Identifying Barriers that Prevent Hispanic/Latino Farmers & Ranchers in Washington State from Participating in USDA Programs and Services

Rural Community Development Resources (RCDR)
Center for Latino Farmers, Yakima, WA

"Investing in Equity to Prepare the Next Generation of American Farmers"
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Primary Researchers: Juan Marinez, Michigan State University
R. Edmund Gomez, New Mexico State University

Latino Policy Research & Development Institute
Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Yakima County

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Introduction and Summary:

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has often referred to the Spanish, Hispanic and Latino farmers and ranchers as the largest and fastest growing ethnic minority group in the nation based on data obtained from the 2002\(^1\) and 2007 Census of Agriculture. Interestingly, based on current USDA data, Hispanic/Latino farmers & ranchers appear to have the lowest participation rate of USDA programs when one compares them to other socially disadvantaged farmer and rancher groups, and proportionately, are underrepresented on USDA boards, committees and grants allocations to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers within USDA agencies.

The Rural Community Development Resources, Center for Latino Farmers (Center) applied for a USDA Outreach and Assistance to Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (OASDFR) Competitive Grant Program – Round 2 RFA in an effort to enhance the coordination of outreach, education, and technical assistance efforts for the Socially Disadvantaged Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State. On October 28, 2010, the Center was awarded an OASDFR grant to collect Hispanic/Latino farmer and rancher data that would identify barriers to accessing USDA services and programs. Through surveys, focus groups, workshop training sessions and individual interviews. The primary purpose of the grant is to enhance the coordination of outreach, technical assistance and education efforts to reach socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers by USDA.

The overall goal of the project was to define the barriers, whether real or perceived, on equitable participation and utilization of USDA programs and services by Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers, beginning at the local USDA service centers in Washington State. It is the intent of the research study, that the data could be used to develop recommendations to USDA that would result in a better outcome of service to the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers and rural communities of Washington State.

A review of literature was conducted attempting to identify past studies that defined the barriers of Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers on equitable participation and utilization of USDA programs. The most recent studies that are pertinent to our study included *A Snapshot of Missouri and Nebraska Latino Farmers and Ranchers* by Bailey\(^2\) from the Center for Rural Affairs. The study focused on farmer rancher demographics and current situations. The Center for Rural Affairs continued the study with an in depth report called *Barriers and Challenges faced by Latino Farmers and Ranchers - Report* examines barriers to starting and sustaining a


farm or ranch by Martinez. The study identified barriers encountered by the Latino farmers and ranchers interviewed in the study. Recommendations to overcome these barriers were not included at this time in the report. The University of Florida conducted a national survey Hispanic-Latino Farmers and Ranchers Project by Swicher. The study focused on identifying the research and extension needs of Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers nationally, as they are the largest and fastest growing minority group in the country. The most recent study was conducted by Jackson Lewis LLP, USDA Independent Assessment of the Delivery of Technical and Financial Assistance, “Civil Rights Assessment” Final Report. This report was commissioned by USDA to identify barriers within USDA agencies and how they provide outreach and assistance to socially disadvantaged producers through their services.

The five project objectives in Washington State include the following: a one day Stakeholder and Partner Listening Session/Small Farm Conference; a 30-hour, five week Conservation Education series for 30 target producers; a 30-hour, five week Personal Financial Responsibility educational series for 30 target producers; a 30-hour, five week Agriculture Leadership educational series for 30 target producers; and a one day Small Farm Conference and Listening Session that included a preliminary overview of project research outcomes.

The project study target audience was identified as all USDA service providers, and the Hispanic/Latino farmers, ranchers and farmworkers with special focus on the Mexican immigrants, and new and beginning farmers and ranchers from the following counties in Washington State: Yakima, Benton, Adams, Okanogan, Grant, Chelan, Douglas, and Franklin. The Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers targeted for this study present unique characteristics as they are an immigrant, first-generation, mono-lingual community who have settled in Washington State over the past years and have become a vibrant entity within Washington State agriculture. The mentioned counties along with the farmers and ranchers selected for the study represented, proportionately, the most current 2007 agriculture census data of Hispanic/Latino farmer and rancher county concentrations and would represent the target audience statistically. These counties also have a very strong agriculture based economy and are experiencing a great number of Hispanic/Latino farmworkers transitioning into farm ownership.

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Target Counties

The Stakeholder and Partner Listening Session/Small Farm Conference was held on February 24, 2011 in Yakima, WA with a special interest in inviting Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers from the target counties as attendees. This was the beginning of the series of workshops and programs from which participants were recruited for the remaining project educational activities. At this first session, all of the participants were introduced to Turning Point® which is a tool used to conduct surveys. This tool was especially selected for this research study because it offered an ease of response with which the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers could participate.

