFPCGP) provide grants to nonprofits.

As **PROGRAMMATIC PARTNERS**: As the goals of both our agency and non-profits coincide, frequently, CSREES and its partners in the states and counties, work with non-profit organizations in partnership to achieve a mutual goals. At times this partnership is only through mutual in-kind contributions. At times, the partnering involves pooling resources through cooperative agreements or mutually funding a third entity to perform work for the partnership.

As **RECIPIENTS OF SERVICES**: For example, CSREES staff will do presentations and

education programs for non-profit organization's conferences.

ARS interacts with nonprofit organizations (NPO's) by inviting such organizations to participate in ARS' National Program planning workshops. (See attached list "A" for examples of non-profit organizations that have been involved in providing input and/or reviewing ARS' research priorities). These meetings provide an opportunity for NPO's to have input in ARS priority setting. ARS also makes its research progress and accomplishments available to NPO's. Also, ARS, where it has the ability to do so, undertakes research on specific needs expressed by NPO's. ERS interacts with nonprofits on a periodic basis to generate input for research planning and priority-setting activities. ERS and non-profits at times work together to sponsor and organize workshops and conferences of mutual interest. Also, through its Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Program (FANRP), ERS provides competitive grants, cooperative agreements, and small grants to nonprofit organizations.

NASS provides information to, answers questions from, and seeks advice from nonprofit organizations which work with statistics and agricultural economics. NASS meets with some nonprofits regularly to discuss current activities of the Agency and educate the nonprofits about its program and services.

NASS sponsors subscriptions to some popular publications of nonprofits, such as Choices published by the American Agricultural Economics Association (AAEA), by purchasing and distributing the publications to NASS State Statistical Offices and to State Directors of Agriculture. From time to time, NASS prepares substantive articles to be included in the publications.

NASS writes articles for the member newsletters of professional societies, such as AAEA and the American Statistical Association (ASA) containing NASS related information. NASS staff members may also serve on subject matter and administrative committees of these nonprofits. However, NASS does not advertise in these publications, nor link to their home pages on the Web, nor promote their products. NASS gives no special treatment to nonprofits for its publications or access to its data.

Technical Assistance/Training

A. What types of technical assistance/training do you provide nonprofit organizations (e.g., management support)?

ARS incorporates NPO input into specific research objectives or provides information relevant to NPO needs. An important means of doing this is through the National Agricultural Library, which has a number of information centers specifically designed to carry out this function.

CSREES frequently provides experts as speakers, or technical assistance providers to non-profits. CSREES provides grantsmanship workshops which are particularly helpful for organizations unfamiliar with Federal granting procedures. CSREES awarded a grant to a non-profit organization to give training and technical services to other non-profit organizations

trying to develop community food projects.

ERS and NASS do not provide technical assistance or training to nonprofits.

B. Who provides the assistance? Provide some examples of technical assistance providers who your agency views as models for successful TA design and delivery. What are the limits of these providers?

ARS examples of direct technical assistance to NPO's:

- Research was initiated by ARS in FY 1999 to control pests that occur in organic farming systems. This need was expressed as a high priority at a workshop organized by ARS in October 1998 by the Organic Farming Research Foundation. ARS has provided funds to support targeted on-farm research on three ARS research locations at Beltsville, Maryland; Beaver, West Virginia; and Salinas, California.
- ARS scientists are assigned to National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) research committees. This is beneficial in numerous ways; one benefit is that NACD helps to provide land sites for ARS field experiments.
- ARS has had a beneficial exchange of ideas with the Council for Responsible Nutrition. As a result, ARS' research efforts on phytonutrients has been strengthened, and the Council has helped to transfer the knowledge gained from the research to the public.
- ARS has established relationship with the National Institutes for Severely Handicapped (NISH) to award contracts to companies that are "verified to produce" under the Javits-Wagner-O'Day (JWOD) Program. NISH is the national nonprofit agency designated by the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind Or Severely Disabled to provide technical assistance to Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) interested in obtaining Federal contracts under the JWOD Program.

The program planning workshop model has performed well for ARS in collaborating with NPO's. This permits key representatives to interact in a venue conducive to the free exchange of ideas, opinions, and knowledge. The joint planning that is the outcome of these workshops ensures a high degree of relevancy for the Agency's research plans.

A CSREES grantee that provided training for other nonprofits was the Community Food Security Coalition, a national non-profit organization made up of about 500 individuals and organizations. The group is organized around developing community food projects and many members are practitioners of what they promote. Having practical, hands-on experience makes them very effective in providing training and technical assistance. The limits of using some non-profits for assistance is that many of them advocate for positions that may be in conflict with Federal policy.

C. What types of technical assistance or training are not currently being provided but should be?

The grant awarding procedures are at times very bewildering to non-profits. Perhaps some additional training on applying and going through awards procedures might help non-profit organizations.

D. If applicable , list other ways your agency improves the efficacy of the nonprofit organizations it works with?

CSREES brokers information with partner colleagues in states and counties and with other Federal agencies. Many times CSREES is able to let partners know of non-profit organizations' resources and in turn let non-profits know of the partner organizations' resources as well. Partners are part of the land grant college and university systems and the Cooperative Extension System in each state and territory.

Relationship with Non-profits

A. What types of services do non-profits that you partner with provide?

Partners include professional associations, trade associations, commodity groups, grassroots community oriented non-profits, special interest non-profits such as health oriented associations, children's advocacy organizations, youth organizations like FFA and 4H Councils, and advocacy groups.

B. Are there any model relationships that are particularly effective in achieving the critical goals of your department or agency?

Relationships with stakeholder associations allows agencies to receive information about how various constituent groups feel about policies, goals and objectives of the agencies and particular programs. Communications with non-profits help the agencies stay in tune with constituents.

C. Can you identify any significant obstacles that hinder more effective relationships between federal agencies and non-profits?

One obstacle is that some non-profits are unable to have sophisticated telecommunication access yet at a time that more and more communication is electronic. Another obstacle is that, at times, non-profits take advocacy positions that are in conflict with current Federal policy.

Public Policy

A. Do you have a working relationship with non-profits when it comes to developing public policy?

Agencies work with non-profit organizations as well as other stakeholders when developing policy and research priorities. Specifically, NASS seeks responses from nonprofits on the

content of its estimating program and the services it provides.

ERS has had discussions with many nonprofit groups about public policy issues, particularly for the purposes of framing research issues and guiding its economic research priorities. Some of the groups ERS has interacted with over the years include: The Soil and Water Conservation Society, the American Farmland Trust, the Nature Conservancy, World Resources Institute, International Food Policy Research Institute, Pheasants Forever, and Ducks Unlimited. The relationships are most productive when there is a mutual interest in enhancing the role of social science research in contributing to policy development.

B. If so, please provide some examples of collaborative activities and describe what worked well and why you think it worked well.

Oftentimes, agency staff and the staff of nonprofit organizations work together to organize policy-oriented workshops and research conferences. Stakeholder input, such as on the new Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems, helped staff develop the request for proposal solicitation.

Some nonprofits are members of advisory committees at USDA. For instance, the Advisory Committee on Agriculture Statistics provides an ongoing forum for discussion on developing a statistical program to serve the broad range of agricultural interests.

Other activities that have worked well were described above under technical assistance and training.

C. If not, what are the barriers to developing a working relationship with non-profits on public policy matters?

One of the barriers is that non-profits, just like for-profits, can have a very limited view and constituency that biases public work toward special interests. The government needs to balance relationships. It can be time-consuming and often time constraints may limit the number of relationships that are possible.

D. What do you think can be done to hurdle the barriers or strengthen the relationships with non-profits when developing public policy?

Agencies should communicate openly and accept non-profits as partners in looking at all aspects and ramifications of public policy. In other words, the openness to stakeholders should be wide-reaching. Non-profit representatives should be included in stakeholder meetings, as peer reviewers in the competitive grant process and as a part of mission area advisory groups on a regular basis.

Foundations

A. Do you have a working relationship with foundations or other private donors?

Yes, CSREES and ARS interact with a number of foundations through planning workshops and other activities. (ARS has provided a list of foundations.) One agency, NASS has no relationships with foundations or other private donors.

ERS has had a steady relationship over the years with the Farm Foundation.

B. If so, please provide some examples of collaborative activities and describe what worked well and why you think it worked well.

Two collaborative activities at CSREES were:

- The Annie E. Casey Foundation funded an unfunded initiative, "The Plight of Yong Children" in order to facilitate the planning process for getting the cooperative extension system working proactively with other agencies in communities trying to help struggling families. It encouraged the Cooperative Extension Service (CES) system to take the efforts of the initiative seriously and form many local collaborations.
- Ronald McDonald Foundation) gave visibility to CSREES by giving an award to the national CSREES partner for the work of its state partners in child abuse prevention.

During 1999, ERS collaborated with the Farm Foundation to present a workshop on the role of the public sector in providing agricultural market information and analysis. Farm Foundation funding and participation allowed ERS to bring together 40 USDA, Land Grant University, and private sector clients of public sector information providers. The workshop explored opportunities for greater public sector collaboration in market analysis, graduate training of new staff, and professional development of existing staff. The workshop resulted in a pilot project linking ERS and university livestock analysts, in order to share market information knowledge and enhance the quality of market information provided to customers.

Other recent workshops co-sponsored and organized jointly with Farm Foundation have addressed measuring agricultural productivity, the economics of organic farming, economic effects of environmental regulation, valuing rural landscape amenities, and the characteristics of successful small farms, among others.

ERS also partnered with the National Center for Atmospheric Research to sponsor a workshop on the impacts of climate variability on cropping patterns.

C. If, not, what are the barriers to developing a working relationship with foundations and other donors?

The only barriers are ones of time and effective communication.

