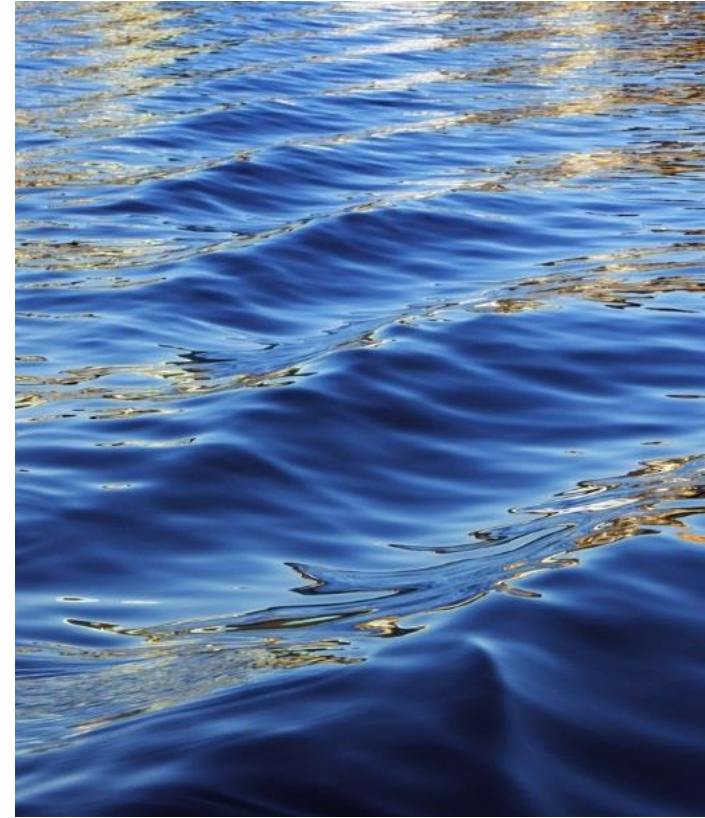




Conservation and Agriculture Reach Everyone

Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts and
Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project Inc. program



CARE Project Partnership

Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts

- non-profit organization with the mission of providing leadership, resources, and partnership opportunities to conservation district and those who manage the land to enhance our natural resources for a better Oklahoma

Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project

- non-profit organization that provides education, technical assistance to socially disadvantaged farmers and forestry landowners.

Project Vision

To provide information, training, funding opportunities and technical assistance to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

What is a socially disadvantaged famer/rancher?

A socially disadvantaged farmer/rancher was defined in the 1990 farm bill as members of a socially disadvantaged group, which is defined to mean those whose identity in a group has subjected them to racial or ethnic prejudice without regard to their individual identity.



The History of Landowners in Oklahoma



CHEROKEE



CHOCTAW



MUSCOGEE
(CREEK)



CHICKASAW



SEMINOLE

- Indian Removal Act of 1830 forced tens of thousands of Native Americans from their homes to modern day Oklahoma
- All of the five civilized tribes owned slaves.
- Following the Civil War, slavery was abolished and the former slaves of the Native Americans began forming towns

Settlement from 1865-1920



All-Black Towns of Oklahoma

Oklahoma Historical Society | www.okhistory.org

- Towns still incorporated today
- Towns & settlements no longer inhabited or without local government

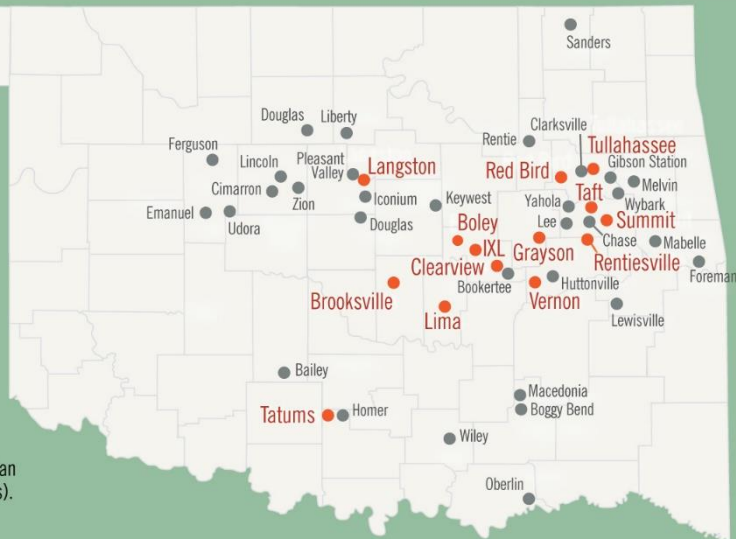
Early towns established before 1880

Tulahassee
Marshalltown
North Fork Colored
Canadian Colored
Arkansas Colored

About All-Black Towns

African Americans who settled in Oklahoma established more than fifty identifiable All-Black towns between the end of the Civil War and 1920. This number is unparalleled in any other region of the United States. Most towns were developed in Indian Territory by freedmen (former slaves of the Five Tribes). Others were established as a result of land openings beginning in 1889.