USDA service providers in the target region were also identified as part of the target audience. As a major component of the project study, the project made special efforts to survey all USDA FSA, NRCS, RMA and RD service providers in the target counties. The survey instrument selected was Survey Monkey® and it had been scheduled to be administered through the internet on the last week of June 2011. (Appendix A) Permission from USDA was requested by the project researchers as a matter of research protocol; regrettably, when the request was sent to an upper administrator at USDA, a barrier at the USDA Office of Civil Rights in Washington, D.C.,

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prevented the survey from being administered to USDA service providers in the targeted counties.

Based on the concept that a relationship must have a minimum of two parties, and both must interact, it is only logical that for the research to be complete, both the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers and the USDA service providers must have a voice in identifying barriers in order for any changes and/or recommendation to have validity to real or existing barriers. If the proposed USDA survey would have been administered to USDA service providers, they would have had an opportunity to provide constructive, yet anonymous input into the process. If barriers would have been discovered through this process, it had been the intent of the researchers to recommend possible solutions to those barriers that had been identified by the USDA service providers in the same fashion that were developed from data collected from the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers surveyed in this project; thus, regrettably, the study is providing and reporting only half of the data originally proposed.

Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers have been a vital component in Washington State agriculture as far back as the 1920’s. According to the U.S. Decennial Census of the period, data in the early years recognizes their presence not only as farmworkers but as farm/ranch owners as well. Based on the data collected by USDA beginning with the 1987 Census of Agriculture, (first year that Hispanic/Latino farmer and rancher data has been gathered) Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers have been increasing in numbers exponentially in Washington State. In 20 years, based on the USDA NASS data, Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers have increased their numbers by just over 701% (1987-325 to 2007-2,604) which represents 7% of the total number of farmers and ranchers in Washington State. Nationally, Washington State Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers represent over 4% of the total number and as of the 2007 Census of Agriculture, they are ranked 6th nationally.

Based on NASS data, Washington State Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers are the fastest growing Hispanic/Latino farmer and rancher group outside of the Southern U.S. Border States and the fastest growing farmer and rancher socially disadvantaged group in Washington State. As proposed and promised by USDA NASS officials at the project’s Small Farm Conference and Listening Session held on August 10, 2011, in Yakima, WA, increased efforts will be made to improve the enumeration process of Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State

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for the 2012 U.S. Census of Agriculture. The researchers anticipate that the data collected in the upcoming 2012 U.S. Census of Agriculture will reinforce this trend of increasing numbers of Hispanic/Latino farmers in Washington State. If this trend continues, Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers could make up the majority of farmers and ranchers in Washington State, and lead the agriculture sector in Washington State in years to come.

The research used a mixed method of sequential explanatory design consisting of two phases: quantitative followed by qualitative. Data was collected through descriptive survey instrument Turning Point®, focus group discussions, listening sessions and one-on-one interviews. Selected demographic outcomes are:

- 62% of the farmers surveyed were under 50 years of age, while 32% were between 51 and 60 years of age
- 92% of the Hispanic farmers surveyed in Washington have lived in the US for 11 or more years, and of these, 78% have lived in the U.S. 20 or more years
- 58% surveyed are U.S. citizens and 42% are legal residents; this distribution of citizenship reflects that 100% are legal U.S residents
- 75% of the Washington State Hispanic/Latino farmers surveyed are currently farm workers while owning and operating their own farms
- 13% of farmers surveyed, have paid off the farm mortgage, 48% are making mortgage payments, while the others are leasing farm land
- 45% of farmers surveyed have owned their farms for six years or more
- 52% learned their farming practices in Mexico, while 39% learned their skills in the U.S.
- 77% of farmers surveyed had been farm workers before purchasing their own farm
- 49% of Washington State Hispanic/Latino farmers surveyed, own more than 40 acres of farm land
- 39% of farmers surveyed have not received assistance in their farming operations
- 61% of Hispanic/Latino farmers in Washington State surveyed have knowledge of FSA and 22% for NRCS, yet 13% are not aware of any of the USDA agencies
- only 33% of farmers surveyed have been assisted by FSA, 17% assisted by NRCS, 5.7% assisted by Cooperative Extension Service, while 34% stated that USDA has not assisted them at all
- only 31% of Hispanic/Latino farmers surveyed participated in the 2007 Census of Agriculture

The objectives of the project have led to identifying the reasons, whether perceived or real for barriers that confront Hispanic/ Latino farmers and ranchers when they request service and participation in USDA programs, or why they have not requested USDA services in the past. In addition, the research study identified barriers at USDA that prevented the USDA service providers from fully assisting the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in achieving these programs. As barriers were identified, recommendations were formulated based on Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers input on how to overcome these barriers. These barriers and recommendations are provided in a final report to USDA and can be found in the body of this report.

In the true spirit of the grant provided by the USDA Office of Advocacy and Outreach, 2501 Outreach and Assistance for Social Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Program, its specific
intent is to have changes made to existing work practices that could bring about an increased participation and outreach service to Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State. These recommendations came directly and indirectly (inferred) from the producers and adhere to the "core values" of the USDA Strategic Plan for 2010-2015.\textsuperscript{12} The data collected in this study along with the research recommendations, will allow USDA to develop and implement specific outreach strategies that will better serve the target audience and result in the increased participation by Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in USDA programs and its activities. This project can also serve as a model for other states and/or regions that have a high concentration of Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers as per USDA NASS census information.