D. What do you think can be done to hurdle these barriers or strengthen relationships with foundations and other donors?

Include foundation personnel as stakeholders in meetings with the public, in advisory groups for

the mission area, and in peer review processes.

Resources

A. What resources do you provide the non-profit community?

CSREES provided \$38.4 million dollars through grants and cooperative agreements to non-profit organizations since 1996.

The Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1990 allows Federal agencies to donate excess research and scientific equipment to eligible organizations involved in the conduct of technical and scientific education and research. ERS has been participating in this activity since 1997 and has donated a total of 177 complete computer systems to schools and other non-profit organizations.

ARS has provided the following donations:

- American Association for the Advancement of Science: \$72,000 for study on risk assessment.
- National Center for Food and agricultural Policy: \$120,000 to develop a pesticide use database.
- American Society for Microbiology: \$5,000 for support of a colloquium on antibiotic resistance.
- Henry A. Wallace Institute for Alternative Agriculture: \$10,000 for preparation of report “People Sustaining the Land.”

In addition, over the past 10 years, ARS has received \$15.6 million to carry out research for NPO's. These funds were received either as reimbursable agreements, trust funds, or cooperative research and development agreements. Many of these NPO's represent produce organizations (e.g., United Soybean Board, Washington Tree Fruit Research Commission).

ERS provided the following through *Competitive Grants/Cooperative Agreements*: The Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Program (FANRP) of the Economic Research Service addresses the research needs of the Nation's food assistance and nutrition programs and the economics of food choice, nutrient intake, and diet quality. A part of this program is an extramural component—a multidisciplinary partnership with government agencies, academic institutions, and private organizations. This component enables ERS to broaden the scope of research on low-income people and food assistance programs beyond the capabilities of its internal program and to shape the focus around the needs of food assistance programs.

Among the FANRP competitive grants and cooperative agreements awarded to nonprofit organizations are:

Organization: The Urban Institute

Research Project Title: Restructuring Food Stamps to Help Working Families

Award Amount: \$50,000

Objective: Building on various analyses related to the New Federalism Project, this study will explore and propose options for restructuring the Food Stamp Program to supplement the incomes of working, low-income families.

Organization: The Urban Institute, University of Michigan, and Mathematica Policy Research

Research Project Title: Food Program Targeting and Delivery

Award Amount: \$677,000

Objective: To evaluate the success of USDA's food assistance programs at servicing needy, at-risk populations, including examination of food program gaps and overlays, characteristics of food assistance recipients after welfare reform, behavior of low-income households, and urban-rural delivery.

Organization: Life Sciences Research Organization

Research Project Title: Report to Congress on Use of Food Stamps to Purchase Dietary Supplements

Award Amount: \$120,250

Objective: Report to Congress assessing the state of scientific knowledge regarding the potential value of vitamin supplements in filling nutrient gaps and the comparative impact of vitamin and mineral supplements, improved diets, and the intake of fortified foods on health status and health care costs.

Organization: The SPHERE Institute

Research Project Title: Program Integrity and Improved Service to the Working Poor Under Alternative Reporting Plans

Award Amount: \$348,428

Objective: To compare retrospective monthly earnings reporting and prospective quarterly reporting to determine which best serves the working poor, yields administrative cost-savings, and preserves program integrity.

Organization: Children's Hospital Medical Center

Research Project Title: Obesity in Low-Income Mothers and Children

Award Amount: \$350,000

Objective: Using links between WIC data and birth certificate data on approximately 35,000 mother-child pairs, the study will examine factors that may influence the probability that by age 4 a WIC child with an obese mother will also be obese.

On the other hand, NASS has no grant authority or in-kind services.

B. How do non-profits find out about resources we have available?

CSRESS places notifications in the Federal Register. Other agency communications are described in the questions and answers on communications.

C. Do you provide any support services to help non-profits comply with cost principles and

administrative requirements (e.g. Circular A-122, Circular A-133)? If so, what are these?

At CSREES, each non-profit organization competitively selected for an award is given a grant specialist to work one-on-one with through the award process.

NASS provides no such support services.

There are no special provisions to provide nonprofits with resources, other than those available to any profit firm. Nonprofits may submit a proposal for consideration on any procurement in the procurement forecast listed on the ARS Home Page, for which they are eligible. All procurement over \$25,000 is announced in the Commerce Business Daily and are available to any firm wishing to submit a proposal.

D. What steps is the Department/agency taking to comply with the new Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act, particularly in regards to streamlining grant applications and reporting requirements?

At CSREES, Request for Proposal language is written in as clear language as is possible while still following the intention of the legislation. Program directors are available to talk with organization representatives throughout the solicitation process. Reports are required once a year only.

Communication

A. How do you reach non-profits to inform them of departmental/agency information?

CSREES publishes solicitations in the Federal register and maintains web sites with current information, RFPs and examples of award winning programs. CSREES publishes highlights of grants to keep non-profits as well as other groups informed. Staff members will also make presentations at conferences to reach various audiences.

ARS communicates its research activities and accomplishments to NPO's through its monthly magazine Agricultural Research (circulation is 17,755), its press releases (several hundred annually), its Internet Home Page (ars.usda.gov), and through the various National Agricultural Library information centers also available through the Internet (e.g., agricultural trade and marketing, alternative farming systems, animal welfare, aquaculture, biotechnology, food and nutrition, plant genome, technology transfer, water quality, youth development, rural). In addition, ARS scientists and managers attend numerous conferences and symposia throughout the year at which they are often invited to discuss Agency research and accomplishments; these sessions provide excellent opportunities to interact with representatives from NPO's.

Non-profits can find information about the ERS program and grant opportunities on the ERS Home Page at www.econ.ag.gov. Workshops and conferences are organized to provide information about funding opportunities, to identify priorities for intramural and extramural research programs, and to communicate and share research findings.

NASS provides basic statistics on American agriculture. All reports and information are available through NASS's website. NASS provides traditional paper publications and offers free e-mail subscriptions. NASS is active in meetings and conferences of professional associations, the Rural Coalition, and other community based nonprofits. In addition to regular meeting attendance, NASS provides informational materials and staffs information booths.

B. Does your web site provide information specifically for non-profits to use? If so, what are some examples of how your web site responds to non-profit needs? Does your agency participate in the Non-profit Gateway? If so, what types of resources does it take to keep information current?

Some of CSREES' solicitations are for non-profits and they are available on the web. CSREES is on www.nonprofit.gov. It takes at least one webmaster within a unit to keep the web sites up-to-date.

Information on NASS' website is provided for all users and interested parties, including nonprofits. From time to time, NASS identifies new statistics that are needed, such as the special series of statistics and publications it created on minority farms from the Census of Agriculture.

The ARS Web site does not provide information organized specifically for the use of NPO's. Instead, information on Agency research plans, activities, and accomplishments is organized to inform the general public, including ARS customers, stakeholders, and partners. NPO's may visit the Web site and easily learn how ARS is organized and managed, and what its national research programs are (including information on planning workshops, research plans, and research accomplishments). ARS' Home Page also features a Find the Expert database that allows NPOs and others to contact Agency experts on specific research topics.

Competition

A. To what extent does the agency require nonprofit participation in the delivery of services?

This is not applicable to the REE agencies.

Specifically, ARS does not require nonprofit participation, though it is encouraged. Nonprofits may compete for all requirements which are open for bid to all businesses. Each procurement is reviewed for the possibility that the requirements could be fulfilled by a non-profit organization.

NASS does not contract for services. All information and reports are freely available over the Internet.

B. Please provide examples of contract/grants/services that your agency formerly provided through non-profit contractors/grantees but are now provided by for-profit contractors/grantees. Why did this occur?

ARS had a contract with Kennedy Institute for copying services at the National Agricultural Library. It was valued at \$25,000 per year. These services are now being performed by the

employees at NAL. This change occurred because of budget restraints.

Risk Management Agency

Survey Questions for Federal Departments and Agencies

Introduction

A. Define your relationship to nonprofits - in what ways does your agency interact with nonprofit organizations?

Through cooperative agreements executed by USDA agencies with contract and cooperative agreement authority, the Risk Management Agency (RMA) has financed partnerships with several nonprofit organizations to educate and assist the agricultural community. Nonprofit organizations have been instrumental in providing opportunities and educational information to limited resource and disadvantaged farmers. Nonprofit organizations have played an important role in farmers becoming knowledgeable of risk management tools and products. The Risk Management Education Program (RME) relies on nonprofit organizations to disseminate risk management information to the agricultural communities. Also, these organizations provide invaluable information to help our Civil Rights Outreach Program to address limited resource and disadvantaged farmers' concerns.

Risk Management Education Program

RMA sponsors regional risk management seminars to educate and inform farmers about the benefits of using risk management tools. The Agency sponsors essay contests for high school students who are involved with Future Farmers of America (FFA). These seminars and contests are coordinated by such nonprofit organizations as National Farmers Organization, National Future Farmers of America Foundation, Incorporated, and National Council for Agriculture Education.

Civil Rights Outreach Program

Nonprofit organizations have helped RMA identify socially disadvantaged and limited resource farmers in agricultural communities. By forming a partnership with Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College, the development and implementation of an agricultural and resource management program was started for farmers. This program will assist disadvantaged farmers on the Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa reservation in sustaining a food supply to help ensure their survival and self-sufficiency in agricultural production.

Another example of our outreach efforts is the partnership formed with Seminole Tribe of Florida, Incorporated. This collaboration was designed to improve the Seminole Tribe's citrus operation expanding their knowledge of risk management. Educational targets were grove management, marketing, replanting and labor management.

Also, a partnership was formed with Hmong American Community, Incorporated (HAC). This community-based organization established an educational program for the Hmong and Southeast Asian farmers of Fresno County in California. The goal was to provide technical assistance to

the Hmong and Southeast Asian farmers to ensure they could effectively manage their risks and increase participation in RMA and other USDA programs.

