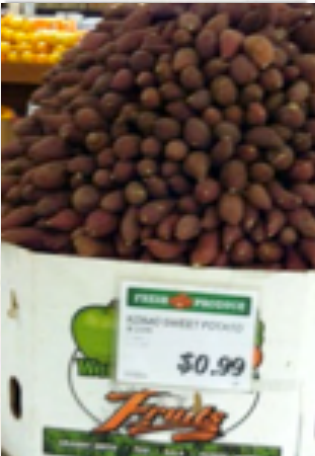




ANNUAL REPORT 2011 / 2012



The Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural is an alliance of farmers, farmworkers, indigenous, migrant, and working people from the United States, Mexico, Canada, and beyond working together toward a new society that values unity, hope, people, and land.

The work and the accomplishments of the Rural Coalition are carried out and achieved by its member groups. Operating with minimal staff, the coalition's role is to facilitate and assist the individual and collaborative goals and needs of its member groups.

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Federation of Southern
Cooperatives



Vice-Chair: Georgia Good
Rural Advancement Fund



Treasurer: Dorothy E. Barker
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Assistant Treasurer:
Altigracia (Chilo) Villarreal
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Organizacion de Lideres
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Association of Cooperatives



At Large: Savi Horne, Land
Loss Prevention Project

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Emeritus Members

Patricia Bellanger, American Indian Movement
John Bloch, The Markham Center
Carlos Marentes, Sin Fronteras Organizing Project
Marge Townsend, North American Farm Alliance



Foreword by Lorette Picciano

Rural Coalition Executive Director

From Beeper to Twitter

It brings me great pleasure to share our annual report with friends and long-time allies at our 2012 Winter Forum. Looking back over 2 decades with Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural, I asked a new staff for some inspiration on how to share our accomplishments this year.

“From Beeper to Twitter,” he reflected, as I sit at my desk near the small RC museum of technology I have insisted on creating. I am impressed that he knows what a beeper is as we observe our collection -- the old IBM Selectric Typewriter, the iMac computer, and soon the old fax machine just retired this year. Our chairperson John Zippert said he had to show a young staff person this year how to use a typewriter to address an envelope.

Of course, this is the same Mr. Zippert who figures in a story you will find in the 1980 section of this report’s Movement Timeline contributed long ago by Board member Starry Krueger ... “RC holds its first gathering, in a large white house in West Virginia, where (future RC chairperson) John Zippert is overheard to say of the newly elected President Ronald Reagan, “He’s 70 and I’ll be 35 tomorrow,” signaling the optimism and staying power of community based activists.”



Let us sit by the fireside for a moment and look back at what we have actually done over the years, to nourish our roots and vision for where we can go in the future. Some things, perhaps, never change. In its first years, Rural Coalition was strongly engaged in creating and protecting rural programs in the face of the very first budget reconciliation battle.

And as we enter our 35th year in 2013, we have grown resources and pushed our government to take a role in sustaining rural communities, only to see a turn around as these same programs are under threat once more. We have many more partners, at the grassroots level where we live, and now much more than before, in USDA and other federal agencies. We have come a long way, but the struggle for justice continues. At present, we are seeking an equitable settlement for Hispanic and Women farmers, and in protecting our communities.

Our work remains important, and so are each one of you. For change has only happened in these years and only will happen in the future with the wisdom we each have to share. In the past year, we have built our staff team and reinstalled new data systems, using the new tools that our youth will teach their elders to use. Yes, I had a beeper, and I will add it to our museum. In 2012, I tweeted for the first time to report from the House Agriculture Committee Farm Bill Mark-up, just reporting, not editorializing. But then I noted “Amendment with draconian cuts to SNAP is defeated.” A moment later I learned this new technology goes further than beepers ever could. “The cuts were not draconian,” responded the Congress Person who offered the amendment.

Rural Coalition has worked quietly and beneath the radar screen for many years. We believe this is the year to arise again to meet the new challenges we face. This is your Rural Coalition and we urge you to join, participate, share and work together with us to imagine and build the new future our communities deserve.

In Solidarity,

Lorette Picciano



2011 Rural Coalition
Winter Forum Participants
Washington, District of Columbia

About the Rural Coalition

The Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural is an alliance of more than 90 culturally diverse community-based groups in the United States, Mexico, Canada and beyond who collaborate to advance social justice and sustainable development in rural areas.

Since 1978, leaders of diverse farm communities including farmworker groups, indigenous communities in the United States and Mexico, African American, American Indian, Asian American, Latino and limited resource farmer organizations and cooperatives have banded together under the Rural Coalition's mission to: work toward a new society that values hope, unity, people, and the land.

The Rural Coalition's mission is to: work toward a new society that values hope, unity, people, and the land.

We have worked for 34 years toward two long term goals:

- I. Development and implementation of progressive policies responsive to rural needs
- II. Development of the capacities of rural organizations and people to work effectively to sustain institutional and systemic change.

What We Do:

- Strengthen Leadership Development and Movement Capacity for Effective Cooperative Civic Engagement
- Secure a Just and Sustainable Food, Agriculture and Trade Policy
- Enhance the Capacity of Producers and Farmworkers to Secure Access to Land and Viable and Sustainable Economic Base

Rural Coalition Principles

The Rural Coalition is committed to promoting the long-term viability of rural communities. To this end, the coalition advocates progressive national policies and programs that are responsive to the unique needs of rural

communities. Our guiding principles and goals to which all coalition member organizations subscribe are:

1. Justice and equal opportunity are the right of all people regardless of race, sex, or place of residence.
2. All rural people are entitled to the goods and services essential to a decent quality of life, including education, health and employment services, housing and basic community facilities. They are also entitled to democratic community institutions dedicated to serving their interests.
3. The long-term viability of rural communities rests on effective control and use of resources by the people living in rural areas, including family farmers, local business people and working people of all walks of life.
4. Community-based organizations are instrumental in the development of rural communities. Public policy should encourage their growth and strength.
5. The federal government has the responsibility to ensure the rights of all citizens and to help secure the fulfillment of these rights.



Communicating the Message; rural to urban and grassroots to new media strategies



Congressional Representatives speak in support of 2012 Fair Farm Bill Petition Delivery Press Conference with ColorOfChange.org, Capitol Hill, Washington, D.C.

Online

The Rural Coalition launched a new Drupal website that includes a relationship building database to build support and membership base for the coalition. The final will be completed by March 2013 and includes email alert sign up, direct feeds from social media, CiviCRM database, events calendar among other relevant info to rural communities and potential donors, members and volunteers. We have sent out over 25 urgent action alerts to help build support for sign-on letters, call in days and collaborative GOAT (Getting Our Act Together) action for a fair 2012 Farm Bill.

In Social Media/ SMS

2011 was the first year that Rural Coalition created a presence in social media circles. More than 380 fans are following our updates on Facebook, and we are in touch with 200 followers on Twitter. In 2011, we used the Cell Phone Action Network through SMS to reach members that have broadband issues and depend on their mobile devices for information. For the first time, we tweeted updates directly from the Senate and House Agriculture committee Farm Bill Mark-ups. Many bloggers communicate our messages to their readers, and many supporters shared our successes and project news with their friends and families. We look forward to continue bringing the latest news about our projects and initiatives to all of our supporters across our different social networks. We collaborated with ColorofChange.org to do a Petition Drop with over 35,000 signatures in favor of a fair Farm Bill.