A copy of the full report can be viewed and downloaded at:
\url{http://www.centerforlatinofarmers.com/}

\url{http://www.ocfo.usda.gov/ssdasp/sp2010/sp2010.pdf}
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History and Trends of Hispanic/Latino Farmers and Ranchers in Washington State:

The United States of America has collected agricultural data, officially and sometimes unofficially, since U.S. marshals inquired about citizen's agricultural operations reported as early as the 1820 decennial census. Then, starting with the 1840 decennial census, U.S. marshals began using separate documents to collect data related to agriculture. This census was the first official agriculture census and was taken as a component of the sixth decennial census of population.\textsuperscript{13}

For over one hundred years, from 1840 to 1950 the agriculture census was taken as part of the decennial census. Then, beginning in 1954, and continuing until 1974, the U.S. Census Bureau conducted the census of agriculture in years ending in “4” and “9”.\textsuperscript{14}

In 1976, Congress authorized the census of agriculture to be taken for 1978 and 1982 in an effort to adjust the data reference year so that it coincided with other economic censuses. By making this adjustment, Congress established the agriculture census on a 5-year cycle collecting data for years ending in “2” and “7”. In 1997, Congress through the 1997 Appropriations Act, transferred responsibility for the census of agriculture to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Agricultural Statistic Service (NASS). The 1997 Census of Agriculture is the first census conducted by USDA NASS.\textsuperscript{15}

Over the past 180 years, the census of agriculture has grown to reflect the changes in American agriculture including the need to document changes and trends in the profiles of the American farmers and ranchers. The census of agriculture is taken to obtain agricultural statistics for each county, state and the Nation. Based on census history, USDA NASS started the collection of Hispanic/Latino-origin, and other minority groups data beginning in the 1978 USDA Census of Agriculture.\textsuperscript{16}

A component of this study is to research the statistical documentation and history of Hispanic/Latino Farmers and Ranchers in Washington State that USDA NASS has collected over the years. Through the use of this data, the researchers will be able to synthesize and analyze the data to determine the current and future trends of these farmers and ranchers as they currently are, and how they are becoming a vibrant entity within Washington State and American agriculture.

Trends of Hispanic/Latino Farmers and Ranchers in Washington State:

The definition of a farm for census purposes was first established in 1850. It has been changed at least nine times since. The current definition established by USDA, first used for the 1974 Census, is "any place from which $1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced or


\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.
sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year.**17** Since 1974, efforts have been made by various interest groups to change the definition of a farm by increasing the dollar amount. These efforts have failed as discussions always point to the overall purpose of the census; to establish the best picture of U.S. agriculture for that particular year, inclusive of all agricultural production.

Starting in 1900 and prior to the 1954 Census of Agriculture, farm and ranch ethnic data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau was collected as: Native White, Foreign-Born White and Colored farmers/ranchers. Colored farmers/ranchers were defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as: native born Negroes, Indians, and Japanese and/or of Chinese decent.**18** Hispanic/Latino farmers/ranchers in the U.S. were counted either as Native White or Foreign-Born White farmers as interpreted by this definition. Due to this classification, it would almost be impossible to determine how many Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers were in Washington State during this time period.

Both, the 1910 and 1920 U.S. Census of Agriculture provided data by country of birth for the Foreign-Born White farmers to include several European countries (excluding Spain), and only Canada and Mexico from North America. All other countries (of White ancestry), including Central and South America are included in the “other countries” category.**19**

In 1920, Washington State, from data obtained by the U.S. Census Bureau, there were as follows:

45,265 Native White Farmers

19,757 Foreign-Born White Farmers (from Latin countries reported: Mexico- 2, Portugal- 33)

1,266 Colored Farmers**20**

It is unknown how many Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers, native or foreign-born, actually lived in Washington State during this time period due to the U.S. Census Bureau ethnic classification. It is assumed, based on current Hispanic/Latino farmer and rancher profiles living in Washington State, that some of their ancestors may have arrived during and/or prior to this time period.**21**

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20 Ibid.

1987 U.S. Census of Agriculture:

The 1987 U.S. Census of Agriculture, the first official agriculture census to include Hispanic/Latino statistics, stated that there were 325* Hispanic/Latino farmers/ranchers in Washington State, representing 1% of the total number of farmers/ranches (33,559) in Washington State and 2% of all (17,476) Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers nationally. 22 Individual Washington State county Hispanic/Latino farmer numbers were not available for the 1987 Census of Agriculture.