Responsibilities of HAC were:

1. Administer the education program for one year.
2. Select a training leader/translator to effectively achieve program objectives.
3. Select and contract, if necessary, with consultants in specialized agricultural areas to train producers.
4. Recruit the services of governmental agencies and private subject experts in providing the training.
5. Provide training on specific crop insurance and management practices.

Technical Assistance/Training

- B.** Consultant contracts have been used to support outreach efforts when the purpose of the cooperative agreement has been to improve operational management and provide technical assistance. For example, consultants were hired to teach the Seminole Tribe how to manage their farming operations of lemons and limes, and to train grove managers on ways to manage the citrus operation.

The consultants provided training in the following areas:

Grove Management:

Operation and maintenance of existing irrigation equipment and application of fertilizers, insecticides, and fungicides

Marketing:

Selection of buyers and timing of harvest to coincide with peak prices

Replanting:

Revitalization of tracts of lemons and replacement dead trees

Labor Management:

Manager training on labor management practices

During the technical assistance process, the Seminole representatives worked closely with USDA agency representatives in implementing and monitoring the program. The Seminole representatives were required to submit a summary progress report to RMA's regional coordinator.

- C. Who provides the assistance? Provide some examples of technical assistance providers**

whom your agency views as models for successful TA design and delivery. What are some of the characteristics that make these providers successful? What are the limits of these providers? What types of technical assistance or training are not currently being provided but should be?

Technical assistance is provided by USDA staff and consultant contracts.

D. If applicable, list other ways your agency improves the efficacy of the nonprofit organizations it works with.

RMA does not have cooperative agreement authority. Cooperative agreements are executed for RMA by USDA agencies with authority to do so. Direct interaction with nonprofit organizations is maintained by those agencies. This issue is best addressed by agencies with cooperative authority.

Relationship With Nonprofits

A. What types of services do nonprofits that you partner with provide (health, human services)?

Explained in "Introduction A".

B. Are there any model relationships that are particularly effective in achieving the critical goals of your department/agency?

Community-based nonprofit organizations have been particularly effective in assisting outreach efforts of the Agency.

C. Can you identify any significant obstacles that hinder more effective relationships between federal agencies and nonprofits?

The Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) hinders the ability of the government to consult collaboratively with nonprofit groups. Regulations for grants and contracts are unduly burdensome.

Public Policy

A. Do you have a working relationship with nonprofits when it comes to developing public policy (e.g., regulatory and budgetary matters)?

RMA does not have authority to establish cooperative agreements directly with nonprofit organizations. Working relationships with nonprofits are maintained by the USDA agency executing the cooperating agreement with financing from RMA.

B. If so, please provide some examples of collaborative activities and describe what worked

well and why you think it worked well.

RMA does not have cooperative authority. This issue is best addressed by agencies with cooperative authority.

C. If not, what are the barriers to developing a working relationship with nonprofits on public policy matters?

RMA does not have authority to establish cooperative agreements directly with nonprofit organizations. As such, there is a barrier in forming effective working relationships with nonprofit organizations.

D. What do you think can be done to hurdle the barriers or strengthen the relationships with nonprofits when developing public policy?

RMA defers to the Department's response to this issue.

Foundations

A. Do you have a working relationship with foundations or other private donors?

There are no relationships established.

B. If so, please provide some examples of collaborative activities and describe what worked well and why you think it worked well.

Not applicable.

C. If not, what are the barriers to developing a working relationships with foundations and other donors?

RMA defers to the Department's position on this issue.

D. What do you think can be done to hurdle these barriers or strengthen relationships with foundations and other donors?

RMA defers to the Department's response to this issue.

Resources

A. What resources do you provide to the nonprofit community (e.g., grants, in-kind services- if possible give amounts)?

Technical Assistance is provided through the use of consultant contracts.

B. How can nonprofits find out about the resources that you make available to them?

The Catalog of Domestic Assistance is a source that provides information about resources that are available for agricultural programs.

C. Do you provide any support services to help nonprofits comply with cost principles and administrative requirements (e.g., Circular A-122, Circular A-133)? If so, what are these?

These issues are outlined in the technical assistance memorandum of understanding at the time cooperative agreements are established. The guidelines in Circular A-122 and Circular A-133 are followed carefully when writing a memorandum of understanding with a nonprofit organization.

D. What step is the department/agency taking to comply with the new Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act, particularly in regards to streamlining grant applications and reporting requirements?

RMA defers to the Department's response to this issue.

Communication

A. How do you reach non profits to inform them of departmental/agency information? Do you have any form of regular communication? If so, what form does it takes?

Much of the communication with nonprofit organizations is performed by the USDA agency executing the cooperative agreement for RMA. RMA receives summary and status reports.

B. Does your web site provide information specifically for nonprofits to use? If so, what are some examples of how your web site responds to nonprofit needs? Does your department/agency participate in the Nonprofit Gateway <<http://www.nonprofit.gov>>? If so, what types of resources does it takes to keep information current?

Currently, RMA's web site does not provide information specifically for nonprofit organizations. RMA does not participate in the Nonprofit Gateway.

C. What changes would you suggest to improve communications with nonprofits?

A recommended change would be to enhance links to web sites so uniform information is provided relative to nonprofit organizations.

Competition

A. To what extent does the department/agency require nonprofit participation in the delivery of services?

In the memorandum of understanding, RMA has not required nonprofit organizations to deliver services. A consultant contract can be used to deliver services.

B. Please provide examples of contracts/grants/services that your agency formerly provided through nonprofit contractors/grantees but are now provided by for-profit grantees/contractors. Why did this change occur?

RMA does not have knowledge of a situation such as this occurring.

Rural Development

Survey Questions for Federal Departments and Agencies

Introduction

A. Define your relationships to nonprofits - in what ways does your agency interact with nonprofit organizations?

The Rural Housing Service (RHS) works with a wide variety of nonprofit organizations to provide housing options to communities throughout rural America. RHS has programs providing funds in the form of grants and cooperative agreements to nonprofits. The following is information about Rural Housing Service programs of special interest to nonprofit organizations.

Single-Family Housing

- Mutual Self-Help Technical Assistance Grants
- Rural Housing Site Loans (Sections 523 and 524)

Multi-Family Housing

- Rural Rental Housing - Direct Loans (Section 515)
- Rural Rental Housing Guaranteed Loan Program (Section 538)
- Farm Labor Housing (Sections 514/516)
- Housing Preservation Grant Program (Section 533)
- Rental Assistance (Section 521)

Housing Application Packaging Grants

Community Facilities

- Community Facilities Direct Loan Program
- Community Facilities Guaranteed Loan Program
- Community Facilities Grant Program

Single-Family Housing

Mutual Self-Help Technical Assistance Grants

The Mutual Self-Help Housing Program (Section 523) makes homes affordable by enabling future homeowners to work on homes themselves. With this investment in the home, or "sweat equity", each homeowner pays less for his or her home than if a contractor built it. This enabled very-low and low-income families an opportunity to own their home.

Grants are provided to nonprofit and local government organizations, which

supervise groups of 10 to 12 enrollees in the Self-Help Program. Members of each group help work on each other's homes, moving in only when all the homes are completed. (Click here for more information about options available to individual homeowners.)

Self-Help Technical Assistance Grants are available to qualified non-profit organizations to provide technical assistance to low and very low-income families who are building homes in rural areas through the Mutual Self-Help Housing Program. These grant funds may be used to pay salaries, rent, and office expenses of the not-for-profit entity.

Rural Housing Site Loans (Sections 523 and 524)

Rural Housing Site Loans are loans made by RHS to provide financing for the purchase and development of affordable housing sites in rural areas for low- and moderate-income families. Loans are made to acquire and develop sites for housing to be constructed by the self-help method, or for site development to build a home for any low- or moderate-income family.

Eligible organizations include nonprofit organizations; public bodies and Federally recognized Indian groups.

Multi-Family Housing

Loans and grants are provided to finance rental and cooperatively owned housing of modest size, design and cost for very low-, low-, and moderate-income households. Special emphasis is placed on needs of the elderly and handicapped. Options include:

Rural Rental Housing - Direct Loans (Section 515)

Under the Multi-Family Housing Direct Loan program, the Rural Housing Service makes direct loans to developers of affordable rural multi-family rental housing. Interest rates for these programs may be subsidized to as low as 1%. Funds can be used to construct new rental housing complexes or to repair and rehabilitate existing units.

Rural Rental Housing Guaranteed Loan Program (Section 538)

This program, like the direct loan program, is intended to fund construction of multi-family housing units to be occupied by low-income families. The Rural Housing Service guarantees up to 90% of the amount of a loan from a private lender to a housing developer to be used for the construction of low-income multi family housing.

Occupants of the completed housing project must be very low- to moderate-

income households; or elderly, handicapped, or disabled persons with income not in excess of 115% of the median income of the surrounding area.

Farm Labor Housing (Sections 514/516)

Low-interest loans and grants are made to public and nonprofit entities (or to individual farmers) for the construction of farm labor housing. RHS is the only national entity providing funding for this use. Farm Labor Housing Technical Assistance Grants are provided to contractors to assist public and private nonprofit agencies to meet special needs of farm laborers.

Housing Preservation Grant Program (Section 533)

The Housing Preservation Grant Program makes grants to nonprofit organizations, local governments and Native American tribes to renovate existing low-income multifamily rental units. Funds may also be used by recipients to help individuals make repairs to private homes.

Funds can be used to upgrade a number of individual housing units, which in some cases affects the housing options in an entire community. Recipients of Housing Preservation Grants are often able to leverage the funds with additional resources from private sources or local governments.

Rental Assistance (Section 521)

The Rental Assistance Program is a tenant subsidy program associated with the Rural Rental Housing and Farm Labor Housing programs. It subsidizes very low- and low-income tenant household rents to 30% of a tenant households adjusted income.