In the Media

The Rural Coalition has been featured in MSNBC, Democracy Now, Pacifica Radio, Talking Feather Radio, the Hagstrom Report and a number of local radio stations and print newspapers. In 2012 Rural Coalition joined Prometheus Radio whose mission is to build participatory radio as a tool for social justice movements and community expression. Through this partnership Rural Coalition continues to identify and work with communities and organizations who are ready to build communication infrastructures in order to strengthen their communities and movements.

Through Community Outreach

During 2011-2012, the Rural Coalitions team worked closely with our members in rural communities, attending and holding different workshops and events to further issues of importance to rural communities including land easement and mentor farm workshops, focus groups, the National Rural Gathering, conservation planning, community garden building, Agricultural Census information, Hispanic and Women's USDA Discrimination case information sessions, Farm Bill Education, among others.

**RURAL COALITION'S
"A MOVEMENT IN TIME"
TIMELINE: 1977-2012**

Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural will celebrate its 35th anniversary in 2013. To honor this milestone, we are compiling a more comprehensive timeline of what we have achieved together in those years. We encourage your participation and contributions to our timeline as we take time to reflect on our work together in the history of this movement we have built.

1977

Summer and Fall

The first organizational meetings of the Rural Coalition.

1978

The Rural Coalition's charter members, some 22 national organizations, first join together to bring their combined experience and skills to bear on national policies affecting rural people and communities. RC is established as an informal coordinating mechanism with donated staff time of Larry Parachini of the Center for Community Change, and no dedicated staff or budget. It operates as something of an experiment—the first significant effort to develop a strong national voice for widely dispersed grassroots groups attempting to serve the rural poor.

The first action of the new Coalition is a letter requesting a meeting with President Jimmy Carter.



1979

APRIL 1979

More than 35 organizations are members of the Coalition's "It's Working" Committee, struggling to address issues ranging from agriculture to welfare rights. The committee concludes that the scope of the effect requires a small full-time staff and commitment to a minimum two-year program. Primary focus will be to try to force federal commitment to a comprehensive, coordinate, fully funded rural development policy.

Volunteer task forces work on this and related priorities, meeting with White House staff and members of Congress; other task forces focus on the federal budget for fiscal year 1980, problems of community economic development financing, and shortcomings of key rural programs operated by USDA's Farmer Home Administration (FmHA).



RURAL COALITION'S
"A MOVEMENT IN TIME"
TIMELINE: 1977-2012

1979

The Coalition develops a detailed policy paper "*Rural Development Policy: Framework & Recommendations*," for use by White House staff, stressing the need for a federal policy to synchronize support in program planning, technical assistance, community facilities, employment, training, human services, and encouragement of community-based delivery networks.

The Coalition addresses 12 principal areas: agriculture (family farms and land use in particular), civil rights (especially voter education and legal services), community facilities and local government, economic development education, employment (especially public-service jobs and training), energy, environment, health and nutrition, housing, social services, and transportation.

RC defines itself as "a developing national organization formed to help shape and influence public policies and processes affecting rural America." Membership is open to any organization willing to support a decent quality of life and their ability to control the processes that lead to fulfillment of that right in rural areas. The Working Committee meets with President Carter to discuss national rural development policy. The President supports many Coalition policy recommendations and commits himself to work for adoption of legislation—but is noncommittal about funding levels.

NOVEMBER 1979
 In addition to extensive work on rural development policy, the Coalition has testified on budget issues for FY 1980, launched an information and advocacy campaign on welfare reform and other issues, and by years' end has grown to 47 member organizations. A small staff now works out of the Coalition's new Washington office.

DECEMBER 1979
 President Carter announces his "Small Community and Rural Development Policy," noting: "Rural areas are unique. They have not been well served by federal programs. We have been missing a wholehearted commitment. We have long needed to translate generalized concerns about rural problems into a set of specific goals, principles, programs, and mechanisms for effective implementation."

1979

Largely in response to Rural Coalition initiatives, the White House announces “more than 100” government actions to be taken in 1980 to improve rural housing, health, water/sewer systems, education, employment, economic development, energy availability, transportation, communications and the environment.

President Carter asks Congress to create the position of Under Secretary of Agriculture for Small Community and Rural Development.

Coalition members are pleased with presidential acknowledgement that problems are severe and need to be addressed. But, at the same time, Carter administration is proposing severe FY80 budget cuts in almost all programs affecting poor people in rural areas. It is clear that budget battles looms large and will dominate the Coalition’s efforts for the foreseeable future.

1980

SEPTEMBER 1980

Work on rural development policy legislation continues through the year.

Congress passes the Rural Development Policy Act of 1980, creating an Undersecretary for Rural Development in USDA, setting up a monitoring process including annual reports to Congress on projected expenditures for rural development programs, and establishing a variety of administrative mechanisms to improve coordination of policy.



For RC, passage of the new law doesn’t represent a total victory, because it lacks teeth. Perhaps more importantly, severe budget cuts in low-income housing, health care, public assistance, public-service employment, and many other areas demonstrate that the administration is retreating from the exemplary rhetoric of the new law.

Rural Coalition now has four active task forces—with member organizations loaning staff time and talent—working on rural development policy, federal budget, Farmers Home Administration, and energy. Two others are forming, to work on rural unemployment and health and welfare problems.

Rural Coalition is incorporated as a non-profit organization in Washington, DC.

The late Civil Rights Leader, Charles Bannerman, after whom the Charles Bannerman Memorial Awards were named, is the Rural Coalition’s first Chairperson.

1980

RC works to see that the the Rural Development Policy Act of 1980 is implemented but it is an uphill struggle and other areas demand attention too. Attempting to respond, RC stretches its limited staff, volunteer aides, and finances to the breaking point. By the end of 1980 the Coalition counts 22 areas of activity including work to:

- Improve the accountability of the Community Services Administration to poor people in rural communities.
- Help a member organization, the Federation of Southern Cooperatives, to defend itself against politically-motivated attacks by federal agencies, including the FBI.
- Implement the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act, which requires lenders to provide information that can be used to determine patterns of credit discrimination.
- Prevent defunding of the Emergency Land Fund, a member organization, by the Community Services Administration.
- Develop a complete analysis of FmHA water/sewer regulations to improve eligibility of low-income housing projects.
- Develop policy positions on impact of gas rationing in rural areas.
- Block dismantling of food assistance programs threatened by budget cuts.
- Improve coordination efforts by organizations working to increase capacity of small communities to govern themselves.
- Improve effectiveness of organizations struggling to protect small farmers, especially black farmers in the South, against foreclosures and tax policies barring them from land ownership and, among many other things, backstopping efforts by rural telephone users to protect themselves against sudden cost increases related to deregulation. Busy year—but the outcome of the November elections suggest that 1981 will be busier by far.

1980

NOVEMBER. 12, 1980

RC holds its first gathering, in a large white house in West Virginia, where future RC chairperson John Zippert was overheard to say of the newly elected President Ronald Reagan, "He's 70 and I'll be 35 tomorrow," signaling the optimism and staying power of community based activists.

1981

Like other public interest organizations, Rural Coalition is staggered by the White House budget cuts. Many efforts are shelved while the Coalition's federal budget task force mounts a damage-control operation.

Coalition initiates an expanded effort to improve communications and coordination among member organizations, built around publication of a regular Rural Coalition Report that provides the only comprehensive analysis of budget cuts affecting rural areas and programs, and proposes specific alternatives.