*Shortly after the 1987 Census of Agriculture was published, and continuing through the 2007 Census, several community based organizations, farmer/rancher groups and Extension agents from across the country challenged U.S. Census Bureau and USDA NASS on the validity of Hispanic/Latino farmer/rancher numbers as well as other minority farmer/rancher groups. Academic studies conducted within the past 10 years have contributed to the debate, questioning USDA NASS’s ability to count “all” Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in the past. 23 Without having an accurate starting point, it is very difficult to gauge and measure growth. These questions will always be asked, “Are the numbers correct and are the trends valid? Have the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers been traditionally undercounted? And, as a result of focused attempts in the past (2007 Census of Agriculture) to count them, how fast is this segment of U.S. agriculture actually growing?” Based on Washington State’s history, current data available and efforts to accurately count Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers by USDA NASS, Center for Latino Farmers and Ranchers and others, Washington State will serve as a national model to determine true growth and trend of current Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in the U.S..


1992 U.S. Census of Agriculture:

The 1992 U.S. Census of Agriculture reported that there were 378 Hispanic/Latino farmers/ranchers in Washington State, representing 1% of the total farmers/ranchers (30,264) in Washington State and increased by 14% over the 1987 Census. The Washington State Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers represented 2% of all (20,956) Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers nationally. The top eight Washington Counties with Hispanic/Latino farmers/ranchers in rank of numbers in the U.S. Census of Agriculture are: Yakima (129), Grant (28), Franklin (26), Benton (18), Okanogan (16), Whatcom (16), Adams (12) and Clark (12).24

1997 U.S. Census of Agriculture:

The 1997 U.S. Census of Agriculture (first year USDA NASS is responsible for the Agriculture Census) reported that there were 625 Hispanic/Latino farmers/ranchers in Washington State, representing 2% of the total farmers/ranchers (40,113) in Washington State and increased by 65% over the 1992 Census and 92% over the 1987 Census. The Washington State Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers represented 2% of all (27,717) Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers nationally. The top eight Washington Counties with Hispanic/Latino farmers/ranchers in rank of numbers are: Yakima (179), Grant (53), Chelan (44), Benton (44), Franklin (41), Douglas (31), Okanogan (24), Adams (20), and Whatcom (17).25


2002 U.S. Census of Agriculture:

The 2002 U.S. Census of Agriculture reported that there were 1,821 Hispanic/Latino farmers/ranchers in Washington State, representing 5% of total farmers/ranchers (35,939) in Washington State and increased by 191% over the 1997 Census and 460% over the 1987 Census. The Washington State Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers represented 3% of all (72,349) Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers nationally ranking seventh (7th) overall in numbers of Hispanic/Latino farmers. The top eight Washington Counties with Hispanic/Latino

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farmers/ranchers in rank of numbers are: Yakima (576), Grant (152), Benton (137), Okanogan (120), Chelan (100), Douglas (85), Franklin (69), Adams (47), and Whatcom (30).\textsuperscript{28}

\textbf{2007 U.S. Census of Agriculture:}


The 2007 U.S. Census of Agriculture reported that there were 2,604 Hispanic/Latino farmers/ranchers in Washington State, representing 7% of total farmers/ranchers (39,284) in Washington State and increased by 43% over the 2002 Census and 701% over the 1987 Census. The Washington State Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers represented 4% of all (82,462) Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers nationally ranking sixth (6th) overall in numbers of Hispanic/Latino farmers. The top eight Washington Counties with Hispanic/Latino farmers/ranchers in rank of numbers are: Yakima (840), Grant (192), Benton (266), Okanogan (168), Chelan (133), Douglas (96), Franklin (82), Whatcom (73), and Pierce (59).30


Based on the data collected by USDA NASS beginning with the 1987 Census of Agriculture, Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers have been increasing in numbers exponentially in Washington State. In 20 years, based on USDA NASS data, Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers have increased in numbers by 701% (1987-325 to 2007-2,604) and represent 7% of the total number of farmers and ranchers in Washington State. Nationally, Washington State Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers represent over 4% of the total number as of the 2007 Census of Agriculture, and are ranked 6th overall in total numbers. Based on this data, Washington State Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers are the fastest growing Hispanic/Latino farmer and rancher group outside of the Southern U.S. border and the fastest growing farmer/rancher minority group in Washington State. As efforts are made to improve the enumeration of Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State, data collected in the upcoming 2012 U.S. Census of Agriculture should reinforce this trend.

Number of Farms with Spanish, Hispanic or Latino Farmer and Rancher Operators
USDA NASS 2007 Census of Agriculture

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Barriers Identified

Summary of Barriers:

The overall goal of the project was to define the barriers, whether real or perceived, to equitable participation and utilization of USDA programs and services by Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers, beginning at the local USDA service centers in Washington State. It is the intent of the research study that the data could be used to develop recommendations to USDA that would result in an improved outcome of service to the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers and rural communities of Washington State.

As the study progressed, the researchers realized that there were two distinct sets of barriers that prevented or contributed to the lack of equitable participation and utilization of USDA programs and services by Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State. The study identified barriers within USDA agencies and their service centers as well as within the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers as identified by the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers interviewed in the study. In addition, the researchers encountered an obstacle in attempting to access data from USDA service personnel and have included it in this report as noted below.