Housing Application Packaging Grants

This program provides government funds to tax-exempt public agencies and private non-profit organizations to package applications for submission to Rural Housing Service. Packagers assist very low- and low-income applicants with the application process by prescreening, making preliminary eligibility determinations, ensuring the application is complete, and helping the applicant understand the program.

Packagers receive training from the Agency and receive a certificate to participate in the program. The certificate qualifies the grantee to package applications for one year which ends September 30. The packager may receive a fee to submit complete application packages to RHS.

Community Facilities

The Rural Housing Community Facilities Program offers direct and guaranteed loans and grants designed to finance and facilitate the development of over 80 different types of essential community facilities serving rural areas. These facilities include, but are not limited to, hospitals, elderly care facilities, childcare centers, fire and rescue stations, vocational and medical rehabilitation centers, schools, and public transportation infrastructure.

Special emphasis is given to projects serving Native American communities, Empowerment Zones, Enterprise and Champion Communities, and Pacific Northwest Initiative Communities.

The Rural Housing Service has assisted in the completion of thousands of successful Community Facility projects.

Community Facilities Direct Loan Program

The Rural Housing Service makes direct loans to nonprofit and public entities for the construction of essential facilities. Most loans are made at below-market interest rates and are aimed at serving financially challenged rural areas. Allowed expenses include purchase of land needed for construction of the facility, necessary professional fees, and equipment and operating costs.

Community Facilities Guaranteed Loan Program

Through this program, the Rural Housing Service guarantees up to 90% of the amount of a loan from a private lender to a public or nonprofit entity to be used for the construction of an essential community facility. Many community borrowers in the Community Facilities Guaranteed Loan Program are able to leverage loan guarantees with funds from private, state and local sources.

Community Facilities Grant Program

The Community Facilities Grant Program is typically used to fund projects under special initiatives, such as Native American community development efforts; child care centers linked with the Federal government's Welfare-to-Work initiative; Federally-designated Enterprise and Champion Communities, and the Northwest Economic Adjustment Initiative area.

In most cases, grantees are able to leverage Community Facility funds with private and state dollars to enable completion of more construction than might have otherwise been possible.

In addition, RHS has two partnership programs with nonprofits to promote homeownership in rural areas. These are:

- The Community Development Financial Institute Initiative (CDFI Initiative) in which nonprofit partners use CDFI funds to leverage RHS funding; and
- The Rural Home Loan Partnership under which a portion of Section 502 Single Family Housing funding is set aside for nonprofit partners. The RHS funds are leveraged with other lending institutions' funds.

Technical Assistance/Training

A. What types of technical assistance/training do you provide nonprofit organizations (e.g., management support)?

On an annual basis the agency provides funding for technical assistance (TA) contractors for our Farm Labor Housing applicants. The TA contractors work with potential applicants and provide advice and training needed to successfully develop and operate a Farm Labor Housing project. RHS also provides as an authorized loan expense for nonprofits, training for nonprofit boards so they can properly administer the projects.

The Section 523 Mutual Self-Help Housing program provides technical and management assistance to nonprofit organizations in various forms including training on the construction process, board development and strengthening, capacity building, financial systems, staff development, Self-Help Automated Reporting and Evaluation System, loan packaging and leveraging of financial resources. TA is also provided in interpreting and following regulatory requirements of the program.

Through the Rural Home Loan Partnership (RHLP), RHS provides formal training to nonprofit organizations by way of a series of regional scheduled workshops. RHS staff conducts training in single family home loan packaging, processing, program guidelines and obtaining additional financing through other funding mechanisms.

Rural Development field offices administer the Community Facilities Program. From the first contact with the nonprofit, Rural Development offices provide technical assistance, guidance, and direction on how they can apply for CF funds. We work closely with these nonprofit organizations in developing rural communities' economic and community development plans. This includes coordinating and facilitating workshops for nonprofits on how to effectively develop and operate these essential community facilities such as childcare centers.

B. Who provides the assistance? Provide some examples of technical assistance providers who you agency views as models for successful TA design and deliver. What are some of the characteristics that make these providers successful? What are the limits

of these providers?

The TA is provided by nonprofit contractors who have the necessary skills to assist the organizations at the grass roots level. Examples of successful TA contractors would be CASA of Oregon and Rural Opportunities, Inc. (ROI). We also have a close working relationship with the Housing Assistance Council(HAC) in providing technical instructions and support services to nonprofit applicants and borrowers. The limiting factor is available funds to contract with the TA contractors.

The Rural Development staff at the National, State, and local level also provides assistance. The Agency has played an important role in facilitating in the area of childcare projects. For instance, the Rural Development Iowa State staff has played a leadership role in helping communities identify their needs, and plan, design, and implement successful childcare centers. This model is being successfully replicated in numerous States. The success of these providers is the result of strong planning and communication skills, and long-standing relationships with local communities. These activities are carried out in conjunction with other Federal, State, and local organizations. Another good example is in the area of outreach to Native Americans. This includes conducting comprehensive needs assessments and helping identify innovative solutions to overcome local challenges. We have developed effective outreach tools to reach nonprofit providers who, in turn, help underserved communities.

C. What types of technical assistance or training are not currently being provided but should be?

Standardized pre-occupancy and post-occupancy counseling are needed to reduce delinquency rates and to ensure that needy families remain in affordable housing created by the programs described above.

A continued emphasis should be placed on how to organize, structure, and manage successful nonprofit organizations, such as best principles and practices. Also, training on basic business management skills to develop staffing capacity to sustain the organization is needed.

D. If applicable, list other ways your agency improves the efficiency of the nonprofit organizations it works with?

We work closely with many national nonprofit entities and other organizations, such as HAC and Rural Local Initiative Support Corporation, which seek to build the capacity local nonprofits. By developing models for local nonprofits, RHS and its partners are able to decrease the learning curve for new nonprofits.

Relations with Nonprofits

A. What types of services do nonprofits that you partner with provide (health, human services)?

Nonprofits using RHS programs provide mostly housing services including pre- and post-occupancy counseling and loan packaging. However, a large segment of our nonprofit partners also provide a variety of services including health care, child care, services for the elderly, job training, and community development in general.

The relationship with nonprofits under the multi-family programs is typically a lender-borrower relationship. However, many nonprofits have the ability to bring services to the project that would otherwise not be available. Some examples of those services are community programs and tenant services, grant funds for operating expenses, additional tax credits and private donations of land and services.

B. Are there any model relationships that are particularly effective in achieving the critical goals of your department/agency?

In the case of the Farm Labor Housing program, we allow a limited profit applicant with a nonprofit general partner to be an eligible entity. When properly structured, the entity can apply for and receive tax credits for the project.

A good example of a strong relationship with a nonprofit organization is the planning, design, and development of the Maddock Business and Technology center in Maddock, North Dakota. The Maddock Economic Development Corporation (a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization), the city of Maddock, and USDA Rural Development developed a rural business and technology center to meet a multitude of challenges faced in a small, rural community. The center opened in May 1999 with the goal of providing shared telecommunication, infrastructure, and a multipurpose facility for the delivery of business development, health care, childcare, training, and education readily available to the region and to stem out-migration and job loss. The facility also includes childcare with an early head start program and a satellite medical clinic with two doctors and a nurse on staff 2 days a week.

C. Can you identify any significant obstacles that hinder more effective relationships between federal agencies and nonprofits?

Significant obstacles hindering more effective relationships between the federal agencies and nonprofits include lack of training of federal agency and nonprofit personnel on how they can benefit by working together; lack of capacity of nonprofits; lack of federal agencies' financial resources.

Other obstacles include limited resources in terms of budget authority, staffing, and time.

Public Policy

A. Do you have a working relationship with nonprofits when it comes to developing public policy (e.g., regulatory and budgetary matters)?

RHS has a working relationship with a network of well-established nonprofits that comment and provide input on regulatory matters. Nonprofits are also instrumental in catalyzing and promoting necessary changes to programs.

B. If so, please provide some examples of collaborative activities and describe what worked well and why you think it worked well.

The use of nonprofits in Stakeholder meetings works well because RHS is able to learn of an organization's concerns prior to drafting the proposed rule, thereby allowing them the opportunity to include their comments.

A good example would be the recent stakeholder meetings for the development and implementation of the Rural Community Development Initiative. This meant bringing in over 50 separate nonprofit organizations to draft a policy that would effectively build capacity in the areas of housing, community and economic development through technical assistance activities. These nonprofits will play a critical role by acting as intermediaries in administering the technical assistance at the local level, hence building local capacity. At the stakeholders meeting, we facilitated the process, identified challenges and opportunities, and how to effectively utilize and distribute these limited grant funds. Another good example of a working relationship with nonprofits is in the area of strengthening rural education. The Agency has developed a partnership with the organization Concerned About Rural Education, a nonprofit composed of various constituents representing rural educational issues. This partnership has resulted in the development and implementation of collaborative workshops across the nation. The purpose is to help rural educators and their communities identify ways of strengthening rural education.

C. If no, what are the barriers to developing a working relations with nonprofits on public policy matters?

Not applicable.

D. What do you think can be done to hurdle the barriers or strengthen the relationships with nonprofits when developing public policy?

Not applicable.

Foundations

A. Do you have a working relationship with foundations or other private donors?

An indirect relationship exists. Nonprofit grantees often obtain funding from foundations to leverage funding provided by RHS.

B. If so, please provide some examples of collaborative activities and describe what worked well and why you think it worked well.

In many instances, funding for the development of nonprofit essential community facilities includes funding participation from foundations and endowments. Recently, we participated in the development and financing of an oncology camp for children with cancer and their siblings. Funding included significant contributions from various foundations.

