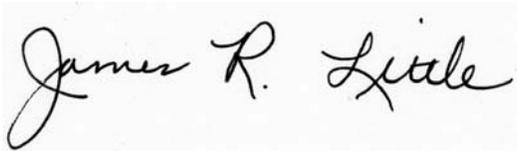


For: State and County Offices

Minority Farm Register (MFR)

Approved by: Administrator



1 Overview

A Background

MFR is a national FSA project that was developed in cooperation with the Office of Outreach. It establishes a data base of individuals who voluntarily provide their name, residential address, telephone number, e-mail address, ethnicity, race, gender, and the location of their farm or ranch to FSA. By registering for MFR, individuals authorize the release of this information for the purpose of USDA outreach efforts conducted through USDA-approved outreach partners, such as community-based organizations (CBO's), colleges and universities, and other nonprofit groups or organizations representing socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

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

B Purpose

This notice provides instructions for collecting and distributing information to support a registry of:

- farm and ranch owners
- operators
- producers and others with a farming or ranching interest.

Disposal Date	Distribution
September 1, 2005	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

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1 Overview (Continued)

C Initial Distribution of MFR Pamphlets

MFR pamphlets PA-1785 and PA-1785SP (Spanish version) were provided to State Offices in sufficient quantities for State Office distribution to local Service Centers and outreach organizations. These pamphlets also contain AD-2035 and AD-2035SP.

Note: AD-2035 and AD-2035SP are also available on the FFAS Intranet Online Forms site and USDA Service Center site for electronic public access.

2 Action

A State Office Action

The State Outreach Coordinator shall coordinate State-wide with socially disadvantaged registrants, land-grant and other minority servicing institutions, and CBO's to distribute MFR pamphlets. The State Outreach Coordinator shall immediately provide to CBO's and institutions any quantity of pamphlets they request. The State Office shall estimate the needs for individual FSA offices and distribute those quantities required. Additional pamphlets shall be requested as needed. Pamphlets will be stocked and provided through normal procedures.

B Service Center Action

Each Service Center shall display the MFR pamphlets and make them readily accessible to the public and CBO's. Employees should note that some items on AD-2035 or AD-2035SP must be completed and some are voluntary.

Note: Every employee is to read and familiarize themselves with the MFR pamphlet so that they can provide assistance to individuals wishing to complete AD-2035 or AD-2035SP.

Individuals will be encouraged to mail AD-2035 or AD-2035SP to the National Office address provided on AD-2035 or AD-2035SP. However, if an individual requests help in mailing AD-2035 or AD-2035SP, the Service Center is to mail the completed and signed AD-2035 or AD-2035SP to the address provided.

Note: It is very important that no completed AD-2035's or AD-2035SP's or copies of completed AD-2035's or AD-2035SP's are to be maintained outside of the national record holding office.

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2 Action (Continued)

B Service Center Action (Continued)

If AD-2035 or AD-2035SP:

- is submitted to a Service Center without the required information:
 - AD-2035 or AD-2035SP is to be returned to the registrant within 10 workdays with a written, signed explanation of the information required
 - the Service Center responder should make it clear that the only information required on AD-2035 or AD-2035SP is the registrant's name, address, signature, and date of signature

Note: All other information is optional.

- cannot be returned to the registrant, it is to be sent to the National Office address appearing on AD-2035 or AD-2035SP with a signed statement that the registrant could not be reached to fully complete the required information and/or the required signature.

CED's shall complete and provide the fill-in-the-blank press release (Exhibit 1) to all local media. County Offices shall include information about MFR in newsletters and at meetings with minority groups and their organizations.

C Access to MFR Mailing Lists

It is anticipated that individuals who elect to register will want to know how their data will be used, and who will have access to the data, among other questions. In response to these inquiries, FSA should indicate that the National Office and the Office of Outreach have developed guidelines for access to and use of the information included in the MFR database. These guidelines will:

- protect the integrity of MFR
- prohibit use of the data for such activities as lobbying, solicitation, promotional considerations, partisan politics, intimidation, harassment, legal representation, and membership drives.

The national record holding office's address is the following.

FSA Office of Minority and Socially Disadvantaged Farmer Assistance
Stop Code 0503
1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20250-0503

Note: All requests for FOIA releases or outreach uses for MFR shall be made in writing to the Director of the national record holding office.

Press Release Example

USDA CREATES VOLUNTARY REGISTER TO REACH MINORITY PRODUCERS

_____(your town, state)_____, Aug. XX, 2004 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) announces that minority farmers and ranchers in _____ County and across the nation may now join a new voluntary register to receive information from USDA.

“The new Minority Farm Register is an outreach tool to reach underserved farmers and ranchers who are not currently enrolled in USDA loan, farm or conservation programs,” said _____, _____(your county)_____ County FSA county executive director. “The Register will create a shared outreach list that will help USDA, community-based organizations and minority-serving educational institutions to communicate with minority farmers and ranchers.”

By joining the Register, minority producers may receive outreach materials, newsletters and program announcements from USDA agencies. They may also receive information and assistance from other USDA-approved outreach partners, such as community-based organizations, faith-based organizations and minority-serving educational institutions. USDA will carefully control access to and use of the Register.

Individuals wishing to join the Register must sign and date a form that provides their name and address. Providing phone numbers, e-mail address, race, ethnicity, gender and farm or ranch location will be voluntary, although the additional information increases the producer’s opportunities for receiving appropriate assistance.

The Register pamphlet with the registration form is available at the _____ County USDA Service Center or from approved USDA outreach partners. Completed forms may be mailed to: Minority Farm Register, USDA Stop Code 0503, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., 20250. The registration information is available on the FSA’s Web site at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pas/publications/mfr/default.htm>. FSA and USDA’s Office of Outreach are jointly administering the Register. Registration forms are available in Spanish and English.

An individual may remove his or her name from the Register by writing to the Minority Farm Register, USDA Stop Code 0503, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., 20250.

For more information, please contact the Office of Minority and Socially Disadvantaged Farmers Assistance, Farm Service Agency, STOP 0503, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-0501 (Call 1-866-538-2610; Fax: 1-866-302-1760; TTY: 1-866-480-2824, E-mail: MSDA@USDA.gov) or USDA Office of Outreach, STOP 9473, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250 (Call 1-800-880-4183; Fax: (202) 720-7489; E-mail: usdaoutreach@usda.gov).

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