Budget cuts and appropriation battles dominate RC's time and energy throughout the year. But RC task forces press on with other efforts and score modest victories. The water/sewer task force succeeds in forcing reform of FmHA regulations and maintaining program funding levels. RC generates effective membership support for extension of Voting Rights Act and preservation of Legal Services Corporation.

1981 FARM BILL EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

RC develops a membership education campaign on the 1981 farm bill and its importance to family farms, food stamp programs, land use policy, and preservation of black land ownership in the South. RC also publicizes a national protest by farmers over discrimination in FmHA loan policies and agency's failure to support limited-resource and beginning farmers. Work on farm bill and related areas gives the Coalition a more solid base for future efforts on these key issues.

RC struggles to help coordinate member organizations' efforts to protect programs and initiatives across the entire range of rural of rural problems and develops educational materials on block grants and impact of reduced federal funding. Coalition members intensify efforts to advise congressional representatives of specific efforts of cutbacks.

1982

Administration launches a second round of cuts in domestic social programs and Coalition members respond preparing a detailed analysis of 21 specific program cuts, expanding education on budget alternatives (military spending, tax policies), and mounting a sustained effort to explain the impact of cuts in rural areas to key Congress committees.

The RC operates with seriously reduced funding and staffing, a consequence of concentrating on aiding members with maintaining holding operation against further federal budget cuts. This strategy produces some successes, but the Board and its Working Committee recognize the need to begin overhauling programs in order to generate adequate funds to support small staff and broad range of sustained multi-year efforts.

JUNE 1982: RC "Rural Summit"

At its conclusion, more than 70 organizations have joined (and balance of membership has shifted from Washington-based toward more locally-based organizations) and they give Coalition a clear, urgent mandate to press on.

1983

Landloss Prevention Project is founded in North Carolina

The Farmworker Association of Florida is incorporated.



JANUARY 1986 (December 1985)

Hundreds of peasants from the northern part of the state of Chihuahua took over 69 storage silos of CONASUPO (the state buyer of agricultural and food products). As a result of the action, the guaranteed prices for corn and beans were increased 30%.

1987

The Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC) is founded. The IAC itself grew out of a study initiated by members of the Rural Coalition, led by Mary Lee Johns who then worked with the American Friends Service Committee.



Operation Spring Plant, Inc. was founded.



The Frente Democrático Campesino (FDC) (the “Democratic Peasant’s Front”) was founded and was the first Rural Coalition member in Mexico.



The FDC grew out of a wide social movement in the state of Chihuahua during the winters of 1985-1986 and 1987-1988, after the small producers organized independently to demand better prices for corn and beans.

1987 FARM CREDIT ACT

The Rural Coalition, the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, the Rural Advancement Fund, the Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation, the Intertribal Agriculture Council, the National Family Farm Coalition and various national religious groups secured language in the 1987 Farm Credit Act that made additional FmHA ownership loan funds available to historically underserved farmers, established target participation rates to track how loan funds were allocated by county and defined “socially disadvantaged farmers.”

1988



Organización en California de Lideres Campesinas is founded.

1990

1990 MINORITY FARMERS RIGHTS ACT

Originally drafted by the Rural Coalition, the North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers Land Loss Prevention Project, the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund, Farmers Legal Action Group, Interfaith Action for Economic Justice, the Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation, the Rural Advancement Fund, and the Intertribal Agriculture Council, the 1990 Minority Farmers Rights Act was introduced by then Representative Mike Espy and Senator Wyche Fowler.

MAY 1990

The Rural Coalition publishes a report "The Status of Minority Farming Today."

1990 FARM BILL

Congress later incorporated parts of the Minority Farmers Rights Act into the 1990 Farm Bill. The Outreach and Technical Assistance Program for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers was established in Section 2501 of the bill and the Indian Reservation Extension Agent Program was authorized to provide essential services on reservations to Indian producers.

1992

SEPTEMBER 12, 1992: NO ON NAFTA

The Rural Coalition holds its Assembly in El Paso-Chihuahua, hosted by the Sin Fronteras Organizing Project and the Frente Democratico Campesino, to examine the real intent and impact of the North American Free Trade Agreement and to witness the struggles of farmworkers on the border. The producers we visit in northern Chihuahua conclude NAFTA means "I guess we won't be able to grow corn anymore."

The Assembly responds by signing an agreement for international solidarity on the International Bridge. We also pledge to support the harvesters of chili peppers in their struggle for fair treatment in the agriculture workplaces in Texas and New Mexico.

OCTOBER 1992 "SIGN THE CHECK" CARAVANS

The Federation of Southern Cooperatives / Land Assistance Fund spearheads a massive caravan of African-American, Latino, Asian-American and American Indian farmers to Washington, DC from various locations in the Southeast. The advocates called upon Congress and the Clinton Administration to "sign the check" and allocate the \$10 million dollars authorized but never fully appropriated for the 2501 Outreach and Technical Assistance to Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Program.

Representatives of RC member organization, the Frente Democrático Campesino, a Chihuahua-based agricultural producer organization, join with the Caravan participants in Washington and carry their concerns about NAFTA members of the US House of Representatives Government Operations Subcommittee.

1992

OCTOBER 1992

The Government Operations Subcommittee reroutes a planned trip and stops in the state of Chihuahua to investigate the rural crisis in Mexico. RC greets the delegation there and guides them on visits to member communities of the Frente Democratico Campesino.

RC leaders Rev. Camilo Daniel and Victor Quintana are invited and travel to testify in the U.S. House of Representatives on the impact of NAFTA on rural communities in Mexico.

1993

The Rural Coalition joined forces with farm organizations in Mexico to fight passage of the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

FEBRUARY. 1993 "WE HAVENT GOT A COMMUNITY TO WASTE"

RC coordinates, and with 30 other organizations, hosts a reception "We Haven't Got a Community to Waste," for new rural members of Congress. Two hundred fifty people attend the event at the House Agriculture Committee room.

FALL 1993 EMPOWERMENT ZONES AND ENTERPRISE (EZ/EC) PROGRAM

RC works with the United States Department of Agriculture to convene a workshop with community-based organizations on the design of the Clinton Administration's Federal Empowerment Zone and Enterprise (EZ/EC) program

1994

1994 USDA REORGANIZATION ACT

RC and its partners seek language in the 1994 Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act authorizing community-based organizations representing historically underserved farmers to nominate eligible producers to the re-organized FSA county committees.

JANUARY 24, 1997

Congress agreed to commission a General Accounting Office (GAO) report on the subject, which was finally released on.

FEBRUARY 1994

The RC Board of Directors meets with Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy to secure the Secretary's support for the full \$10 million appropriation for minority farmer outreach and continued support of the Minority Farmers Rights Act that he had introduced as a member of Congress in 1990.

MARCH 1994

Rural Coalition convenes for its Annual Assembly, Building the Movement for Community-Based Development at the Penn Center in the Sea Islands of South Carolina hosted by the Rural Advancement Fund, the Penn Center and Institute for Southern Studies.

1994

MAY 1994

A Rural Coalition board delegation travels to Chihuahua, Mexico to begin creating an equitable framework for trade and identifying products that were available for an interactive people-to-people alternative NAFTA marketing and health networked called the "SuperMarket Coop."

AUGUST. 1994

At the invitation of the Frente Democrático Campesino, the Rural Coalition organizes an international observer team to observe and document the electoral process in Mexico.