The Agency recently provided funding to a school in the Pacific Northwest to purchase kitchen equipment and construct storage and restroom facilities. The purchase of kitchen equipment was needed to obtain a licensed kitchen to serve hot, healthy meals to children. This facility will also be used as a Red Cross Disaster Relief Shelter. The Carpenter Foundation, Four Way Community Foundation, and Rose E. Tucker Charitable Trust also provided funding.

C. If not, what are the barriers to developing a working relationship with foundations and other donors?

Not applicable.

D. What do you think can be done to hurdle these barriers or strengthen relationships with foundations and other donors?

Create program awareness by reaching out to foundations and endowments. Attend conferences and workshops to promote awareness of how we can work together.

Resources

A. What resources do you provide to the nonprofit community (e.g., grants, in-kind services - if possible give amounts)?

\$28 million in Self-Help technical assistance grants; \$61,000 in Housing Application Packaging Grants; and \$329,000 in Technical and Supervisory Assistance grants for homeownership occupation education and counseling.

Over 50 percent of our Community Facilities Program funding authority has been invested in nonprofit providers which includes direct and guaranteed loans and grants. Since these essential community facilities require significant community support, often the nonprofit entity will contribute in-kind services.

B. How can nonprofits find out about the resources that you make available to them?

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance

Rural Development State, Local, and Area Offices

USDA Web Site, National and State Office level

Federal Register

Publications

Attend and make presentations at conferences, forums, and various public events.

Also through news reports of events, such as grant awards, ground breaking ceremonies, dedications, videos, and factsheets.

A. Do you provide any support services to help nonprofits comply with cost principles and administrative requirements (e.g., Circular A-122, Circular A-133)? If so, what are these?

Yes, we developed a guide to be used by the borrower's auditor. In addition, RHS has an Interagency Agreement with the Department of Labor to provide assistance in establishing indirect cost rates and cost allocation plans for Self-Help grantees.

D. What steps is the department/agency taking to comply with the new Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act, particularly in regards to streamlining grant applications and reporting requirements?

We are taking many steps to meet these requirements, such as:

- Streamlining the grant application process and reporting requirements
- Rewriting regulations to be easier for the public to use.
- Reducing the regulations by 90% to make the program easier to administer.
- Using NOFA's for competitive funding decisions.

Communications

A. How do you reach nonprofits to inform them of departmental/agency information? Do you have any form of regular communication? If so, what form does it take?

They can contact any one of our 250 Field Offices or 47 State Offices. All of these offices are staffed with personnel that can explain the programs, how to

access them and the resources that we make available.

In addition, we have a web site that is very complete and informative with a section directed to nonprofit applicants and borrowers. All of the funding opportunities are also posted on the web site.

We also publish all of our NOFA (Notice of Funds Availability) in the Federal Register as applicable. We also publicize the program through use of the national and local media.

B. Does your web site provide information specifically for nonprofits to use? If so, what are some examples of how your web site responds to nonprofit needs? Does your department/agency participate in the Nonprofit Gateway <<http://www.nonprofit.gov>>? If so, what types of resources does it take to keep information current?

We have a web site that is very complete and informative with a section directed to nonprofit applicants and borrowers. All of the funding opportunities are posted on the web site. Yes, we participate in the Nonprofit Gateway. The function is carried out through the Under Secretary's Office for USDA Rural Development.

Competition

A. To what extent does the department/agency require nonprofit participation in the delivery of services?

Nonprofits must compete against each other to qualify for funding set asides for which only nonprofit or special limited profits with nonprofit general partners can compete.

B. Please provide examples of contacts/grants/services that your agency formerly provided through nonprofit contractors/grantees but that are now provided by for profit grantees/contractors. Why did this change occur?

Not applicable.

Response by RBS/Cooperative Program

Survey Questions for Federal Departments and Agencies

Introduction

- A. Define your relationship to nonprofits - in what ways does your agency interact with nonprofit organizations?

Formal cooperative agreements, primarily to conduct research [Examples: New England Small Farm Institute in joint effort with Cornell University; the Foundation for Rural Service in joint effort with Georgetown University; Purdue Research Foundation; Univ. of KY Research Foundation; Cooperative Development Foundation for RRCOP cooperative agreements]; Informal collaborative activities, especially in educational efforts [Example: NICE, GICL]; Occasional joint sponsorship of programs [Example: Farm Foundation joint sponsorship of a seminar]; and informal work with professional associations [Example: American Ag Econ Assn.; Nat. Society of Cooperative Accountants]

Cooperative Services also interacts with nonprofits through Memorandums of Understanding and other, more informal arrangements to further the cooperative movement through educational and promotional programs.

Technical Assistance/training

- A. What types of technical assistance/training do you provide nonprofit organizations (e.g., management support)?

The Cooperative Services' publications we make available to nonprofit organizations provide them with a valuable training resource for internal use as well as with their constituents. Cooperative Services' staff also participates as presenters and facilitators with nonprofit organizations in training programs for agricultural cooperatives.

- B. Who provides the assistance? Provide some examples of technical assistance providers who your agency views as models for successful TA design and delivery. What are some of the characteristics that make these providers successful? What are the limits of these providers/

RBS professional staff provides direct technical assistance only to cooperatives and groups of farmers wanting to form cooperatives.

- C. What types of technical assistance or training are not currently being provided but should be?

If resources were available cooperative services could train non-profit technical assistance providers on the dynamics of the cooperative development process.

- D. If applicable, list other ways your agency improves the efficacy of the nonprofit organizations it works with?

Our staff's broad knowledge and expertise in specific areas or cooperative activities, such as

legal and policy matters could provide a valuable resource to nonprofits.

Relationships With Nonprofits

- A. What types of services do nonprofits that you partner with provide (health, human services)?

Educational, most agricultural or cooperative related.

- B. Are there any model relationships that are particularly effective in achieving the critical goals of your department/agency?

The close working relationships we enjoy with the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, a national trade and educational organization for agricultural cooperatives, and the National Cooperative Business Association, a membership organization for non-agricultural cooperatives, are important to Cooperative Services in achieving its goal of providing research, education, and technical assistance support. Our relationships with the Appropriate Technology Transfer to Rural Areas (ATTRA) program has been particularly effective in the sustainable agriculture area.

- C. Can you identify any significant obstacles that hinder more effective relationships between federal agencies and nonprofits?

N/A

Public Policy

- A. Do you have a working relationship with nonprofits when it comes to developing public policy (e.g., regulatory and budgetary matters)?

Only informal

- B. If so, please provide some examples of collaborative activities and described what worked well and why you think it worked well.

- C. If not, what the barriers to developing a working relationship with nonprofits on public policy matters?

Prohibition on lobbying activities prevents developing a working relationship with some organizations.

- D. What do you think can be done to hurdle the barriers or strengthen the relationships with nonprofits when developing public policy?

Provide Cooperative Services expanded authority to be able to work with non-agricultural rural cooperatives and provide line item budget appropriations for doing so.

Foundations

Do you have a working relationship with foundations or other private donors?

Formal cooperative agreements, primarily to conduct research [Examples: the Foundation for Rural Service and the Cooperative Development Foundation, also with research foundations maintained by universities such as Purdue Research Foundation and the Univ. of KY Research Foundation] Informal or ad hoc arrangements to sponsor program [Example: Farm

Foundation]

- A. If so, please provide some examples of collaborative activities and describe what worked well and why you think it worked well.

The university research foundations are nearly transparent and function well to facilitate paying of money to a public university for specific research projects. In the example of joint sponsorship of a meeting, professional staff of foundation and professional staff of the agency were able to work together to develop the program and to help publicize and defray the cost beyond registration fees of the seminar.

Foundations sometimes provide matching grant funds or in-kind contributions to nonprofit organizations and institutions of higher learning that are recipients of funds from Cooperative Services grant programs.

- B. If not, what are the barriers to developing a working relationship with foundations and other donors?

N/A

- C. What do you think can be done to hurdle these barriers or strengthen relationships with foundations and other donors?

Lower bar

N/A

Resources

- A. What resources do you provide to the nonprofit community (e.g., grants, in-kind services- if possible give amounts)?

Grants, cooperative agreement funding for research, access to our research and information publications, and coordination and advice on their programs.

- B. How can nonprofits find out about the resources that you make available to them?

The Internet, Federal Register Notices, *Rural Cooperatives* magazine, direct inquires, word-of-mouth, and our general publications.

- C. Do you provide any support services to help nonprofits comply with cost principles and administrative requirements (e.g. Circular A-122, Circular A-133)? If so, what are these?

No

- D. What steps is the department/agency taking to comply with the new Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act, particularly in regards to streamlining grant applicants and reporting requirement

N/A

Communications

- A. How do you reach nonprofits to inform them of department/agency information? Do you have any form of regular communication? If so, what form does it take?

Federal Register Notices; direct contact; Web page; regular attendance at some annual meetings.

- B. Does your web site provide information specifically for nonprofits to use? If so, what are some example of how your web site responds to nonprofit needs? Does your department/agency participate in the Nonprofit Gateway <<http://www.nonprofit.gov>>? If so, what types of resources does it take to keep information current?

Web site has information on programs for which nonprofits qualify and has educational materials that can be used by nonprofits as well as others.

- C. What changes would you suggest to improve communications with nonprofits?

More information for non-profits and announcements for all programs via our web site.

Competition

- A. To what extent does the department/agency requires nonprofit participation in the delivery of services?

No required participation.

- B. Please provide examples of contracts/grants/services that your agency formerly provided through nonprofit contractors/grantees but that are now provided by for -profit grantees/contractors. Why did this change occur?

N/A

RANDALL E. TORGERSON
Deputy Administrator
Cooperative Programs

Business Program Response

This is in response to the February 3, 2000, e-mail request from Justin Paschal, Office of the Secretary, on the subject survey concerning "Supporting the Role of Nonprofit Organizations: Interagency Task Force on Nonprofits and Government" (your assignment 34). We are forwarding this Business Programs response by e-mail to Gayle Primrose for her use in providing the Agency response to the indicated survey questions:

Survey Questions for Federal Departments and Agencies

Introduction

- A: Numerous Business Programs recognize non-profit organizations as eligible recipients of the program financial assistance provided for enhancing economic and business development in rural areas.