In these towns African Americans lived relatively free from the prejudices and violence found in many communities. Today, thirteen historical All-Black towns still exist.



- During this time period, all black communities were established throughout Oklahoma
- In 1910, there were 13,000+ farms operated by African Americans in Oklahoma.
- 1910, 176,000+ farms owned by whites

Fast Forward 100 Years – Landownership Today



- Today there are 1,900 farms owned by African Americans in Oklahoma
- There are 14,000 farms owned by Native Americans
- There are over 100,000 farms owned by whites in Oklahoma

Why the disparity in land loss rates?

Unequal access to governmental programs, heir property/fractionation issues, and a lower level of agriculture community support for minority farming/ranching operations over the last 100+ years.

USDA and Minority Producers

Reports of Discrimination

- 1965 U.S. Commission on Civil Rights publishes “Equal Opportunity in Farm Programs” detailing discrimination within USDA
- 1983 & 1990 US Commission on Civil Rights reports filed that civil rights abuse was a leading factor in the decline of minority farm ownership

Legal Action

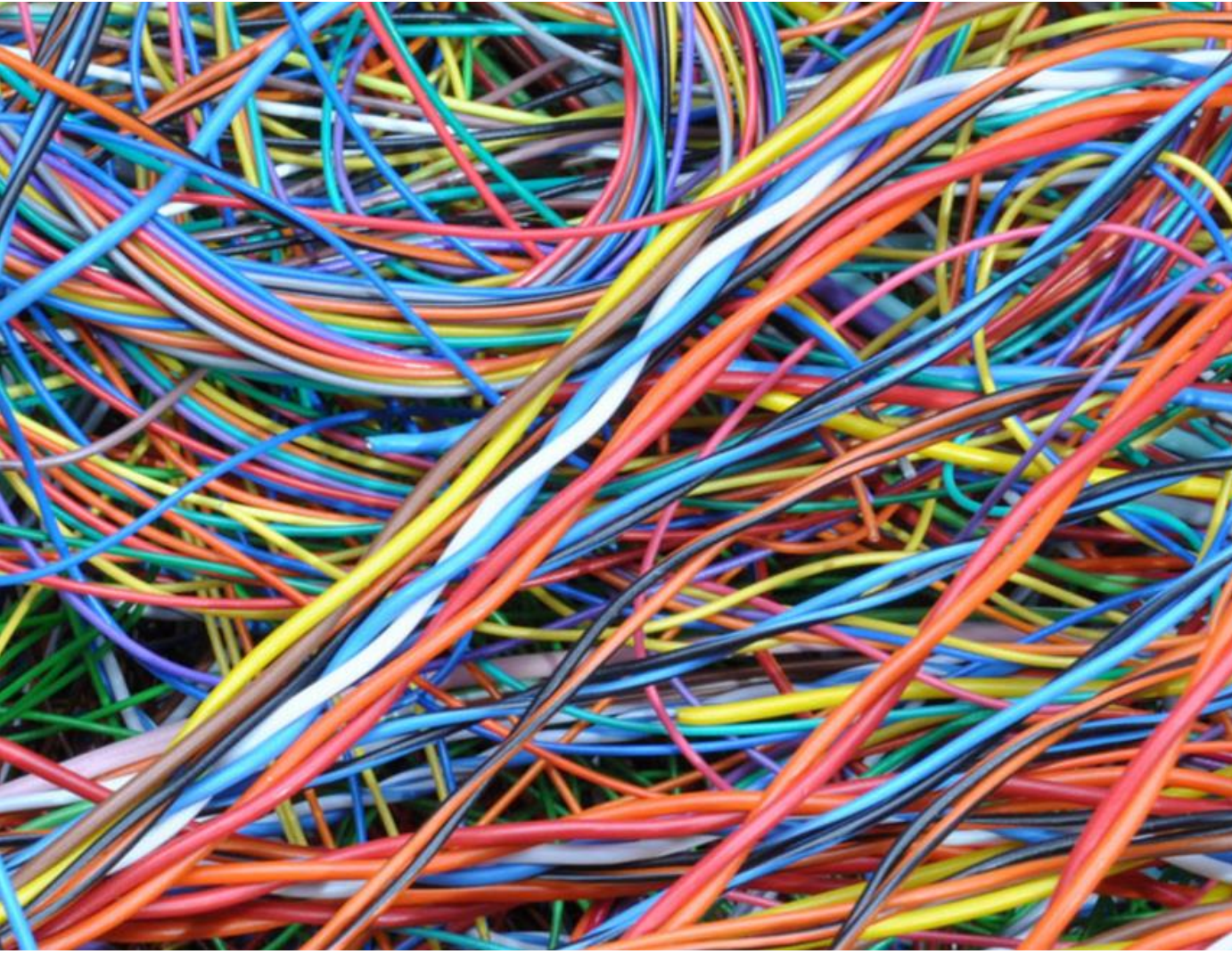
- 1999 Pigford I lawsuit is filed. Settled for \$1.03 billion.
- 2008 Pigford II lawsuit, settlement of \$1.25 billion
- 2011 Keepseagle lawsuit, settlement of \$760 million
- 2011 USDA and DOJ announce \$1.3 billion available for Hispanic and women farmers

USDA Efforts to Repair Relationships with Minority Farmers/Ranchers

Establishment of the Office of Advocacy and Outreach to enhance access to USDA programs.