Obstacle Encountered:

1. **USDA prevented an internal and external review of its staff's efforts to provide optimum outreach and service to Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers as experienced by the researchers in their attempt to interview the local USDA service personnel through this study.**

The following are a summary of barriers this study has identified:

USDA Barriers:

1. **USDA agencies, including: FSA, NRCS, NASS, RD, RMA and Cooperative Extension Service have not made adequate efforts in marketing their specific programs and services to the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers.**
   As evidenced by study questions 26, 27, 30, 31, 33 and statements made by Francisco Ponce and other farmers and ranchers surveyed during focus group discussions and individual interviews.

2. **USDA NASS has not captured the true count of “all” Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers over the past 20 years.**
   As evidenced by study question 32 and from conversations with farmers and ranchers during focus group discussions and individual interviews.
Hispanic/Latino Farmer and Rancher Barriers:

3. Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers have difficulty in comprehending English and with reading and writing the English language.
As evidenced by study questions 3, 4, 5, 6, by requests from individual farmers and ranchers to have translators present during study activities and with conversations with farmers and ranchers during focus group discussions and individual interviews.

4. Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers have difficulty in comprehending agriculture policy and USDA program eligibility.
As evidenced by conversations with farmers and ranchers during focus group discussions and individual interviews and individual interviews.

5. Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers have difficulty in finding, understanding and receiving assistance from USDA programs and services.
As evidenced by study questions 27, 30, 33, 34, and with conversations with farmers and ranchers during focus group meetings and individual interviews.

6. Most Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers have difficulty with expressing their needs and comprehending educational material presented at workshops, seminars and conferences in the English language, and in most cases, they also lack USDA cultural competency skills.
As evidenced by results from pre and post-test scores taken during the educational series workshops, requests from individual farmers and ranchers to have translators present at educational programs and with conversations with farmers and ranchers during focus group meetings and individual interviews.

7. Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers have difficulty in completing appropriate USDA program applications.
As evidenced by study question 34 and with conversations with farmers and ranchers during focus group meetings and individual interviews.

8. Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers have a difficult time in accessing capital for purchasing farms and/or operation loans.
As evidenced by individual interviews with Mr. Jose Ramirez, Ms. Maria Carrillo, and with conversations with other farmers and ranchers during focus group meetings.

9. Hispanic/Latino farmers have not acquired the skills to monitor plant, soil, insect, and pest conditions on their farms, and therefore, they have become dependent on the purchasing contract companies to determine the chemical application of fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, etc., to their fields which may present economic and environmental hardships in the future.
As evidenced by conversations with farmers and ranchers during focus group meetings and individual interviews with farmers during farm visits.
10. The FSA purchasing and operating loans take too long to process and close. As evidenced by study question 34 and with conversations with farmers and ranchers during focus group meetings and individual interviews with Mr. Jose Ramirez and Ms. Maria Carrillo and others.

11. Most Hispanic farmers and ranchers do not have knowledge of USDA FSA disaster programs and what records they must keep to apply or qualify for them. As evidenced by study question 34 and with conversations with farmers and ranchers during focus group meetings and individual interviews with Mr. Jose Ramirez and Ms. Maria Carrillo.

12. The Hispanic farmers and ranchers lack the understanding and importance of advocacy due to their lack of leadership opportunities and language barriers. As evidenced through conversations with farmers and ranchers during focus group meetings and individual interviews with farmers during farm visits.

13. Most Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers are not enrolled members of established farm organizations; therefore, do not have a voice on matters of farm policy and advocacy. As evidenced through conversations with farmers and ranchers during focus group discussions and individual interviews and individual interviews. Few farmers interviewed had any working knowledge and/or understanding of the “USDA Farm Bill”, past or future, this became evident during the workshop session presented on the Farm Bill during the session pertaining to farmer leadership.

14. Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State are experiencing difficulties in maintaining a reliable and stable workforce and having to compete for any available farmworkers with larger farms who can afford to pay higher wages and ultimately, due to the stringent immigration policies that farmers are facing today. As evidenced by conversations with Mr. Jesus Valencia and Mr. Leon Loza, and other farmers and ranchers during focus group discussions and individual interviews.
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Methodology

This section describes the methods and procedures used to collect, analyze and interpret the situation of Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State. This research used a mixed method of sequential explanatory design consisting of two phases: quantitative followed by qualitative. The reason for the base of mixed methods research, the major types of mixed methods designs, the methodology and procedures used for collection and analyzing the data in the quantitative and qualitative phases are detailed here.

The purpose of the study was to create a profile of the Hispanic/Latino farmers in order to create a baseline of information that could assist in overcoming barriers, in serving small, minority and disadvantaged farmers. This is aimed at providing data and drawing conclusion that can contribute towards the development of Hispanic/Latino farmers and allow for the better interaction between them and the agriculture agencies serving them.