Rural Coalition Board Member, Pat Bellanger of the American Indian Movement represents the Rural Coalition at a rally against the Northern States Power Company's plans for dry cask storage of nuclear waste at the Prairie Island community, the Mdewakanton Sioux Reservation on the Mississippi River.

DECEMBER. 1994

Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy announces the establishment of three Empowerment Zones and thirty Enterprise Communities in rural areas. Several Rural Coalition member organizations were principal recipients including Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation, Boggs Rural Life Center, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund and the Center for Community Action.

1995

1995 FARM BILL

The Rural Coalition, the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund and the North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers Land Loss Prevention Project draft a completely new Minority Farmers Rights Act for the 1995 Farm Bill debate

JUNE 1995 RC ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

Rural Coalition Annual Assembly, One People, One Planet: Replanting Communities on the Land, convened at Window Rock, Arizona, seat of the Navajo Nation.

The Office of Civil Rights Enforcement of USDA cooperated with the Rural Coalition to conduct the first ever forum that included diverse representation from African-American, American Indian, Asian-American and Latino rural communities.

1997

FEBRUARY. 1997 USDA Civil Rights Action Team (CRAT)

The USDA establishes a Civil Rights Action Team (CRAT) which holds over a dozen listening sessions and reviews many documents. Rural Coalition was instrumental in organizing and testifying at many, patterned after the session held at the 1995 Assembly in Window Rock, Arizona. The CRAT, which included current board member Rudy Arredondo, report made over 92 recommendations regarding the civil rights system, including setting measurable goals, and clear leadership and accountability.

JUNE 1997

The Rural Coalition Annual Assembly “Healing, Planting and Harvesting – Taking the Future Into Our Own Hands” convened in Montpelier, Vermont, hosted by the Markham Center, which begins with a field visit to rural communities in coastal Maine. Rep. Bernie Sanders (VT) assists the Rural Coalition to protect board member Victor Quintana who is detained in Mexico attempting to attend the Assembly.

FALL 1997: NCCBOA

The National Council of Community-Based Organizations in Agriculture (NCCBOA) is founded to provide a formal structure for community-based organizations to coordinate among themselves and to assist the USDA and other federal agencies in providing services to historically underserved and limited resource farmers and ranchers. Holding the USDA accountable for civil rights was identified as the first priority of the NCCBOA. The Rural Coalition organized the first convening of NCCBOA and was asked to manage the group and arrange future planning meetings.

1998

APRIL 1998: PEOPLE’S SUMMIT ON THE AMERICAS (FTAA PROTEST)

RC Board Member, Altagracia “Chilo” Villarreal, represents the Rural Coalition in the People’s Summit of the Americas held in Santiago de Chile and at the same time as the Summit of the Americas, attended by Western leaders to launch negotiations for a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Community organizers of environmental, indigenous, rural workers, and women’s and human rights groups meet to affirm their concerns and disapproval with the FTAA and other trade agreements in the area.

JULY 1998

RC member groups and partners present a four-point action plan to Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman and Deputy Secretary Richard Rominger to improve USDA delivery of services to African American, American Indian, Asian American and Latino farmers and ranchers.

1998

SEPTEMBER 1998

RC and its partners send a letter to the House-Senate Agriculture Appropriations Conferees requesting the removal of legislative barriers to the settlement of long-standing civil rights complaints in the fiscal year 1999 agriculture appropriations bill. RC and its partners also oppose all versions of legislation to establish a new and punitive guest worker program that would result in renewed exploitation of farmworkers.

1999

SEPTEMBER 1999

RC holds its Assembly “Food n’ Justice” in Creel, Chihuahua, where we are welcomed by the Rarámuri people, and we recognize ourselves as a “transnational social movement.”

LATE 1999: WTO OPPOSITION

RC joins many partner organizations in Seattle to oppose ceding control of agriculture to the World Trade Organization.

1998

APRIL 1998: PEOPLE’S SUMMIT ON THE AMERICAS (FTAA PROTEST)

RC Board Member, Altagracia “Chilo” Villarreal, represents the Rural Coalition in the People’s Summit of the Americas held in Santiago de Chile and at the same time as the Summit of the Americas, attended by Western leaders to launch negotiations for a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Community organizers of environmental, indigenous, rural workers, and women’s and human rights groups meet to affirm their concerns and disapproval with the FTAA and other trade agreements in the area

JULY 1998

RC member groups and partners present a four-point action plan to Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman and Deputy Secretary Richard Rominger to improve USDA delivery of services to African American, American Indian, Asian American and Latino farmers and ranchers.

2000

APRIL 2000: SUPERMARKET COOP

RC officially launches the SuperMarket Coop, an online marketing network to assist small farmers and campesinos cooperatively market their products. The SuperMarket strives to locate markets for sustainably produced products; provide training in developing product descriptions, legal and contract assistance, information on transportation and import/export requirements; and training on how to develop a business plan and reduce risk.

2001-2002

FARM BILL DEBATE

The Rural Coalition collaborated with other key allies in the diverse family farm, farmworker, sustainable agriculture, community food security and fair trade movements, to create and provide policy makers with draft equity provisions for the 2001 Farm Bill debate, which is extended into 2002.

2002

APRIL 2002

RC holds its Annual Assembly in Washington, DC to spur action on the 2002 Farm Bill, which by year's end is passed with new equity provisions including increased funding authority for the 2501 Outreach and Assistance Program for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers to \$25 million annually, establishment of the USDA Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, and transparency and accountability provisions on USDA program participation.

HOUSE HEARING ON CIVIL RIGHTS

During a floor colloquy in the House of Representatives, the House Agriculture Committee agrees to hold the first-ever hearing on Civil Rights in Agriculture.

SEPTEMBER 2002

Rural Coalition Chairperson John Zippert presents testimony on behalf of the Rural Coalition and the Federation of Southern Cooperatives on the need for expanded oversight and action on Civil Rights in Agriculture.

2004

AUGUST 2004 NLFRTA Founded

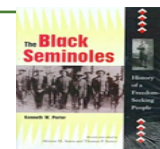
National Latino Farmers and Ranchers Trade Association is founded.



2005

OBHRP

Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project, Inc. is founded.



2006-2008

FARM BILL: FARM AND FOOD POLICY DIVERSITY INITIATIVE FORMED

The Farm and Food Policy Diversity Initiative, coordinated by the Rural Coalition, secured more than 30 equity sections in the 2008 Farm Bill that provided access and opportunity to historically underserved farmers, ranchers and farmworkers.

2008

JUNE 2008 GREAT IMMIGRATION DEBATE

RC holds its 30th Anniversary Assembly, The Great Immigration Debate, in Homestead, Florida, hosted by the Farmworker Association of Florida.

SEPTEMBER 2008 RURAL COALITION JOINS VIA CAMPESINA

Rural Coalition is accepted as a member La Via Campesina, an International Peasant's movement at its 5th International Conference in Maputo, Mozambique.



2008-2010

APRIL 2002 NRCS APPROVES SEASONAL HIGH TUNNELS

RC works on the implementation of the 2008 Farm Bill and on the outreach to producers on using the new authority. RC proposes that the Natural Resources and Conservation Service approve seasonal high tunnels as a conservation practice.

Between 2009 and 2012, NRCS supports completion of more than 7,000 high tunnels, including many on farms operated by RC members.