Technical Assistance Training

The response to all four (A. through D.) is "N/A".

Relationship with Nonprofits

- A. Economic and business development services.
B. N/A
C. None we are aware of.

Public Policy

- A. Numerous nonprofits do comment on proposed program regulations through the Federal Register notice process.
B. N/A
C. None
D. N/A

Foundations

- A. Yes
B. We sometimes partner with foundations in funding economic and business development projects in rural areas.
C. N/A
D. N/A

Resources

- A. Nonprofits are eligible for a variety of guaranteed loans and grant programs that provide economic and business development opportunities in rural areas.

- B. Access our webpage or contact either our National Office or one of our State Offices.
- C. No
- D. We have streamlined some of our program regulations and are currently streamlining other regulations to make them more customer-friendly. In addition, we are making strides toward automating our applications for easier access by the public and to provide a more efficient procedure.

Communication

- A. No
- B. No
- C. None at this time

Competition

- A. Nonprofit organizations are one of many eligible recipients that can receive the benefits of our business programs.
- B. N/A

WILLIAM F. HAGY III
Deputy Administrator
Business Programs

Survey Questions for Federal Departments and Agencies

Response from the USDA Forest Service

2/11/00

Introduction

A. Define your relationship to nonprofits - in what ways does your agency interact with nonprofit organizations?

The USDA Forest Service has over 650 administrative units across the country. With these units we have literally thousands of relationships with nonprofit organizations. These occur across all levels of our organization, from the headquarters in Washington, D.C. to the ranger districts that are in small communities across America. They involve all four branches of the USDA Forest Service – managing the national forests, research, state and private forestry, and international programs.

Technical Assistance/Training

A. What types of technical assistance/training do you provide nonprofit organizations (e.g., management support)?

The USDA Forest Service provides several types of technical assistance to nonprofit groups. When the mission of a nonprofit group and the mission of the USDA Forest Service align, it is beneficial to the Forest Service to provide technical assistance to the nonprofit, as this helps us in fulfilling our mission. This assistance includes technical training in natural resources, expertise in grants and agreements, and assistance with organizational development. For example, in a partnership between the Flathead National Forest and the Swan Ecosystem Center, the Forest Service trained members of the Association in trail maintenance and natural resources interpretation. We also taught Association members about habitat needs of grizzly bears to help the Association improve habitat for the bears.

The USDA Forest Service also has a number of successful partnerships with universities in which we provide internships and other opportunities for students. This has been an excellent mechanism for us to reach minority communities. Our research branch is also heavily involved with joint research and technology transfer in partnership with universities.

B. Who provides the assistance? Provide some examples of technical assistance providers who your agency views as models for successful TA design and delivery. What are some of the characteristics that make these providers successful? What are the limits of these providers?

USDA Forest Service employees provide assistance across all levels and branches of the Forest Service. Between our four branches, we are uniquely positioned to provide help to nonprofits. Through our direct management of the national forests, we are able to provide our technical expertise in natural resource disciplines at the community level. Employees who work on ranger districts and national forests provide the majority of this expertise. Our research division is the world leader in developing new technology related to managing forests. The state and private forestry branch has specific authority to provide financial and technical assistance to nonprofits and local governments. They also have programs to provide direct technical assistance to private forest landowners. We work internationally under the aegis of the State Department.

We frequently invite members of non-profit organizations to attend Forest Service training sessions on technical and procedural topics.

One example of assistance that earned the USDA Forest Service the Hammer Award from Vice President Al Gore is development of the web site <http://www.recreation.gov/> that provides links for the public to many federal agency and nonprofit outdoor recreation providers.

We are successful because of our pool of highly trained employees in locations all across the country. These individuals are a valued resource. Many of the nonprofits we work with are small groups located in urban and rural areas. If our employees were not available to them, these groups simply would have no way of accessing the kind of expertise that we have on staff.

What types of technical assistance or training are not currently being provided but should be?

The amount of assistance and training we can provide is limited by our budget and staffing levels. We have a need to provide training to our employees to help them understand our authorities and the possibilities for working with nonprofits.

C. If applicable, list other ways your agency improves the efficacy of the nonprofit organizations it works with?

We help by providing meeting facilities, organizational skills, meeting facilitation, and training in how to apply for federal grants. In this way, we are able to help groups organize and meet. Skills development helps nonprofits improve their capacity to compete and obtain a fuller range of federal services and help.

An example of a group the USDA Forest Service has helped in this way is the Owsley County Action Team in Kentucky. The Forest Service provided the help the community needed to build local capacity and implement changes. This group has been so successful they were recently highlighted by the White House Task Force on Livable Communities.

The Forest Service also facilitated the development of the National Network of Forest Practitioners. This is a network of local nonprofits with an interest in forestry issues. By helping them come together as a group, they have had the latest and best information in community-based forestry.

Relationship With Nonprofits

A. What types of services do nonprofits that you partner with provide (health, human services)?

The USDA Forest Service has administrative units in many communities across the country. We are in large cities, small towns, and rural areas. We have a long history and a wide mandate to work with our communities of place and communities of interest. As a result, we partner with an incredible array of nonprofit organizations. Because of the diverse mission of the Forest Service and our locations across the country, we work with nonprofits that are involved in all aspects of the environmental, economic, and social fabric of communities. This includes traditional forestry work as well as community development, environmental education, and urban forestry, to name a few.

Our research branch has strong ties to universities in order to bring the best science to bear in land management and the services we provide.

For example, the Forest Service Rocky Mountain Region funded 22 of the 41 grant award recipients the Denver Urban Resources Partnership recently announced. The Denver Urban Resources is a collaboration of federal, State and local natural resources agencies. The funding totaled \$213,700. These projects connect youth, communities, urban environment, and leverage local resources. For the fifth year, over 165 projects in the Denver area have benefited from this unique collaboration that provides both technical and financial assistance to community-based efforts.

B. Are there any model relationships that are particularly effective in achieving the critical goals of your department/agency?

We have been effective in using the Challenge Cost-Share Act to work with large national organizations and smaller local groups to fund on-the-ground projects. Under this program, we can obtain outside funding for Forest Service projects by combining federal dollars with private funds raised by nonprofits. For example, in fiscal year 1999, \$2.1 million of federal funds were combined with private funds raised by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to provide \$7.5 million worth of wildlife enhancement and restoration work on the national forests.

Our research branch has expanded their capacity to produce scientific and technical products with universities and nonprofits through the use of the research co-op agreement.

Resource conservation and development (RC & D) councils are local nonprofit groups that have worked in partnership with the Forest Service on natural resource management issues and to obtain private and public money for locally important issues. An example is the Northern Arizona Sustainable Forestry Partnership, which operates under the leadership of the Little Colorado RC&D Council. See <http://www.littlecolorado.org/sustain.htm> for more information.

The Forest Service has been successful in working with over 50 nonprofit interpretive associations. These associations sell books and other materials. A portion of the funds generated are then used for Forest Service interpretive activities.

C. Can you identify any significant obstacles that hinder more effective relationships between federal agencies and nonprofits?

Complex procurement and grant authorities can slow and frustrate both nonprofits and federal officials. There is a confusing and sometimes conflicting array of agency and Department regulations caused by years of adding authorities. There is a need to evaluate whether these can be simplified or consolidated.

We have many successful relationships with nonprofits. However, other than the National Forest Foundation, the Forest Service does not have specific authority to form partnerships with nonprofit groups for the purpose of raising money for local projects. For example, individual units of the Forest Service lack the authority to have a financial relationship with a "friends" organization such as those developed with many national parks. This limits the ability of groups to join with the Forest Service to accomplish locally important work. As a result, our relationships with nonprofits at the local level are often open to varying interpretation as to their legality. This can leave local managers uncertain as to the legal limits of their relationships with nonprofits.

Another obstacle is that some nonprofit groups who deal with natural resource issues simply do not have the resources to deal with us on the terms we have become comfortable using or that may be required by federal law. For example, groups that are operating in impoverished areas that may not have access to computer equipment or the Internet are at a disadvantage. Our environmental justice programs are

attempting to address this issue of the “digital divide.”

Public Policy

A. Do you have a working relationship with nonprofits when it comes to developing public policy (e.g., regulatory and budgetary matters)?

The Forest Service, in a spirit of collaboration, does everything possible under the law to obtain full input from nonprofit organizations at the national and local levels, on all key issues, decisions, and procedures.

B. If so, please provide some examples of collaborative activities and describe what worked well and why you think it worked well.

As part of the development of the national recreation strategy for the Forest Service, the agency convened a major conference and invited over 20 nonprofit organizations interested in outdoor recreation to be involved in a review and critique of the proposed national recreation strategy. These groups contributed an invaluable perspective.

In developing large-scale ecosystem management plans, such as the Northwest Forest Plan, the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Plan, and the Sierra Nevada Strategy, the Forest Service conducted extensive public involvement. Specific invitations were sent to nonprofit groups asking them to provide input throughout the process of developing the strategies.

C. If not, what are the barriers to developing a working relationship with nonprofits on public policy matters?

The Federal Advisory Committee Act can hinder or is perceived to hinder our ability to work collaboratively with nonprofit groups.

Some nonprofits have little or no expertise in finance and accounting. As a result, we are at risk in developing a financial relationship with them. We may damage their ability to function if we help them get a grant and then they find themselves unable to manage a large sum of money responsibly.

D. What do you think can be done to hurdle the barriers or strengthen the relationships with nonprofits when developing public policy?

Simplify authorities and regulations. Monitor the development of new direction so that it does not work at cross-purposes to that already on the books. We should follow the standards established by OMB for federal agencies so that the capacity building that occurs with nonprofits helps their organization work with all federal financial instruments.