The questions that guided the research were:

1. What are the barriers that Hispanic/Latino farmers face in the operation of their farm?
2. What is the level of interaction between Hispanic farmers and agricultural agencies in Washington State?
3. What are the demographics and socioeconomic characteristics of Hispanic/Latino farmers in Washington State?
4. How have Hispanic/Latino farmers organized their farm operation in Washington State?
5. How do Hispanic/Latino Farmers become owner-operators?

The Design

The study used a mixed method sequential explanatory designs that consist of two distinct phases: quantitative followed by qualitative (Creswell & Plano 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998)\(^{34}\)

Three methods that were used with the Hispanic/Latino farmers were:

1. The (quantitative) descriptive Turning Point® survey

2. The (qualitative) case study in-depth videos

3. The educational series conservation, financial, leadership and the final Small Farm Conference, focus group meetings

The rationale for mixing both kinds of data within one study is grounded in the fact that neither quantitative nor qualitative methods are sufficiently inclusive in understanding holistically the physical and social circumstances that are contributing to the Hispanic/Latino farm ownership increase as well as to their characteristics in Washington State. The quantitative and qualitative methods complemented each other.

The quantitative phase used a descriptive survey, the tool that was used is a computer software program, and the name of this tool is called Turning Point®. This method allowed the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers to respond while at the same time the system integrated 100% of their responses into Microsoft PowerPoint® program by submitting responses to interactive questions using a Response Card keypad or other hand-held/computer devices. We found this tool worked best to survey low-income, less formally educated populations, just as the population of Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers who took the survey in a large group listening session setting. It allowed the interviewers to ask complex issues where there is limited background available information on the part of the interviewees. Turning Point® was also used in a series of three workshops as a pre and post survey instrument collecting data, all the while providing further information on barriers. This phase had two goals (1) create a profile (demographic, socioeconomics, type of farms, etc.) (2) Help identify the participants for the qualitative phase. The second phase used a qualitative case study (video interviews) of in-depth interviews which allowed the interviewee to provide an accurate and complete assessment of their current situation as Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in the Washington State. The case studies were designed to incorporate the participant’s views on the barriers under study. The in-depth interviews provided the study firsthand experience and permitted the researchers to draw on personal knowledge about the farmers during the data analysis.
Summary of General Survey

The purpose of the study was to create a profile of the Hispanic/Latino farmers in order to have a baseline of information that could assist in overcoming barriers to serving small, minority, and disadvantaged farmers. This was the focus of the survey. It would provide the users with data and program strategies that could contribute towards the in-reach of Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers which in turn allows for the enhanced interaction between Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers and the agriculture agencies that were created to service agriculture and rural communities.

The questions that guided the research were:

1. What are the barriers that Hispanic/Latino farmers face in the operation of their farm?
2. What is the level of interaction between Hispanic farmers and ranchers, and agricultural agencies in Washington State?
3. What are the demographics and socioeconomic characteristics of Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State?
4. How have Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers organized their farm operation in Washington State?
5. How do Hispanic/Latino Farmers and ranchers become owner-operators?

Outcomes

Slide 1. Demographics of participant's population by gender?

![Chart showing gender distribution]

- Male (Hombre): 78.7%
- Female (Mujer): 21.3%
The Washington State Hispanic/Latino farmer and ranchers, who took the survey 21%, were female and 78% male. From the response it’s important to note that Hispanic females are also primary operators.

Slide 2. The ages of the participants

The largest group of farmers surveyed was between the ages 41-50, although there is a good distribution across all ages. Note the majority of the participants were below 50 years of age this point is important when, you compare the overall Washington State farming population average age is 57 years of age. This says a lot about who are going to be the future farmers in the State of Washington.

Slide 3. Place of Birth?

The survey reflects that 85% of the participants were born in Mexico, 7% were born in the U.S. and the remaining 7% other. If USDA seeks to translate material into Spanish for first generation Mexican immigrant farmers, it would be best to have these materials translated by an individual who is versed in the Mexican dialect.
Slide 4. Level of Education attained by participants

The survey reflects that 48% had achieved no more than a sixth grade education and/or less. This first generation of Latino farmers will and or may need more training and support than the present educational pedagogy of webinars, video conferences; written material that are used to reach out to farmers. These educational methods will not have its intended results with a majority of first generation immigrant farmers.

Slide 5. Primary languages spoken

Survey reflects that 94% speak, Spanish as their primary language, and 6% English. We can infer that the first generation of Hispanic/Latino farmer is more comfortable in Spanish. Therefore, depending on what agriculture classes are being taught, it may behoove the instructor to have a translator although; ideally a bilingual instructor may be best.
Survey reflects 8% spoke English at home, 37% Spanish, and 55% responded that both Spanish and English were spoken at home. Therefore 92% of the time Spanish is being used in daily verbal interactions. Although, when it comes to reading and writing of materials, this becomes another issue, as reflected in slide number 4, i.e. educational attainment on the part of the immigrant Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers is a concern when it comes to reading comprehension skills that does limits their understanding of written material in both English and Spanish. This becomes a real issue when it comes to teaching technical farming and business practices for the farm business enterprise.

