



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

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# Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Advisory Committee Meeting

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August 5; 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. EST



# UAIP Advisory Committee Purpose, Priorities and Subcommittees

Angela Mason  
UAIPAC Chairperson

# Purpose

- The purpose of the Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production Advisory Committee is to advise the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA Secretary) and the Director of the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production (OUAIP) on the development of policies and outreach related to urban, indoor, and other emerging agricultural production practices, and any other aspects of the implementation of the Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production section of the 2018 Farm Bill.

# Priorities

- The Committee shall:
  - Develop recommendations and advise on policies, initiatives, and outreach administered by OUAIP
  - Evaluate and review ongoing research and extension activities relating to urban, indoor, and other innovative agricultural practices
  - Identify new and existing barriers to successful urban, indoor, and other emerging agricultural production practices; and
  - Provide additional assistance and advice to the Director of OUAIP as appropriate

# Subcommittees

- Subcommittee 1-
  - “Subcommittee on Policies, Initiatives and Outreach”
    - Lead – John Lebeaux
      - Members – Sally Brown, Zachari Curtis, Jerry Hebron, John Lebeaux, Alison Paap, Viraj Puri, Carl Wallace

# Subcommittees

- Subcommittee 2-
  - “Subcommittee on Evaluation and Review of Research and Extension Activities”
    - Lead – Sally Brown
    - Members – John Erwin, Angela Mason, Kaben Smallwood, Carl Wallace

# Subcommittees

- Subcommittee 3-
  - Subcommittee on Identification of New and Existing Barriers to Urban, Indoor and Innovative Agriculture
    - Lead – Tara Chadwick
    - Members – Zachari Curtis, John Erwin, Jerry Hebron, Allison Paap, Kaben Smallwood, Carl Wallace, Bobby Wilson

# Equity Commission Overview & Priorities

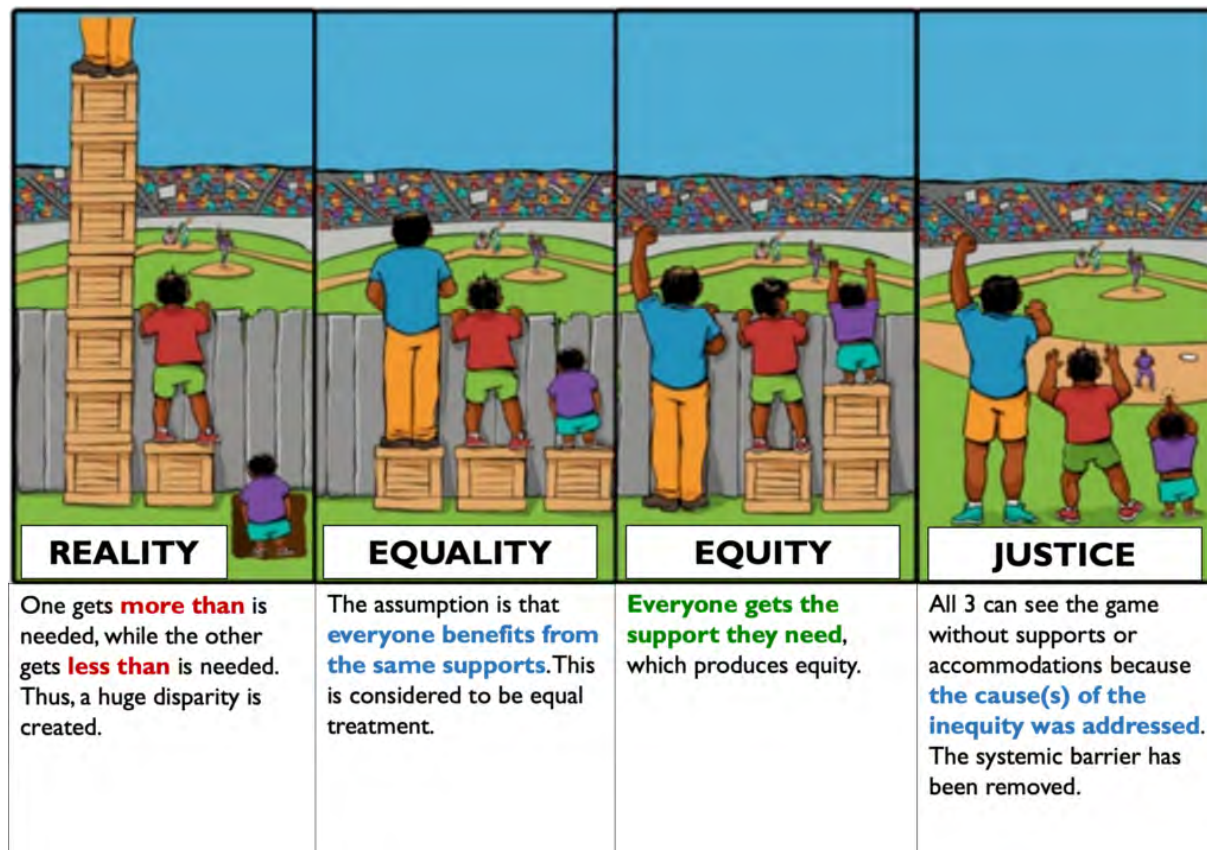
August 5, 2022

**USDA** EQUITY COMMISSION  
*Shaping Change at USDA*





Equity means the consistent and systemic fair, just and impartial treatment of all individuals, including those who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment.