2010

ACT REPORT IS RELEASED

The Rural Coalition and the Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund released a 180-page report entitled, "A Time to Change: Report of the Assessment Conversations Team (The ACT report), that compiled findings by over a hundred participants in the 5-year USDA-Community Based Organization Partners process, and reviewed the status of implementation of the 2008 Farm Bill by USDA through January 2009. Over 200 recommendations on actions to improve equity in agriculture are included.

YOUTH IN TODAY'S AGRICULTURE SOCIAL FORUM Detroit, MI

JULY 2010

The Rural Coalition compiles a compendium of many statements issued from diverse communities in support of Shirley Sherrod, former USDA Rural Development Director for the state of Georgia, who was forced to resign by the Obama Administration after her comments at an NAACP Awards dinner were manipulated by a conservative political blogger, Andrew Breitbart.



2010

DECEMBER 2010:

PIGFORD II

President Barack Obama signs a bill providing settlement funds for the Pigford II African American Farmers settlement and the Cobell settlement resolving claims of American Indian individuals against the Interior Department. RC leaders and allies were in attendance at the White House.

COP16 CARAVANS to MEXICO

Rural Coalition delegation members join fellow climate justice campaigners, environmentalists and social justice advocates from around the world for COP16 in Cancun. Traveling with Via Campesina organized caravans en route to COP 16, the caravans visited communities struggling and in resistance, learning about the local effects of climate change and adding their voices of solidarity to communities working to construct a better future.

2011

JULY 2011

RC holds a National Rural Gathering: Water, Land, Energy and Food which is widened to include the RC Assembly and the national meetings of its partner groups, in Shawnee and Wewoka, Oklahoma, hosted by the Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project.

RC members pass a resolution seeking changes to make the proposed USDA Hispanic and Women’s Claims process more fair and more similar to the African American and American Indian Settlements.

AUGUST. 2011

WHITE HOUSE RURAL FORUM

RC leaders participate in the White House Rural Forum in Peosta, Iowa.

NOVEMBER 2011

GOAT PLANNING BEGINS

An informal group meeting at the Community Food Security Coalition Conference in Oakland, California proposes the creation of the “Getting Our Act Together (GOAT) on the Farm Bill” collaboration. The group begins planning.

DECEMBER 2011 KEEPSLEAGLE SETTLE AGREEMENT CLOSES

The 180-day period for American Indian producers to submit discrimination claims under the Keepseagle Settlement Agreement closes.

2012

JANUARY 2012

USDA announces the addition of a \$250,000 claims level to the Hispanic and Women’s Claims process.

2012

FEBRUARY 2012

GOAT (Getting Our Act Together) holds its first meeting in Washington, DC to develop a collaborative structures to share information and seek alignment among organizations supporting equity in the 2012 Farm Bill. Collaboration continues on a weekly basis through the on-again, off-again Farm Bill Process.

MAY 2012

The 180-day period for African American producers to submit claims under the *In Re Black Farmers Settlement Agreement* closes.

JUNE. 2012

Rural Coalition participates in the national meeting in New York City of the emerging Food Chain Workers, an organization supporting the rights of all workers in the food chain.

JULY 2012

Rural Coalition participates in the Peoples Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in Solidarity with the Via Campesina, MST and MAB and other international social movements in support of the "Real Green Economy," Peasant Farmers.

SEPTEMBER 2012

HISPANIC AND WOMEN'S CLAIMS PROCESS OPENS

The Hispanic and Women Farmers and Ranchers Claims process opens with continued action by RC and its members to seek fairer terms and to assure all potentially eligible producers know about the process.

FAIR FARM BILL: PETITION DELIVERY AND PRESS CONFERENCE

With partners ColorOfChange.org, NFFC, NLFRTA and others, a 35,000 signed petition was delivered to the House of Agriculture during a Press Conference urging for a fair farm bill that included full funding for the 2501 Outreach and Assistance Program and (SNAP) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. congresswoman Rosa Delauro (RI), congressman Jim McGovern (MA) of the House Ag Committee, Congresswoman Terri Sewell (AL) were all present to speak in support.

OCTOBER 2012

Alianza Campesinas Nacional (The National Alliance of Farmworker Women) is formed in Washington, DC, Rural Coalition helps in meetings with key Congressional Meetings to express concerns on labor conditions, health, violence toward women and other critical issues.

NOVEMBER 2012

Budget battles and the "fiscal cliff" dominate the Congressional agenda yet again, as the 2012 Farm Bill remains on hold in a year when disasters affect farmers and rural communities across the nation.



2011-2012 Program and Project Achievements

Implementation of the 2008 Farm Bill

During 2012, Rural Coalition has continued to work actively on the implementation of the 2008 Farm Bill and in training our leaders in members to access new farm bill programs.

- Programs we helped to get passed in the 2008 Farm Bill are making in excess \$2.5 billion in benefits accessible to socially disadvantaged producers, farmworkers and minority serving institutions and we have worked to assure our members are helping their farmers and ranchers participate as fully as possible.
- Since we were instrumental in helping to get high tunnels as a conservation practice in 2009, the USDA Natural Resources and Conservation Service has funded more than 7000 high tunnels including many in the communities we serve. We have assisted our members in meeting the requirements for this program, and at current count, at least 60 have been installed and funded in our member communities.
- At least 8 of our member organizations that serve socially-disadvantaged producers have secured access to specialty crop block grants as a result of our efforts on that program, which they had never been able to access before.

NORTH COUNTRY FAIR TRADE Helps Support the Rural Coalition

North Country Fair Trade is committed to improving wages and labor conditions for production workers in Latin America by expanding the market in the United States for basic goods produced by fair trade production groups in Latin America. North Country Fair Trade donated 100 Bags to the Rural Coalition. They are made of organic cotton by “Maquiladora dignidad y Justicia” which is a Cooperative of Mexican women that were laid off from maquiladoras in Piedras Negras Mexico because they were trying to organize for better working conditions. They formed a cooperative with the help of John Flory several years ago and John formed a business called “North country Fair trade” which commercializes whatever the maquiladora in Piedras negras produces. **Address:** 1385 Goodrich Ave., St. Paul, Minnesota, 55105-2306 **Phone:** (612)730-4453, northcountryfairtrade@comcast.com



Caryl Henry Alexander, local social activist and artist hand painted the bags.

PHONE: (301) 877-2029, **E-MAIL:** caryl@bigbangbanners.com, <http://bigbangbanners.com/index.html>

CONTRIBUTE A DONATION FOR A BAG!



Armando Nieto, ED, Community Food and Justice Coalition Facilitating GOAT Meeting in February 2012, Washington, DC

2011-2012 Program and Project Achievements

The 2012 Farm Bill Struggle and GOAT

RC worked hard in the current year to protect the historic 2501 Outreach and Assistance Program for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers, as well as the Office of Advocacy and Outreach that manages it at USDA. On the eve of the Senate Agriculture Committee deliberations on the Farm Bill, two Senators included a last minute amendment in the Senate bill that widened the program to include veteran farmers and ranchers. We then reached out to veterans and other groups to build support.

At the same time, the program was the subject of a USDA Office of Inspector General Report that was issued just as the 2012 Farm bill was approaching the committee. No funding increases were approved there, and due to the report, an amendment by Sen. Tom Udall to restore funding

cut from it was not approved by Senate leaders for a vote. We then worked with USDA to address the problems in the grant review process that triggered the report, and continue to monitor progress and meet with the staff with suggestions for improvement. We also prepared a report highlighting 2501 achievements. In our work on the Farm Bill, we also campaigned to protect funding in both the Senate and the House bills. As a result in a year of many cuts, the historic program held \$25 million, or \$5 million a year, in the Senate bill, and \$50 million or \$10 million per year in the House Agriculture Committee bill.