The survey reflects a young Hispanic/Latino farming population 69.9% of household who responded to the survey had a family size of 4 or more persons. Hispanic farmer and rancher household reflect that these farming families do have a high expectation of their future one can make one inference by the size of family. It could also be a demonstration of the confidence and self-assuredness as owner operators of their own farms.
Slide 8. Years living in the U.S.

The survey reflects that 92% of the Hispanic farmers and ranchers in State of Washington have been in the US for 11 or more years, of these 78% have lived in the U.S. 20 or more years. One can extrapolate to say that 78%, of the Hispanic/Latino farmers have been in the US for a generation. It is imperative for the food security of the Nation that USDA realize that the future is already in the present.

Slide 9. Citizenship

Survey reflects that 58% are U.S. citizens and 42% are legal residents, this distribution of citizenship reflects that 100% are legal U.S. residents. The fact that Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers are either U.S. Citizens and or legal residents should erase any and all reservations that federal dollars from USDA and Extension can only be accessed by U.S. citizens. The responses show clearly that Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers are in the U.S. to stay. If there are any reservations, the response clearly show that the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers should be allotted full access to all and any federal, state and or local programs that U.S. citizenship brings. It is also clear that the offspring of this first generation of immigrant farmers and ranchers are U.S. citizens and, who, in the near future, will be the inheritors of their family farm operations.
Slide 10. Marital statuses

Survey reflects that 84% the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers are married. This reflects a higher percentage than the national average for U.S. married households. They also mirror the face of traditional agriculture, best known as a “traditional farm family”. Due to the strong family commitment, program delivery needs to factor in the many responsibilities by these new farm families such as school, church, and related community responsibilities. There can be a struggle, at times, to attend farm related programs.

Slide 11. Farmer status

Survey reflects that 75% of the Washington State Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers are currently farm workers. The belief that all farmworkers are only executing the role of employee is a myth. As the study reflects, in the case of two thirds of the farmers in Washington State, they have dual employment as both farmers and farmworkers. The belief that all the new farmers and ranchers will come from FFA, 4-H and the Land Grant Institutions, needs to be re-thought. A closer look at what is occurring on the ground tells an expanding story of who is also producing the food for the American table. This insight might also bring attention to the type of programs
that are being created for agriculture employees. The response on the part of the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers is blurring the lines of farm owner and/or the employee.

Slide 12. Are you making plans to purchase a ranch and or farm?

Survey reflects that 58.3% own their farm and/or have plans to purchase a ranch or farm. 18% said no, and 23.6% said it is not applicable at this time. By the response it can be inferred that increasing numbers of farmers and ranchers will be coming from the ethnic ranks of the Hispanic/Latino community in the State of Washington? The profile of rural America is changing rapidly. Is USDA, the first agency created by Abraham Lincoln, ready to meet the varied needs of rural America? Is it up to the task?

Slide 13. Do you have off farm income?

Survey reflects that 53% have employment off the farm, 33% said no. It points to the barriers that exist when it comes to serving part-time farmers who are the large group of new generation farmers. Although, it is not new, and given the technology that is available to the USDA and Extension employee of the 21 century, this task is not insurmountable. It does mean some changes, adopting new programs and educational approaches as well as a strong dedication to a mission.
Slide 14. Farm yearly incomes

Survey reflects that 43% would be categorizing as limited income farm families, 29% make more than $30,000. Therefore, one size does not fit all. The Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers come in varied economic stripes. It would be an error to continue to view them as only as an “economically” disadvantaged farming population. As farmers, they do have some disadvantages (barriers) as reflected by the responses to the survey. Although, it is clear that they do want to move up the economic ladder by growing hi-value specialty crops as well as livestock, as well as working off the farm. This income also clearly shows that the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers are paying their share of local, state and federal taxes.

Slide 15. Status of farm

Survey reflects that 13% have paid off their farm mortgage, while 48% are making mortgage payments. This data is very revealing about farm ownership. First, generation Hispanic farmers and ranchers strongly belief in not carrying debt their goal is to pay it off as soon as possible. When it comes to economic risk, they may tend to be more conservative and will go without for
a period in order to pay off the farm mortgage. This purchase model can also have a double
edged outcome, such as, not as quick to change to the market forces and investment in equipment
and technology.

Slide 16. Are you a farm operator?

Survey reflects that 72% are owner operators of their own farms. This fast growing farming first
generation farmers are farming their own farm. 10.3% said no, and 17.6% said it did not apply to
them. The large number of those who responded are their own farm owner operator as defined by
NASS-USDA.

Slide 17. How long have you owned your farm?