Joint training in accounting and fiscal responsibility between the USDA Forest Service and nonprofits may help with accountability issues. Both agency employees and potential partners could benefit from clearly presented material outlining application of partnership authorities and other service delivery mechanisms.

Foundations

A. Do you have a working relationship with foundations or other private donors?

One of the strongest working relationship is with the National Forest Foundation, which is a Congressionally chartered nonprofit which supports Forest Service activities. A recent audit report by OIG criticized many financial aspects of this relationship. We are currently responding to the OIG audit and hope to strengthen our relationship with the National Forest Foundation.

We have good working relationships with many national and regional foundations that support conservation projects on the national forests, grasslands, and private non-industrial forest lands.

B. If so, please provide some examples of collaborative activities and describe what worked well and why you think it worked well.

Between 1996 and 1999, we completed over 100 conservation projects in partnership with the National Forest Foundation.

In 1999 the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation received \$2.1 million to benefit the USDA Forest Service mission. The Foundation awarded 79 nationwide challenge grants with these funds matching \$3.8 million in non-federal challenge (cash and in-kind contributions). Therefore with an investment of \$2.1 million the USDA Forest Service achieved \$5.9 million worth of on-the-ground projects.

C. If not, what are the barriers to developing a working relationship with foundations and other donors?

Most large national foundations tend to fund projects in urban areas, and do not see the national forests, conservation projects, or rural development, as being within their scope of interest. Those foundations that do have interest in rural areas have heavy demand placed on them by rural communities. Staff at smaller rural or urban nonprofits often do not have the polish and experience of staff at larger urban nonprofits. This puts them at a disadvantage in applying for funds.

D. What do you think can be done to hurdle these barriers or strengthen relationships with foundations and other donors?

We have had some successes in working with large national foundations when a regional nonprofit organization writes the grants and administers the funds. Our problem has been that many nonprofits working in natural resources are very small, locally oriented, and staffed by committed but inexperienced volunteers. We can overcome some of this by tapping into the expertise, experience, and networks of regional nonprofits.

Natural resource agencies and rural communities need to take the initiative to form relationships with these foundations that have typically had an urban focus. We can also work with these foundations to explore ways that our missions can come together through funding projects. For example, the Ford Foundation has recently begun to look at rural development projects as part of its Sustaining America program.

Resources

A. What resources do you provide to the nonprofit community (e.g., grants, in-kind services- if possible give amounts)?

The State and Private Forestry division of the Forest Service has made nearly \$4.0 million in grants to support community-based forestry in fiscal year 1999. The communities and nonprofit organizations match these dollars over 5:1 in local money and in-kind services. In addition to this program, State and Private Forestry also provides help to private landowners through grants to non-profit conservation organizations. The Forest Service uses cooperative agreements with nonprofits as a way to combine Forest Service funds with nonprofit organization funds or in-kind services to complete field projects. Research cooperative agreements allow our research division to support university and nonprofit research efforts. We work with the Department of State's Agency for International Development in providing in-kind services for a variety of activities overseas.

B. How can nonprofits find out about the resources that you make available to them?

Information is available from the catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance, National Commerce Daily, national and local outreach strategies, brochures, and word of mouth.

C. Do you provide any support services to help nonprofits comply with cost principles and administrative requirements (e.g., Circular A-122, Circular A-133)? If so, what are these?

The USDA Forest Service provides some training on this through their community development projects.

D. What steps is the department/agency taking to comply with the new Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act, particularly in regards to streamlining grant applications and reporting requirements?

The Secretary of Agriculture, through his chief financial officer Sally Thompson, has not selected the lead agency to work on this initiative yet. This decision will be made soon.

Communication

A. How do you reach nonprofits to inform them of departmental/agency information? Do you have any form of regular communication? If so, what form does it take?

Standard channels include those used to reach the general public such as press releases, information posted to the FS website, and information distributed through visitor centers. Personal contacts of agency professionals also play an important role in reaching nonprofits. Memberships in professional societies, speaking opportunities and exhibits at conferences and seminars held by nonprofits, invitations to attend Forest Service conferences, and one-on-one visits are all used to convey key agency messages.

The Chief of the Forest Service speaks regularly in nonprofit venues. Recent appearances have included presentations at the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco, the Society of American Foresters, the Copper River Delta Conference and the Wildlife Management Institute.

B. Does your web site provide information specifically for nonprofits to use? If so, what are some examples of how your web site responds to nonprofit needs? Does your department/agency participate in the Nonprofit Gateway <<http://www.nonprofit.gov>>? If so, what types of resources does it take to keep information current?

Our web site does not provide information specifically for nonprofits. We do not participate in the nonprofit

C. What changes would you suggest to improve communications with nonprofits?

Communications would be greatly enhanced with a website that is easier to find and navigate. For both nonprofits and other visitors, the Forest Service site is difficult to find, as the domain name "fs.fed.us" is not consistent with other government sites that usually end in "gov." The agency is in the process of reevaluating its site and making it more user-friendly.

We can continue to use innovative and non-traditional communications outlets to reach new audiences. For example, the Conservation Connection, a series of brief radio spots on conservation issues, will begin airing in May. This will be an extremely cost-effective way to reach under-served and urban populations, and will improve our communications with all segments of society, including nonprofits.

Competition

A. To what extent does the department/agency require nonprofit participation in the delivery of services?

The USDA Forest Service does not require nonprofit participation in the delivery of our programs. Federal procurement requirements limit the Forest Service's ability to work with local nonprofit organizations. Examples include the requirements under the small business set-aside program and the fact that all contracts to nonprofits must be advertised in the Commerce Business Daily for 30 days before award to see if there is competition from a for-profit organization.

B. Please provide examples of contracts/grants/services that your agency formerly provided through nonprofit contractors/grantees but that are now provided by for-profit grantees/contractors. Why did this change occur?

There are very few examples in the Forest Service of services previously provided through a nonprofit that are now provided by a for-profit group. We used to use a lot of nonprofit groups to facilitate meetings, but we are now finding those skills in for-profit groups and now using for-profit groups to facilitate our meetings.

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR FEDERAL DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES ON NONPROFIT GROUPS

**RESPONDING STAFF OFFICE: Office of Procurement, Property and Emergency
Preparedness (OPPEP)**

Introduction

A. Define your relationship to nonprofits - in what ways does your agency interact with nonprofit organizations?

E. O. 12999, Educational Technology: Ensuring Opportunity for All Children in the Next Century, gives USDA the authority to transfer information technology equipment to any educational non-profit organization. Using this authority Departmental agencies transfer information technology equipment to eligible non-profit organizations.

USDA is a member of a Presidential Committee, the Committee for Purchase From People Who Are Blind or Severely Disabled. This Committee carries out the statutory responsibilities of the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act. The USDA Presidential Appointee is Ira L. Hobbs, Deputy Chief Information Officer. USDA buys products and services from nonprofit organizations employing persons who are blind or severely disabled.

Technical Assistance/Training

A. What types of technical assistance/training do you provide nonprofit organizations (e.g., management support)?

Although the E. O. 12999 does allow for technical assistance at this time USDA has not provided this type of assistance.

USDA actively advocates the sale of products and services generated under Javits-Wagner-O'Day Program. The assistance generally provided is directed at providing names and contact information for sales efforts and in enabling the nonprofits to participate in government training and other events.

B. Who provides the assistance? Provide some examples of technical assistance providers who your agency views as models for successful TA design and delivery. What are some of the characteristics that make these providers successful? What are the limits of these providers?

The USDA member of the President's Committee is Ira L. Hobbs, Deputy Chief Information Officer. He is supported with staff assistance from the Office of Procurement, Property, and Emergency Preparedness.

**RESPONDING STAFF OFFICE: Office of Procurement, Property and Emergency
Preparedness (OPPEP) Con.**

Relationship With Nonprofits

A. What types of services do nonprofits that you partner with provide (health, human services)?

The nonprofits provide products and services needed by the government. This ranges from mail room services to building management.

B. Can you identify any significant obstacles that hinder more effective relationships between federal agencies and nonprofits?

The distributed nature of the procurement system with the advent of the purchase card has significantly hindered the program's success. As more and more cards are issued, even with cardholder training, more sales are lost. This leads to the loss of employment under this program.

Public Policy

A. Do you have a working relationship with nonprofits when it comes to developing public policy (e.g., regulatory and budgetary matters)?

The President's Committee regulates the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Program. The USDA member is an active participant in that regulatory process.

Resources

A. What resources do you provide to the nonprofit community (e.g., grants, in-kind services- if possible give amounts)?

USDA staff advocates for the sale of products or services made by persons who are blind or severely disabled. USDA purchases are estimated to be approximately \$25,000,000 under this program in the last fiscal year.

Communication

A. How do you reach nonprofits to inform them of departmental/agency information? Do you have any form of regular communication? If so, what form does it take?

The President's Committee meets monthly in addition to annual meetings with their major partners. USDA's representatives attend and participate in these meetings. Additionally, USDA staff constantly meet with and actively advocate for increased participation in this program.

We maintain a website which lists information on excess information technology equipment.

**RESPONDING STAFF OFFICE: Office of Procurement, Property and Emergency
Preparedness (OPPEP) Con.**

B. Does your web site provide information specifically for nonprofits to use? If so, what are some examples of how your web site responds to nonprofit needs? Does your department/agency participate in the Nonprofit Gateway <<http://www.nonprofit.gov>>? If so, what types of resources does it take to keep information current?

Yes, the website provides information for eligible recipients of excess personal property, which includes, but is not limited, to nonprofit organizations. The website gives detailed information on specific property that is available. An example would be "486 IBM computer (includes keyboard and monitor and CPU)" along with the pertinent information on how to contact the holding agency to request the equipment. No, OPPEP does not participate in the Nonprofit Gateway.