We worked with Color of Change on a campaign to restore funds to 2501 and the SNAP program, with a press conference held before Congress left for the elections.

If funds are not increased, we were able to have language included that will also authorize up to \$20 million of appropriated funds. The Office of Advocacy and Outreach retained \$2 million in funding authority in each bill, and the Office of Tribal Relations was provided statutory authority for the first time in both the House and Senate Bills.



A transformation Farm Bill is possible if we GOAT (Get Our Act Together) around the Farm Bill Process

During the ongoing 2012 Farm Bill debate, the Rural Coalition in collaboration with the National Family Farm

Coalition (NFFC) and California Food and Justice Coalition (CFJC) and other partners developed the 2012 GOAT process to unify various good food, sustainable agriculture, rural development and other organizations to work together for equity and justice in the 2012 Farm Bill. Sections of Policy that include 2501, Outreach and Assistance to Socially Disadvantaged Producers, SNAP, Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Programs, Rural Development, Nutrition, Local Food and Conservation issues have been addressed by GOAT. GOAT includes over 150 participants. More than 40 weekly calls have taken place with an average of 20 callers at a time and a Google group was established for the exchange of information. A dozen or so sign-on-letters, action alerts, and timely information regarding Agricultural Policy has been exchanged during the GOAT process that have instrumental and timely during the 2012 Farm Bill Debate.

The final outcome of the 2012 Farm Bill remains unclear as we go to press. Our current challenge is to protect and build upon these gains. The proposed future work serves as an investment in strengthening the shared voice of our leaders to connect with others and secured continued returns to our economy, our environment, and our society

Mediate— Don't Litigate

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- Can resolve conflicts between farmers and their neighbors, organizations and local governments
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- Assists with unfavorable decisions by USDA agencies
- Offers confidential assistance to help resolve disputes
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- Increases understanding among agricultural producers, agencies, organizations and communities
- Strengthens agriculture through better communications



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2011-2012 Program and Project Achievements

Discrimination Settlements and Claims Processes

Our leaders continue their work until the present day to assure that all eligible producers gain access to the discrimination settlements and claims processes to resolve past discrimination.

- An additional 2.25 billion was provided by Congress to settle discrimination claims that were never considered under the historic Pigford consent decree for African American producers. A settlement decree was approved and carried out, and with major assistance from Rural Coalition and its board leaders, almost 40,000 African American producers submitted claims when the process ended May 18, 2012. Our staff led efforts to fix problems in the claims process and by the end of the process, had the well-paid class attorneys asking for our assistance. The judge in the case sent a letter thanking the Rural Coalition for the role we played in the process. (see related article)
- The administration settled the Keepseagle Case for American Indian Farmers. Our member, the Intertribal Agriculture Council, was instrumental in conducting outreach and helping producer file claims. As in the Pigford II process, it was the advocates often more than the attorneys who did the best job assisting producers. The claims process closed in December 2011 with 5100 claims submitted of which 3400 were successful. The majority of those not approved related to incomplete claims. The success rate for those who used the legal process was 70%, and of those whose claims were prepared by IAC, 94% were successful.

- We continue to work for the opening of a claims settlement process for Hispanic and Woman Farmers and Ranchers, and as a result of our efforts, the top claim level was increased from \$50,000 to \$250,000. Efforts continue to make the process, which opened in September 2012 more like the previous cases. USDA has called on RC to lead outreach in this administrative process, working with USDA state leaders to reach more farmers, and continue to press the Justice Department to resolve inequities in the claims process they are offering. (see related article)



NIFI SHARES THE RURAL COALITION MISSION IN FAVOR OF SMALL FARMERS, RANCHERS AND FARMWORKERS THROUGH TRAINING, ADVOCACY, CAPACITY BUILDING, AND NEW

Discrimination Settlements and Claims Processes

In Re Black Farmers Litigation Concludes

Since the outset of the *In Re Black Farmers Litigation* claims process (commonly referred to as “Pigford II”), the Rural Coalition and its partners have worked to ensure maximum participation of the estimated more than 60,000 potential claimants in the claims process defined by the Settlement Agreement. The new process was opened when Congress approved language in the 2008 Farm Bill and later additional funding to review claims submitted in the first Pigford class action settlement for African-American Farmers. Their claims had never been reviewed because they were defined as late in the first process, which began in 1999. Throughout the 180-day claims period the Rural Coalition conferred with our community-based member organizations including the Federation of Southern Cooperatives, the Land Loss Prevention Project, Operation Spring Plant, the Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project and Rural Advancement Fund to resolve pressing issues regarding the implementation and coordination of the Settlement Agreement by Class Counsel. Potential claimants faced an inadequate number of attorneys assigned to assist claimants with their claims packages and insufficient outreach efforts and

coordination with community-based organizations. With our member organizations, RC amplified the farmers’ concerns in letters to the presiding judge, Judge Paul Friedman, and meetings with the court appointed Ombudsman and Class Counsel.

RC and its partners also continued to point out the inherent inequities of the Settlement Agreement that excluded thousands of African-Americans farmers from Class membership. For example, RC and its partners spoke with numerous farmers who were deemed ineligible for Class Membership by the Claims Administrator because they did not submit a written request to an official entity associated with the first Pigford case. RC opposed this narrow interpretation of Class Membership at the Fairness Hearing in 2011 because we anticipated how this strict interpretation would exclude thousands of African-American farmers who have compelling circumstances that in the interest of justice should be eligible for Class Membership. To illustrate, in 2006 an African-American farmer from Sumter County, Alabama wrote U.S. Senator Richard Shelby to inquire about filing a late claim under

Pigford. The farmer had in his possession a correspondence dated November 2, 2006 from U.S. Senator Richard Shelby that acknowledged the farmer’s inquiry regarding filing a late claim under Pigford I. Under the terms of the Settlement Agreement, this farmer who clearly demonstrated the intent to file a late claim under Pigford was ineligible for Class Membership.

On May 8th, 2011, Judge Paul Friedman denied the request for an extension of the claims period by numerous community-based organizations including the Federation of Southern Cooperatives and RC. Consequently, the claims period ended on May 11th, 2012 as defined by the Settlement Agreement. On November 7, 2012, the Ombudsman filed a report with the Court assessing the good faith implementation and coordination of the Settlement Agreement by Class Counsel. According to the report, approximately 39,905 claim packages were submitted to the Claims Administrator. Out of the total claim packages submitted, about 33,089 had been determined by the Claims Administrator to be complete. Of these, Class

Counsel signed Claim Forms for about 12,984 claimants while the rest were submitted directly by farmers, many with the assistance of longtime advocates who have followed the process for decades.

The Hispanic and Women Farmers and Ranchers Claims Process Opens

As part of continued efforts to resolve allegations of discrimination against USDA, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and Assistant Attorney General Tony West announced a process to resolve the claims of women and Hispanic farmers and ranchers who assert that they were discriminated against when seeking USDA farm loans. The two-tier claims process offers a streamlined alternative to litigation and provides at least \$1.33 billion in compensation, plus up to \$160 million in farm debt relief, to eligible Hispanic and Women farmers and ranchers. USDA opened the 180-day claims period September 25, 2012. The claims period will close March 24, 2013.