- Specialized funding pools & financial resources
- Advisory committees
- Outreach efforts
- Learning resources





Fractionated Land and Heir Property Issues

Current legislative efforts:

"Assist Socially Disadvantaged and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers Act of 2018" Senate Bill: 2839, Van Hollen and Smith and House Resolution 5824, Lujan-Grisham

"Assist Farmers and Ranchers Operating on Heirs' Property to Participate in USDA Programs Act of 2018"

To Sign On:
<https://www.ruralco.org/2018/05/08/farm-bill-equity-sign-on-letter/>

Community Agriculture Organizations

Why community ag groups should help

- There 246,176 minority farmers in the United States. There are an additional 288,264 female farmers in the U.S.
- Diversity improves the organization

How they can help

- Invite minority farmers/ranchers to attend your organizations events.
- Include leaders of minority farming/ranching organizations in your larger ag community.
- Identify minority landowners who have leadership potential. Nurture those relationships. Encourage those people to seek out leadership roles.

Project Goals

- Build relationships between socially disadvantaged producers, USDA and conservation districts at the local, state, regional and national levels.
- Cultivating leadership of socially disadvantaged producers to increase knowledge of and participation in USDA programs.
- Provide educational information and training opportunities to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers in larger geographic areas across Oklahoma.
- Educate non-minority farmers, ranchers and conservation district leaders and employees about the unique barriers that socially disadvantaged farmers/ranchers face.

Why Oklahoma?

- 18,585 Socially Disadvantaged Farmers/Ranchers
- Oklahoma is 2nd in the nation for the number of Native American farmers and 14th in the nation for African-American/Black farmers.
- Strong conservation districts, the majority of which are co-located with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and many that are co-located in the same building as Farm Service Agency allows districts to be a natural bridge between producers and United States Department of Agriculture
- Native-American and African-American farmers/ranchers receive significantly less funding through USDA compared with their white counterparts in Oklahoma.



Participating Conservation Districts & Partners

- Wagoner County Conservation District
- Muskogee County Conservation District
- Muskogee (Creek) Nation Conservation District
- Okfuskee County Conservation District
- South Caddo Conservation District
- West Caddo Conservation District
- North Caddo Conservation District
- Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project
- Core conservation partnership – NRCS, OCC, OACDE



Our Plan

- Identify and cultivate relationships with SDA producers in the community that are willing to serve as champions
- Include SDA producer organizations and individual SDA producers in existing conservation, commodity, and farm advocacy groups
- Conduct survey and interviews to identify existing barriers in access to USDA programs and share that information in a confidential written report to the office of advocacy and outreach
- Host field days and workshops featuring SDA producers



Meet our CARE Champions

A photograph of Pershon Davis, a man with a long grey beard, wearing a camouflage baseball cap and a dark button-down shirt. He is standing in front of a large red and white metal barn. In the foreground, several black and white cows are gathered around a green metal feeding trough. Hay bales are visible in the background behind a fence. The text "Pershon Davis" is written in a large, white, cursive font across the top left of the image.

Pershon Davis

CADDO COUNTY

**“The Farm Service Agency
Operating Loan Program
allowed me to expand my
operation by 100 acres.”**

A portrait of a young woman with dark hair, smiling, wearing a grey and black baseball-style shirt. The background is a blurred outdoor scene with warm, golden light, possibly a field or farm.

Emery Fox

MUSCOGEE (CREEK) NATION

**“The Beginning Farmer/
Rancher Microloan through
the Farm Service Agency
allowed me to start my own
operation.”**



Ray Penn
LOGAN COUNTY

**“USDA programs
allow people to better
their farms.”**



Vanessa Vance

CADDO COUNTY

"I have been working with my tribe to create opportunities for tribal members to learn about different USDA and conservation district programs."



Ronnie Nero

OKFUSKEE COUNTY

"Without the state cost share and NRCS programs, I would not have been able to move my operation forward as quickly."

Dana Todd

WAGONER COUNTY

"Conservation is the way we can preserve our land
while still providing food for our families and future
generations."



A photograph of Phil Campbell, a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a blue jacket and jeans, standing in a field with several black cattle. He is reaching out to touch one of the cows. The background shows a line of bare trees under a cloudy sky.

Phil Campbell

OKLAHOMA COUNTY

“Talk to your local NRCS district conservationist. From conservation planning to cost share programs. There is something for everyone.”

CARE



Conservation and Agriculture Reach Everyone



For more information:

okconservation.org/care

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