The Business Opportunities site maintained by the OSDBU presents procurement forecast information to alert the nonprofit organizations of potential business.

Competition

A. To what extent does the department/agency require nonprofit participation in the delivery of services?

To carry out the goals of the Javits-Wagner-O'Day Act, the Presidential Committee uses the National Industries for the Blind and the National Institute for the Severely Handicapped to manage more than 600 community based rehabilitation programs, non-profit organizations, to provide skill assessments, job training, and employment opportunities for persons who are blind or have another severe disability.

RESPONDING STAFF OFFICE: Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center (CPRC)

Introduction

A. Define your relationship to nonprofits - in what ways does your agency interact with nonprofit organizations?

CPRC from time to time confers with non-profit organizations regarding the provision of alternative dispute resolution services for resolving USDA disputes. For example, CPRC has discussed possible mediation pilot projects with the National Association for Community Mediation (NAFCM). As another example, CPRC has met with organizations such as the Rural Coalition to discuss how mediation can be used more effectively to resolve agricultural disputes between farmers and USDA.

Technical Assistance/Training

A. What types of technical assistance/training do you provide nonprofit organizations (e.g., management support)?

None.

B. Who provides the assistance? Provide some examples of technical assistance providers who your agency views as models for successful TA design and delivery. What are some of the characteristics that make these providers successful? What are the limits of these providers? What types of technical assistance or training are not currently being provided but should be?

N/A

C. If applicable, list other ways your agency improves the efficacy of the nonprofit organizations it works with?

N/A

Relationship With Nonprofits**A. What types of services do nonprofits that you partner with provide (health, human services)?**

Primarily Mediation

B. Are there any model relationships that are particularly effective in achieving the critical goals of your department/agency?

Not yet.

RESPONDING STAFF OFFICE: Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center (CPRC) Con.

C. Can you identify any significant obstacles that hinder more effective relationships

between federal agencies and nonprofits?

Not at this time.

Public Policy

A. Do you have a working relationship with nonprofits when it comes to developing public policy (e.g., regulatory and budgetary matters)?

Yes

B. If so, please provide some examples of collaborative activities and describe what worked well and why you think it worked well.

At one point in 1997-1998, CPRC, as well as the Office of Civil Rights, worked with the Farmers Legal Action Group (FLAG) to develop a procedural handbook for conducting investigations in connection with farmers' civil rights complaints. A handbook was completed by FLAG. However, it is not known whether the Handbook has been used by USDA.

C. If not, what are the barriers to developing a working relationship with nonprofits on public policy matters?

N/A

D. What do you think can be done to hurdle the barriers or strengthen the relationships with nonprofits when developing public policy?

Ensure that agencies understanding what is permissible and what is not, and who to confer with if questions arise as to the permissibility of working with nonprofits in this way.

Also, there is a need to create a culture, through education and other means, by which agencies see the value of conferring with nonprofits in developing policy, rather than always developing policy and then asking for comment.

Foundations

A. Do you have a working relationship with foundations or other private donors?

Not at this time.

RESPONDING STAFF OFFICE: Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center (CPRC) Con.

B. If so, please provide some examples of collaborative activities and describe what worked well and why you think it worked well.

N/A

C. If not, what are the barriers to developing a working relationship with foundations and other donors?

N/A

D. What do you think can be done to hurdle these barriers or strengthen relationships with foundations and other donors?

N/A

Resources

A. What resources do you provide to the nonprofit community (e.g., grants, in-kind services- if possible give amounts)?

None.

B. How can nonprofits find out about the resources that you make available to them?

N/A

C. Do you provide any support services to help nonprofits comply with cost principles and administrative requirements (e.g., Circular A-122, Circular A-133)? If so, what are these?

No.

D. What steps is the department/agency taking to comply with the new Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act, particularly in regards to streamlining grant applications and reporting requirements?

N/A

RESPONDING STAFF OFFICE: Conflict Prevention and Resolution Center (CPRC) Con.

Communication

A. How do you reach nonprofits to inform them of departmental/agency information? Do you have any form of regular communication? If so, what form does it take?

Website: <http://www.usda.gov/cprc>

B. Does your web site provide information specifically for nonprofits to use? If so, what are some examples of how your web site responds to nonprofit needs? Does your department/agency participate in the Nonprofit Gateway <<http://www.nonprofit.gov>>? If so, what types of resources does it take to keep information current?

No.

C. What changes would you suggest to improve communications with nonprofits?

N/A

Competition

A. To what extent does the department/agency require nonprofit participation in the delivery of services?

Not sure at this time.

B. Please provide examples of contracts/grants/services that your agency formerly provided through nonprofit contractors/grantees but that are now provided by for-profit grantees/contractors. Why did this change occur?

N/A

RESPONDING STAFF OFFICE: Office of Outreach (OUTREACH)

Introduction

A. Define your relationship to nonprofits - in what ways does your agency interact with nonprofit organizations?

The National Office of Outreach's relationship with nonprofit organizations facilitates delivery of USDA's outreach and assistance to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. We provide grants to a few such organizations, and work in various partnerships with others to exchange information and provide advice and guidance on outreach issues.

Technical Assistance/Training

A. What types of technical assistance/training do you provide nonprofit organizations (e.g., management support)?

The National Office of Outreach provides information on all USDA agencies and respective programs and services. This is important because the nonprofit organizations have agreed to provide outreach and technical assistance to encourage and assist socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to own and operate farms and ranches and to participate in USDA programs.

B. Who provides the assistance? Provide some examples of technical assistance providers who your agency views as models for successful TA design and delivery. What are some of the characteristics that make these providers successful? What are the limits of these providers?

National Office of Outreach and other USDA employees provide advice, guidance and training, particularly to grant recipients that are non-profit organizations.

C. What types of technical assistance or training are not currently being provided but should be?

N/A

D. If applicable, list other ways your agency improves the efficacy of the nonprofit organizations it works with?

N/A

RESPONDING STAFF OFFICE: Office of Outreach (OUTREACH) Con.

Relationship With NonprofitsA. What types of services do nonprofits that you partner

with provide (health, human services)?

Services provided by the nonprofits are outreach and technical assistance to encourage and assist socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to own and operate farms and ranches and to participate in USDA agricultural programs and services. The assistance includes information on application and bidding procedures, farm management, marketing, credit, conservation, housing, and other essential information to participate in USDA programs. In addition, we are establishing additional relationships in which non profit organizations will provide training, technical assistance and information on all USDA programs available to rural populations.

B. Are there any model relationships that are particularly effective in achieving the critical goals of your department/agency?

Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation and the Federation of Southern Cooperatives are effective in achieving the outreach goals of USDA. They both operate a project funded through a cooperative agreement under the 2501 program to provide training and technical assistance to small and disadvantaged farmers.

C. Can you identify any significant obstacles that hinder more effective relationships between federal agencies and nonprofits? Not at this time.

Public Policy

A. Do you have a working relationship with nonprofits when it comes to developing public policy (e.g., regulatory and budgetary matters)?

No.

B. If so, please provide some examples of collaborative activities and describe what worked well and why you think it worked well.

N/A

RESPONDING STAFF OFFICE: Office of Outreach (OUTREACH) Con.

C. If not, what are the barriers to developing a working relationship with nonprofits on public policy matters? Internal resource needs and higher priority projects limit the Office of Outreach's ability to expand its relationships with nonprofits on public policy matters. We are addressing these needs, and expect to increase our relationships with nonprofits in this arena in the future.

D. What do you think can be done to hurdle the barriers or strengthen the relationships

with nonprofits when developing public policy?

N/A

Foundations

A. Do you have a working relationship with foundations or other private donors?

Not at this time.

B. If so, please provide some examples of collaborative activities and describe what worked well and why you think it worked well.

N/A

C. If not, what are the barriers to developing a working relationship with foundations and other donors?

The same resource constraints mentioned earlier.

D. What do you think can be done to hurdle these barriers or strengthen relationships with foundations and other donors?

N/A

RESPONDING STAFF OFFICE: Office of Outreach (OUTREACH) Con.

Resources

A. What resources do you provide to the nonprofit community (e.g., grants, in-kind services- if possible give amounts)?

Nonprofits receive a portion of the appropriated funds for USDA's 2501 Program through cooperative agreements.

B. How can nonprofits find out about the resources that you make available to them?

Nonprofits can find out about resources through the Federal Register, Federal Funding Sources for Rural Areas: Fiscal Year ---- (appropriate year), and solicitation to USDA.

C. Do you provide any support services to help nonprofits comply with cost principles and

administrative requirements (e.g., Circular A-122, Circular A-133)? If so, what are these?

Agreements with the nonprofits require financial audits. National Office of Outreach employees regularly review budgets and invoices to monitor compliance with efficient financial management.

D. What steps is the department/agency taking to comply with the new Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act, particularly in regards to streamlining grant applications and reporting requirements?

N/A

Communication

A. How do you reach nonprofits to inform them of departmental/agency information? Do you have any form of regular communication? If so, what form does it take?

N/A

B. Does your web site provide information specifically for nonprofits to use? If so, what are some examples of how your web site responds to nonprofit needs? Does your department/agency participate in the Nonprofit Gateway <<http://www.nonprofit.gov>>? If so, what types of resources does it take to keep information current?

We are just developing the Outreach website. We will incorporate some specific nonprofit related information as the site is developed.

RESPONDING STAFF OFFICE: Office of Outreach (OUTREACH) Con.

B. What changes would you suggest to improve communications with nonprofits?

N/A

Competition

A. To what extent does the department/agency require nonprofit participation in the delivery of services?

N/A

B. Please provide examples of contracts/grants/services that your agency formerly provided through nonprofit contractors/grantees but that are now provided by for-profit grantees/contractors. Why did this change occur?

N/A