## KEY THEMES

- USDA's History of Discrimination
- Lack of Internal Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access (DEIA)
- Barriers to Funding Opportunities and Program Access
- Barriers to Land Access, Ownership, and Retention
- Need to Honor Trust & Treaty Responsibilities with Tribes
- Need for Targeted Education, Outreach & Technical Assistance
- Expanded Access to Nutrition Programs
- Strengthening USDA's Civil Rights
- Customer experience including capacity in the field



All public comments are accessible online at <https://www.regulations.gov/document/USDA-2021-0006-0001>

## Summer 2021: Received input from more than 500 stakeholders

- 50% (most commenters) used the word “BIPOC” or “people of color” when discussing barriers and opportunities
- 20% spoke directly about the Black or African American community (farmers, organizations, businesses, youth)
- 10-15% spoke directly about tribal concerns
- 10% spoke directly about Hispanic/Latino and/or farmworker concerns
- <5% spoke directly about AAPI concerns, indicating a need for the USDA to engage more with that community





*“Farmers hear stories from their peers about disparate treatment, as well as extra and unclear requirements for applications, and many decide not to apply at all. It takes significant time and work to understand a program and put together an application, as well as drive to the FSA office. When farmers are rejected with little explanation, it deters them from following up or participating in future opportunities. Others who hear about these hurdles do not apply at all.”*

-African American woman, a fifth-generation farmer in Southeastern AL



*“Cooperative agreements for organizations with trusting relationships with underserved communities. Distrust of the agency prevents many underserved farmers from applying to USDA programs. Community organizations with trusted relationships with BIPOC farmers are the best at encouraging and empowering farmers in their networks to apply for USDA programs. They should be leveraged as key partners across USDA programs like they have been with CFAP2 cooperative agreements.”*

-National Young Farmers Coalition

**The Biden Administration is advancing a comprehensive strategy to consider the barriers and challenges faced by those who experience intersecting and compounding forms of discrimination and bias related to gender, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, disability, age and socioeconomic status.**

This includes addressing discrimination and bias faced by Black, Latinx, Indigenous and Native American persons, Asia Americans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, Alaska Natives and other persons of color; women; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities, persons who live in rural areas and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

# USDA Equity Framework



**Dr. Dewayne Goldmon**  
Sr. Advisor for Racial Justice & Equity



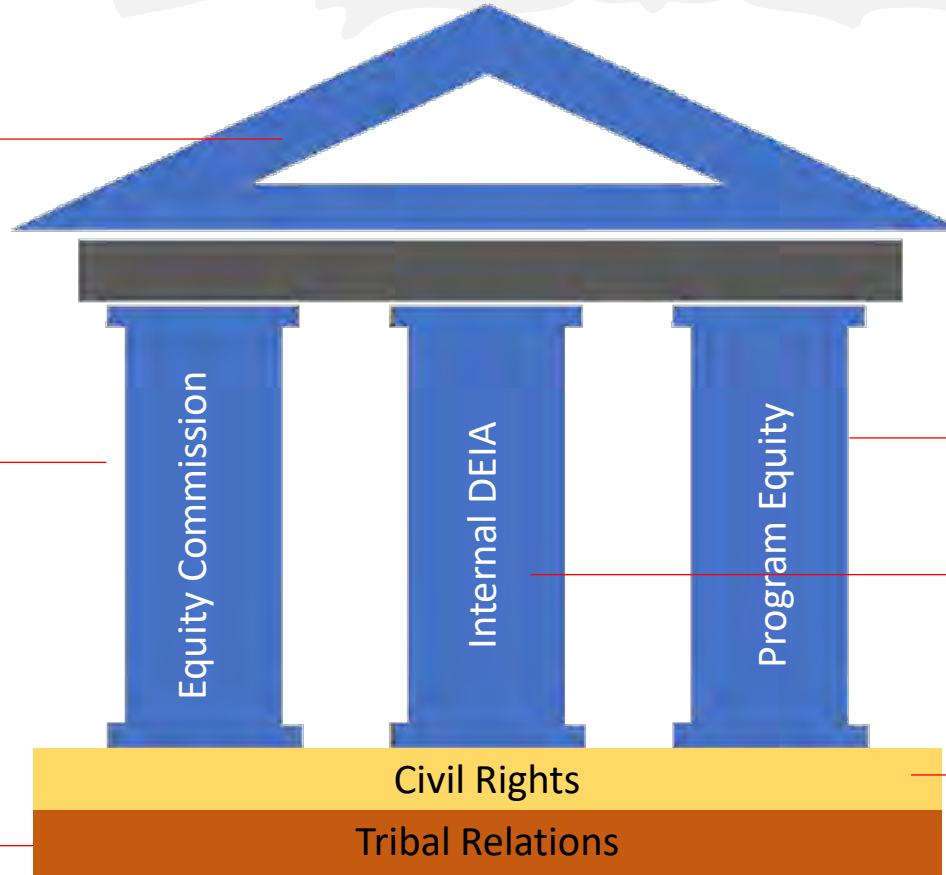
**Claudette Fernandez** (*Career*)  
Program Equity Lead



