

OUTREACH PLAN TIP SHEET

GM 230, Part 406, 406.1 Policy

The policy of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is that Outreach is an integral part of the overall delivery of NRCS programs and services to customers and potential beneficiaries. We will conduct our business to ensure that all programs and services are made accessible to all customers, with emphasis on the underserved.

Outreach Definition: An organized effort to extend services beyond usual limits, as to particular segments of a community

NRCS OUTREACH DIVISION DEFINES a way of conducting business to ensure that the "**underserved**" individuals and groups throughout the United States and its territories are made aware of, understand, and have a working knowledge of USDA programs and services. Outreach will ensure that these programs and services are equitable and made accessible to all.

WHO ARE UNDERSERVED CUSTOMERS?

INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS WHO HAVE NOT PARTICIPATED IN OR HAVE RECEIVED LIMITED BENEFITS FROM USDA OR NRCS PROGRAMS (i.e., Limited Resource Producers, Small Farmers/Ranchers, Minority Groups, and Females)

OUTREACH TIPS FOR ALL OFFICES

Presentations

- Sponsor Backyard Conservation workshop at Ag show
- Woman's Ag night
- Family Ag night
- When selecting presenters at public events look for potential minorities for role model opportunities

News Articles

- Consult with local newspaper for space to have monthly news articles to inform potential customers of success stories and opportunities working with the SCD and NRCS
- Write and publish news articles informing public of USDA programs and services available
- Write additional news articles

Staff communication

- Ensure all program materials that leave the office have the non-discrimination statement
- Review Equal Opportunity Fact sheet with staff and provide training as needed
- Show SCD board and staff "North Dakota Workforce Diversity-Representation on District boards"
- Show SCD board and staff "Careers with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in North Dakota" recruitment DVD
- Emphasize or expand invitation to spouses when planning activities such as tours, workshops, etc.
- Reporting data is regularly reviewed for program participation and providing quality assistance
- Review complaint process with district & NRCS employees
- Review and discuss "Standards of Ethical Conduct" with all field office staff
- Review with field office staff how to receive and process a program discrimination complaint
- Review the civil rights complaint process at one staff meeting
- Discuss outreach plan at staff meeting
- Review any civil rights program delivery needs at staff meeting
- Review civil rights for Program delivery with all staff and provide training as requested
- Utilize training videos from the "Leader in You" series during staff meetings
- Review outreach plan and action items at staff meetings
- Review what "Outreach" is and its importance with all staff
- Encourage staff to read and discuss Special Emphasis Program Manager (SEPM) Awareness Month emails and articles

SCD Board Meetings

- Discuss opportunities and benefits of minorities, women, or physically disabled representation on the local board
- Discuss program delivery/diversity issues with the SCD board
- Show SCD board and staff "North Dakota Workforce Diversity-Representation on District boards"
- Show SCD board and staff "Careers with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in North Dakota" recruitment DVD
- Provide Civil Rights information to district boards
- Review complaint process with district and NRCS employees
- Review and document the civil rights portion of the MOU with the SCD at board meeting.

Posters/Displays/Booths

- Place program information in public buildings
- The "And Justice for All" poster is prominently displayed in office
- Provide information to customers through farm shows, county fairs, etc.
- Post all SEPM Awareness Month Posters prominently in office

Recruitment/Education

- Present career material to schools
- Show "Careers with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in North Dakota" and provide DVD to interested parties
- Provide schools information about Earth Team Volunteer program
- Encourage schools to participate in Natural Resources day, TREES program, etc.
- Provide information to ND Home School Association newsletter regarding SCD sponsored programs
- Participate in recruitment of NRCS employees by providing career information and attending career days
- Promote "Take your child to work day" in office

Mailings

- Develop (update) name/address file of underserved customers
- Send special mailing to identified lists
- Provide current information on NRCS programs and services to underserved customers by mail

- Send special mailing to identified lists
- Include urban customers along with rural customers for mailings

Training

- Ensure required employees complete the ethics training modules.
- Maintain training file for Civil Rights Training

Documentation

- Document initiatives taken to target underserved groups and file
- File is maintained of the ND Civil Rights Committee minutes

Accessibility/Accommodations

- Ensure NRCS and District public meetings are held at handicap assessable sites
- Work with Districts to identify barriers
- Ensure office space is handicap accessible throughout the year
- Ensure handicap accessibility of USDA Service Center

Miscellaneous

- Farm visits
- Provide current information on NRCS programs and services available to non-ag customers
- Recruit senior citizens and others as volunteers

Remember to "Think OUTSIDE the Box"