

Exhibit 2



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • 1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250-1300 • Voice: (202) 720-4623 • Email: oc.news@usda.gov • Web: <http://www.usda.gov>

Release No. 0309.12

Contact:
Office of Communications (202)720-4623

Claims Filing Period for Hispanic and Women Farmers and Ranchers Who Claim Past Discrimination at USDA to Open on September 24, 2012 *Those Eligible Must File Claims No Later Than March 25, 2013*

Espanol

WASHINGTON, Sept. 24, 2012- Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced that Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA in past decades can file claims between September 24, 2012 and March 25, 2013.

"Hispanic and women farmers who believe they have faced discriminatory practices from the USDA must file a claim by March 25, 2013 in order to have a chance to receive a cash payment or loan forgiveness," said Secretary Vilsack. "The opening of this claims process is part of USDA's ongoing efforts to correct the wrongs of the past and ensure fair treatment to all current and future customers."

The process offers a voluntary alternative to litigation for each Hispanic or female farmer and rancher who can prove that USDA denied their applications for loan or loan servicing assistance for discriminatory reasons for certain time periods between 1981 and 2000.

As announced in February 2011, the voluntary claims process will make available at least \$1.33 billion for cash awards and tax relief payments, plus up to \$160 million in farm debt relief, to eligible Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers. There are no filing fees to participate in the program.

The Department will continue reaching out to potential Hispanic and female claimants, around the country to get the word out to individuals who may be eligible for this program so they have the opportunity to participate.

Call center representatives can be reached at 1-888-508-4429. Claimants must register for a claims package (by calling the number or visiting the website) and the claims package will be mailed to claimants. All those interested in learning more or receiving information about the claims process and claims packages are encouraged to attend meetings in your communities about the claims process and contact the website or claims telephone number.

Website: www.farmerclaims.gov

Phone: 1-888-508-4429

Claims Period: September 24, 2012 - March 25, 2013.

Independent legal services companies will administer the claims process and adjudicate the claims. Although there are no filing fees to participate and a lawyer is not required to participate in the claims process, persons seeking legal advice may contact a lawyer or other legal services provider.

Under Secretary Vilsack's leadership, USDA has instituted a comprehensive plan to strengthen the Department as a model service provider and to ensure that every farmer and rancher is treated equally and fairly as part of "a new era of civil rights" at USDA. This

Administration has made it a priority to resolve all of the past program class action civil rights cases facing the Department, and today's announcement is another major step towards achieving that goal. In February 2010, the Secretary announced the Pigford II settlement with African American farmers, and in October 2010, he announced the Keepseagle settlement with Native American farmers. Both of those settlements have since received court approval. Unlike the cases brought by African American and Native American farmers, the cases filed by Hispanic and women farmers over a decade ago were not certified as class actions and are still pending in the courts as individual matters. The claims process provides a voluntary alternative to continuing litigation for Hispanic and female farmers and ranchers who want to use it.

Audio and video public service announcements in English and Spanish from Secretary Vilsack and downloadable print and web banner ads on the Hispanic and women farmer claims process are available at: http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=PSAs_Print_and_WebBanner_Ads.xml

The following leaders have released statements on the opening of the Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher claims process:

National President of the HNBA, Peter M. Reyes, Jr.

"The announcement that the USDA is starting an administrative claims process as an alternative to litigation for Hispanic or female farmers and ranchers is a welcome path to justice for individuals who alleged discrimination between 1981-2000 in connection with USDA farm loan programs. ...The new claims process, which is entirely voluntary, is a testament to Secretary Vilsack's vision and leadership and an important step to correct the wrongs of the past and strengthen the USDA for the future. The HNBA applauds the USDA and Secretary Vilsack for living up to President Lincoln's vision for the USDA as the "People's Department."

Raul M. Grijalva, Representative (D-AZ)

"Southern Arizonans may have some of the strongest claims out there on this compensation, and I encourage everyone to exercise their full legal rights in seeing that justice is served. ...The economy is rebounding and people are looking to build their family businesses again, and I applaud USDA officials for seeking to right a historic wrong at the right time."

John Salazar, Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture

"I am pleased to learn that the voluntary claims process has begun by USDA to help resolve discrimination complaints of Hispanic and women farmers. While I recognize not all claims will be resolved through this process the President and his administration deserve credit for taking steps to resolve for many their longstanding claims based on past discrimination."

Debbie Stabenow, Senator (D-MI)

"I commend Secretary Vilsack for addressing these long-standing equal opportunity issues. The steps he has taken move the Department in the right direction."

#

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).

#