Rural Coalition and its member groups have closely collaborated to seek changes to the administrative process developed by USDA to seek claims levels that more closely match those in the just completed Pigford II process and the Keepseagle process for American Indian producers that closed in December 2012 with almost 5000 claims filed and up to 3500 approved. In early 2012, USDA and the Department of Justice

responded with the creation of a \$250,000 claims tier. Building on their experience with the recently completed processes, RC and with its community based organization members have since worked with USDA to formulate an outreach plan to reach and inform Hispanic and Women producers around the country of the claims process and what it will take to participate.

RC and its colleagues in organizations including the Farmers Legal Action Group and the University of Arkansas Agricultural Law Center have conducted seminars and webinars to train CBOs and legal professionals interested in assisting with the claims process of the framework and particular requirements of the process. RC is also assisting producers to find legal assistance. Meetings were held in September and October with USDA officials to align RC and partner staffing with designated priority states to attend meetings sponsored by USDA and CBOs and provide outreach services on the Claims Process.

To date RC staff and member groups have provided information at approximately 20 meetings in five of the USDA designated priority states with significantly high concentrations of Hispanic and Women farmers and ranchers to provide outreach assistance and educate producers on what is needed to prove eligibility. The eligibility requirements remain much steeper than in the other cases and because neither the Hispanic nor the Women's lawsuits, Garcia

and Love, were approved as class action in the courts, there are no designated class attorneys to assist producers. For example, a producer filing a basic claim in this process must have a letter from USDA accepting a discrimination complaint made as many as 30 years ago or a statement from witness that was with the farmer in the USDA office at the time, documents that many producers who experienced discrimination do not have for discrimination dating back to 1981. Separate litigation, the Cantu v. Vilsack case, seeks a settlement from USDA that would treat the case as a class action and change eligibility requirements. Rural Coalition and its members also continue efforts to seek administrative changes to make eligibility requirements more like those in the other settlements.

In Honor of

Lorette

Picciano

**We Applaud Your Hard Work,
Dedication and Sincerity**

With all best wishes,

Congressman Eliot L. Engel

and

Mrs. Pat Engel



2011-2012 Program and Project Achievements

Claiming Important Victories

Proposition 37

While there were many notable state and local ballot initiatives this election cycle, an initiative that stood out as a “bright, shining moment” was Proposition 37. If passed, Proposition 37 would have required the labeling of genetically engineered foods in the state of California. Although Proposition 37 was defeated narrowly due to a \$45 million misinformation campaign advanced by biotech and food manufacturer corporations such as Monsanto, DuPont, and PepsiCo, we must claim the victory in our determined efforts to reclaim our food system. As a result of tremendous community organizing efforts, over 4.2 million voters (47 percent) voted in favor of Proposition 37. Despite the temporary setback in California, the food justice movement is gaining momentum throughout the country with over twenty states having introduced legislation to label genetically engineered foods.

Another important initiative approved in the state of Maryland provided in-state college tuition to students who have grown up in Maryland but lack documentation. Now immigrant students in Maryland will have access to higher education and a brighter path to achieve their dreams. The Maryland law may set a pattern in the future for other states. Maryland voters also upheld Marriage Equality in a statewide referendum.

Ensuring Fair Farm Rules Through Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyard Administration (GIPSA) rule

After the 2008 Farm Bill there was much hope in when USDA proposed GIPSA rules that included reforms for fair farm rules to protect small cattle, hog, and poultry producers. However, it was not until November 2011 after the demand from farmer

organizations including Rural Coalition that the rule was sent to the White House for final approval. However, the final rule as issued abandoned all regulations to protect cattle and



hog producers and had greatly watered-down proposed poultry regulations. The final deficient ruling did little to regain control over the meat and poultry industry that is currently dominated and controlled by a few large companies.

In 2012, over the strong opposition of National Family Farm Coalition, Rural Coalition, National Farmers Union, American Farm Bureau

2011-2012 Program and Project Achievements

Claiming Important Victories

Federation, and more than 100 farmer, consumer and community organizations around the country the House Agriculture Committee included the Conaway-Costa Amendment in its version of the 2012 Farm Bill. The misguided amendment called for an entire repeal of the 2008 GIPSA rules. A rider to restrict implementation of the rules was also included in the FY 2014 Agriculture Appropriations bill by the House Appropriations Committee. While the House Committees seek to bury the GIPSA ruling, the Senate has continued to support USDA's comprehensive GIPSA proposed rule and has continually funded work on the rule through its Appropriations process. Without the GIPSA ruling contract farmers, who often incur hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt and have contracts that may last only a few months continue to have little rights and be at the mercy of large poultry processors. The proposed GIPSA regulations allow for financial protection when receiving a flock late through no fault of the producer, protect pullet and breeders, and ensure processing companies could no longer force producers upgrade expensive equipment without financial compensation.

The Rural Coalition will continue to work with its colleagues to oppose inclusion of the Conaway-Costa language and the Appropriations rider in the final Farm Bill and the appropriations process. The Rural Coalition also continues to call for the implementation a comprehensive GIPSA rule to include protection for cattle and hog producers and work for fair farm rules for all livestock producers.

Lorette, a trailblazer in the movement.

Thanks to your leadership we
have a fighting chance.



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GET INVOLVED

FOR A FAIR FARM AND FOOD SYSTEM



Organizational Membership

The Rural Coalition/Coalición Rural is an alliance of farmers, farmworkers, indigenous, migrant and working people from the United States, Mexico, Canada and beyond working together toward a new society that values unity, hope, people and the land.

This principle of unity guides our work not only on changing and improving policies that impact lives, but also on economic and cooperative alternatives that bring resources to our communities. With your membership you form part of a long-standing and growing group of organizations that:

- I. confront structural injustices in policies, programs and delivery of government services;
- II. share skills, encouragement and strategies; seek and leverage resources to support their organizations and their work;
- III. make government entities more responsive;
- IV. and support one another in local and global struggles.

RC Membership Dues Policy: *Your organizational dues support the shared work of our members and are evidence of our mutual solidarity to help each other, as we are able. We ask that each member of the organization pay annual dues at the appropriate dues level.*

Annual Member Dues *

- Organizational Budget of \$99,999 or less - \$ 100.00
- Organizational Budget of \$100,000-\$249,999 - \$ 200.00
- Organizational Budget of \$100,000-\$249,999 - \$ 500.00
- Organizational Budget of \$250,000-\$749,999 - \$ 500.00
- Organizational Budget of \$750,000-\$949,999 - \$ 750.00
- Organizational Budget of \$950,000+ - \$ 1,000.00

Friends of the Rural Coalition

We CAN build the movement!!

We look forward to communicating with you throughout the year to share our goals and accomplishments via our newsletter, regular email updates and annual conferences, workshops and more.

Annual Dues:

- New Individual Member *
- Friends of the Rural Coalition - \$ 25.00
- Family of Friends of the Rural Coalition - \$ 35.00
- Next Generation Friends of the Rural Coalition - \$ 10.00
- Strong Supporter of Limited Income - \$ 10.00

Donations

Please also consider making a tax deductible donation or contribution by the end of the year to help support our work. Contact: angela@ruralco.org for more information on membership or donations.