**Cecilia Hernandez** (*Career*)  
Equity Commission, Designated  
Federal Official (DFO)



**Leslie Weldon** (*Career*)  
Acting Chief Diversity &  
Inclusion Officer



**Heather Dawn Thompson**  
Director, Office of Tribal  
Relations



**Monica Rainge**  
Deputy Assistant Secretary, Office of  
the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights



**To provide recommendations to the Secretary on policies, programs, and actions needed to address racial equity issues within the Department of Agriculture and its programs, including strengthening accountability at USDA and to provide recommendations to the Secretary on broader and more systemic equity issues at USDA.**



## **Executive Order 19385** ***Advancing Racial Equity***

- Enacted on January 20, 2021
- Signed into law by President Biden to advance racial equity and support for underserved communities through the federal government
- Provides a commitment to closing the racial wealth gap and more direction to the Equity Commission on the scope of work

## **American Rescue Plan Act of 2021,** **Section 1006**

- Enacted on March 11, 2021
- Signed into law by President Biden to speed up the country's recovery from the economic and health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Section 1006 of the Act directed USDA to create the Equity Commission and provided funds sufficient to ensure the Commission is well staffed

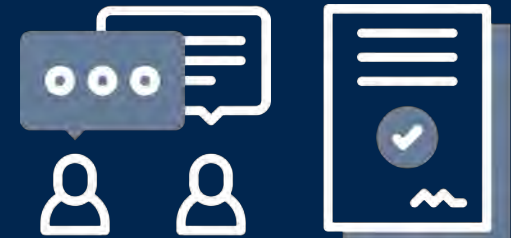
1. Identify and recommend actions to **remove barriers to equitable access** and use of USDA programs, policies, systems, structures, and practices, including impediments that are internal, external, discretionary, or statutory.
2. Recommend actions and solutions that **address racial equity issues**, expand assistance, and provide support for historically underserved customers and communities needed for equitable access to USDA programs and services.
3. Recommend actions and solutions that **address broader and more systemic equity issues** at USDA.
4. Recommend actions that will ensure USDA is a modern, competitive workplace with an **organizational culture that prioritizes diversity, equity, inclusion, and access** for its staff and customers alike.



10 reports



30 agencies and offices



56 years

1965

2021

**The USDA Equity Commission and its Subcommittees is a group of agriculture industry members, experts, and advocates:**

***The Equity Commission:***

15 members including 2 co-chairs

**Dr. Jewel Bronaugh** - Co-Chair + Deputy Secretary of Agriculture

**Arturo S. Rodriguez** - Co-Chair + President of the United Farm Workers of America

***Agriculture Subcommittee:***

13 members + 2 Equity Commission members

***Rural Community Economic Development Subcommittee:***

13 members + 2 Equity Commission members

Equity Commission members are appointed for 2 years:

- **Feb 2022:** Launch and First Public Meeting
- **May 2022:** Second Public Meeting
- **Aug 2022:** Planned launch of the Rural Community and Economic Development (RCED) Subcommittee
- **Sep 2022:** Third Public Meeting
- **October 2022:** Equity Commission Interim Report
- **Dec 2022:** Fourth Public Meeting
- **Summer 2023:** Consolidated Final Report from Equity Commission

- **USDA Equity Commission Website**

[www.usda.gov/equity-commission](http://www.usda.gov/equity-commission)

- **Point of Contact**

DFO Cecilia Hernandez

- **Equity Commission Email**

[EquityCommission@usda.gov](mailto:EquityCommission@usda.gov)