National Latino Farmers & Ranchers Trade Association

*Saludos a la gente de la tierra, y a nuestros antepasados en
el Día de los Muertos*



**We organize farmers, ranchers and farm workers, plus provide
policy advocacy and technical assistance.**

**NLFRTA is also an active member of the board of Directors of
the Rural Coalition, a trans-national US-Mexico Advocacy
organization.**

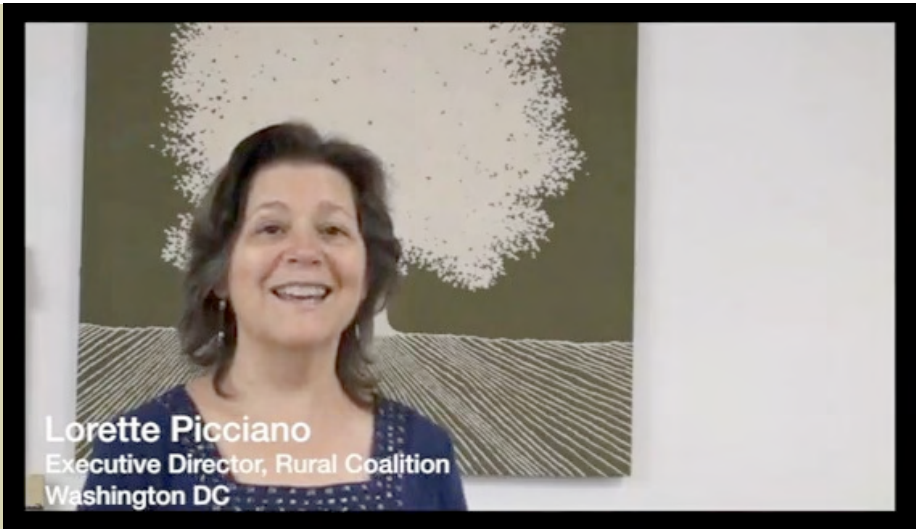
**National Latino Farmers and Ranchers Trade Association
Rudy Arredondo-President, CEO
717 D Street NW Suite 400
Washington, DC 20004**

*Mas vale morir de pie que vivir arrodillado....
Its better to die on your feet tan live a lifetime on your knees....*

hola_5@hotmail.com

www.nlfrta.org

**CONGRATULATIONS
LORETTE PICCIANO
FOR 20 YEARS OF
LEADERSHIP AT THE
RURAL COALITION!
APRIL 1st 1992-2012**



MURAL OF SOLIDARITY AND APPRECIATION

For 20 years of service as a dedicated, unselfish, diligent, competent, industrious, conscientious, capable, loyal, willing, resourceful, caring and visionary leader who puts humanity into her work for rural people and with rural issues. - **RURAL COALITION BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Congratulations to Lorette on 20 years of servant leadership to the Rural Coalition, our membership and rural constituents across the world! - **JOHN ZIPPERT**

Congrats Lorette! Your Leadership and Dedication to the Movement inspire us everyday. And in your honor, we promise to get our reports in on time.- **RURAL COALITION STAFF**

Congratulations to Lorette on your amazing work in your 20 years at the Rural Coalition! Thank you for your steadfast support for food workers' rights! - **FOOD CHAIN WORKERS ALLIANCE**

In Honor of Lorette Picciano Your Hard Work, Dedication and Sincerity created food access and farmer advocacy as we know it today. - **WORLD FARMERS INC**

Congratulations Lorette!!! You are a wonderful role model!!! - **THE SHELTER FOR ABUSED WOMEN AND CHILDREN**

Congratulations on 20 years of magnificent work, fighting for the poor, championing rural communities, representing diversity, pushing for change. We celebrate your work and achievements!

- **RURAL DEVELOPMENT LEADERSHIP NETWORK**

20 years of making a difference for small farmers and farmworkers! Thanks for your dedication! Congratulations, Lorette!

- **THE FARMWORKER ASSOCIATION OF FLORIDA**

Congratulations on 20 years of service, Lorette! I am honored to have been there in the beginning. Much Love,

- **JENNIFER SLATKIN**

Happy 20th Lorette! In 1999, you believed in the potential of graduate students and changed our lives forever.

- **INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH**

MURAL OF SOLIDARITY AND APPRECIATION CELEBRATING LORETTE PICCIANO'S 20th ANNIVERSARY WITH THE RURAL COALITION

A Nuestra Madrina Lorette, por su tenacidad, lealtad con nuestras comunidades campesinas, especialmente a la Mujer. Por su constante lucha por un mejor porvenir y en Solidaridad con Pequeños Agricultores y Campesinos/as.

- ALIANZA NACIONAL DE CAMPESINAS

Thank you for always being a great Mom, teaching us how to work passionately and to love the land and her people. -

HANNAH, LARS, AND MERIDITH

There wouldn't be a Rural Coalition without the nurture and dedication of Lorette Picciano. Thanks for 20 years of speaking out for small farmers and rural communities. - DEBRA LIVINGSTON

We celebrate the leadership of Lorette Picciano and the work of the Rural Coalition in promoting diversity and equity in the farm and food system, In Solidarity,- NATIONAL FAMILY FARM COALITION FARMERS AND MEMBERS

The North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers Land Loss Prevention Project congratulates Lorette for providing leadership and guidance of the Rural Coalition and the small farm movement for twenty years and counting in advance many more years to come. The Good Shepherd comes to mind.

- NORTH CAROLINA BLACK LAWYERS LANDLOSS PREVENTION PROJECT

Lorette, Desde Mexico queremos darte las gracias por estos 20 años acompañando a la Coalición Rural. Tu fuiste mi primer contacto para conocerla. Muchas Gracias, las Organizaciones de Mexico también te dan las gracias.

- CHILO VILLAREAL

**Congratulations Lorette
for 20 years of wonderful
service to farmers and rural
people.**

We wish you the best!

**Rural Advancement Fund
of the
National Sharecroppers Fund, Inc.**
Georgia Good, Executive Director



Seeds fell into good soil and
produced a hundredfold."

Mark 4:8

Honoring Lorette's good
heart!

- Love, HER MOM and
SIBLINGS



Opening Blessing Ceremony
 2011 RC National Rural Gathering
 Shawnee, Oklahoma

In Gratitude to Our Community of Sponsors and Donors

The Rural Coalition would like to thank everyone who shares our passion and has helped us take the often difficult steps towards a more equitable and fair food and farm system. In a very difficult year your support has been a tremendous asset to our members, projects, and our coalition.

- National Latino Farmers and Ranchers Trade Association
- National Hmong Farmers, Inc.
- Rural Advancement Fund
- North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers Land Loss Prevention Project
- Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund
- Mississippi Association of Cooperatives
- Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project
- Operation Spring Plant
- World Farmers
- Farmworker Association of Florida
- Rural Development Leadership Network
- Community Food and Justice Coalition
- Institute for Community-Based Research
- The Washington Center
- National Crop Insurance Services
- USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

- USDA Farm Service Agency
- USDA Natural Resources and Conservation Service
- USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture
- USDA Office of Advocacy and Outreach
- USDA Risk Management Agency
- USDA Rural Development



With Special Thanks to :

- First Congregational United Church of Christ
- Luther Place Memorial Church
- Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation
- New World Foundation
- Presbyterian Church USA Hunger Program
- W. K. Kellogg Foundation

A very special thank you to Ayisah Yusuf, Maritza Moya, Tahirah Cook, and Rabiah Al Nur for their great efforts and sweat equity contributions over the last year.