# Equity Commission Q&A Session

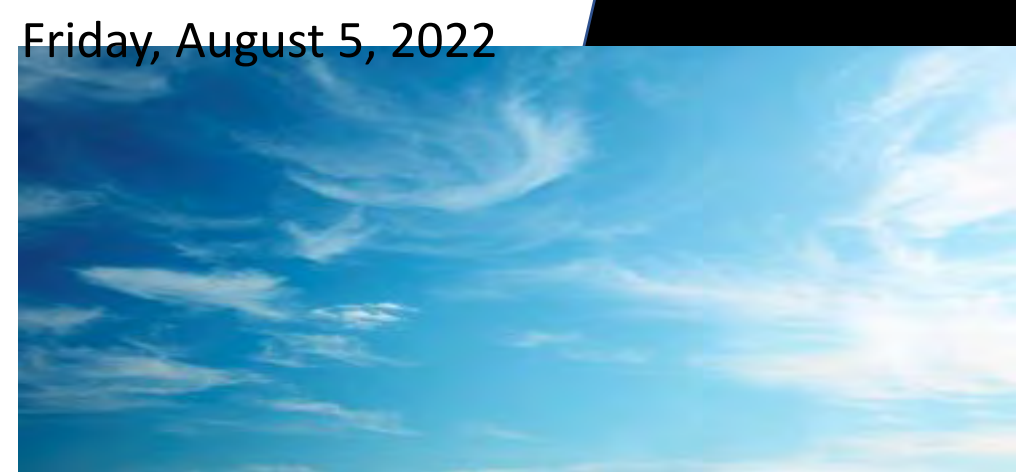
# URBAN AG COUNTY COMMITTEES

## Roles and Responsibilities

Conisha T. Hackett, Esq.  
Senior Policy Advisor for Equity, FSA



Friday, August 5, 2022





# How to Become an Urban County Committee Member?

- **Elections**
- **Nominations**
  - Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in an FSA program may be nominated for candidacy for the county office. Individuals may nominate themselves or others as a candidate. In addition, organizations representing underserved (minority and women) farmers or ranchers may nominate candidates.
- **Voting**
  - Agricultural producers of legal voting age may be eligible to vote if they participate or cooperate in any FSA program.
    - A cooperating producer is someone who has provided information about their farming or ranching operation(s) but may not have applied or received FSA program benefits.
  - A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the operations of an entire farm also may be eligible to vote. Members of American Indian tribes holding agricultural land are eligible to vote if voting requirements are met.

# Roles & Responsibilities

The urban and suburban county committees will :

- work to encourage and promote urban, indoor, and other emerging agricultural production practices.
- address areas such as food access, community engagement, support of local activities to promote and encourage community compost, and food waste reduction.
- make determinations, listen to appeals and make decisions, and conduct outreach to urban and suburban farms and farmers for both FSA and NRCS.

# Roles & Responsibilities

Committee members:

- meet at least quarterly during term (up to three years).
- operate within official federal regulations and provide local input on:
  - Income safety-net loans and payments, including setting county average yields for commodities;
  - Conservation programs;
  - Incentive, indemnity, and disaster payments for some commodities;
  - Emergency programs; and
  - Payment eligibility.

# Q&A Session

**Conisha T. Hackett**

Farm Service Agency  
Senior Policy Advisor for Equity

[Conisha.Hackett@usda.gov](mailto:Conisha.Hackett@usda.gov)

# Urban Technical Barriers

Margaret Gannon, Urban Conservationist  
Natural Resources Conservation Service

# History



# Change

- NRCS priorities
- Information sharing



# Change

- Public comments
- Agency review





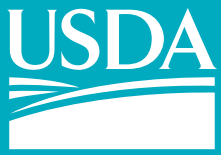
# Barrier Identification

- Overarching needs
- Technical
- Programmatic



# Overarching Needs





United States Department of Agriculture

# Technical & Programmatic



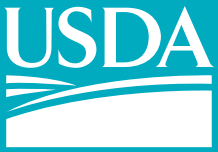
# Future Efforts





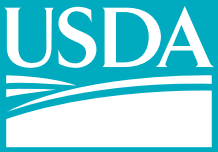
Q&A

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# Contact Us

- More information about OUAIP can be viewed at [usda.gov/urban](https://usda.gov/urban)
- Email us at [urbanagriculture@usda.gov](mailto:urbanagriculture@usda.gov)



# Urban Technical Barriers Q&A Session

# UAIPAC Open Discussion

Brian Guse, Designated Federal Officer/Director OUAIP  
UAIPAC Members



# Additional Information and Closing Remarks

- Information regarding the UAIPAC meetings can be found at:  
[www.usda.gov/partnerships/federal-advisory-committee-urban-ag](http://www.usda.gov/partnerships/federal-advisory-committee-urban-ag)
- Email questions and comments to  
[UrbanagricultureFederalAdvisoryCommittee@usda.gov](mailto:UrbanagricultureFederalAdvisoryCommittee@usda.gov)

# Thank you for attending

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[www.usda.gov/urban](http://www.usda.gov/urban)