Survey reflects that 45% have owned their farms for six years or more. It telling yes, they are
new farmers, and yet have been present among the farming community for several many years.
The presence of this farming and ranching community, based on this trends, will only continue to
grow; how fast, and for how long is the question? The intent was to also ask USDA staff in the
service area for which the program had been funded; i.e. what are their barriers that have kept
you from accomplishing your mission of serving all farmers and ranchers. USDA did not grant
permission to conduct a survey therefore at this juncture, one can only speculate by what was
seen and heard while conducting the study.
Slide 18. What county is your farm located in?

Survey reflects that Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers are concentrated in Yakima County, it is consistent with the Hispanic/Latino farming distribution based on the 2007 Census of Agriculture for all counties in Washington State. Yakima County leads the state in Agriculture production and sales, now it also leads with first generation immigrant Hispanic/Latino farmer in Washington State. Although, when one takes a look at the surrounding counties, these counties are also populated with Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers. As you can tell by the graph, they are represented in other counties as well but smaller numbers, if the future trends hold; one can anticipate that these numbers will also increase.

Slide 19. Where did you learn how to farm?

Survey reflects that 52% of respondents learned their farming practices in Mexico, 39% learned their skills in the U.S. It also confirms that many may have gained their farming experience as farmworkers. It could behoove some of the service providers to have a bit of insight to the farming and ranching practices in Mexico. The main outcome of having this information would be to have a better insight to the farming practices that one observes at the farm; if one of your goals is to influence farm practices change.
Slide 20. Where you a farm worker before purchasing your farm?

Survey reflects that 77% had been farm workers before purchasing their own farms. 7.4% no and 16.2% said not applicable. This information shows that the transition is occurring from farmworker to farm operator/owner. Based on USDA NASS data, this trend should continue into the future. As mention before the level of literacy and cultural competency must be kept in mind if agriculture education will or can affect practices at the farm level.

Slide 21. Who helped you buy your farm?

Survey reflects a wide range of assistance in the among first generation farmer’s farm purchase. This data clearly does not reflect the national norm of USDA FSA farm purchase assistance. Therefore, a broad understanding of how Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers are purchasing their farms is crucial to on-farm educational delivery.
Slide 22. How were you helped?

Survey reflects a wide range of assistance although 23% said that packaging their loan was the greatest assistance. It may reflect that a good number of farmers and ranchers do know who can assist them with certain aspects of farm business technical assistance and planning. This aspect of farm ownership is crucial; it means access to financial capital. This can be a "make it, or break it" situation when you are on the path to farm ownership.

Slide 23. What is your principal harvest?

Survey reflects that the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State are diversified in the cropping and livestock programs. This is a good insight to the farming practices of this first generation of new Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers. Diversification reduces risk, thus making the farm enterprise more economically productive. Given the fact that Yakima is a large fruit growing area, it could lead to mistakenly assume that Hispanic/Latino farmers are only
growing tree fruit. This would be a grave mistake given the response to products coming off the farm. This also can be a bit more complicated when it comes to farm records and participating in educational programs geared to their major crop while, in reality, they have very diverse farming systems.

Slide 24. What do you grow?

Survey reflects the present diversification of crops that exist among Hispanic/Latino farmers in Washington State. While in the pervious graph number 23, the response was associated to what was your principle crops; Graph 24, is asking what do you grow? In the two responses you find a a strong correspondence between the responses. What it tells us is that Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers are growing a varied set of crops and livestock. So therefore, when planning educational programs, one must keep in mind a whole farm business planning; i.e. record keeping, financing, production, marketing, and etc, that incorporate a diversified whole farm planning process.

Slide 25. How many acres do you farm?
Survey reflects that 49% of Washington State Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers own more than 40 acres of farm land. Given that several are growing specialty crops, and through experience that 40 acres are the minimal acreage that a small farmer would need in order to achieve any sort of economic prosperity. They understand that 40 acres will get them closer to achieving their American dream; it can begin with 40 acres.

**Slide 26. Have you received farm assistance?**

![Bar Chart]

Survey reflects that 39% have not received assistance in their farming operations. This data reflects the lack of technical assistance and outreach provided to first generation Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in the State of Washington. Even if little assistance is provided to the few, many Hispanic/Latino's are still choosing to go into farm ownership. From first hand conversations with producers as well as documented interviews with Hispanic/Farmers (refer to full report), one hears the lack of minimal assistance that this farming population is receiving from USDA and Extension. The primary reference of assistance came from family members, non-Hispanic/Latino farmers and the Center for Latino farmers. One can just image how much more advanced the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers would be if they were provided USDA programs and Extension education, i.e. from how to finance their farm to utilizing sustainable farming practices and marketing. One has to believe that one would see many more Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers owning and operating their own farms if these resources were made available to them.
Slide 27. Who provided you the help with your farm?

Survey reflects that only 14% of Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State have been assisted by USDA, and 13% from the Washington State, Center for Latino Farmers. It shows that if agencies have a tag team working with new first generation beginning Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers, could result in many more Hispanic’s joining the ranks of farmers in their respective counties. The challenge lies in narrowing the gap between those who have the technical assistance for new farm start up. When you begin to think of the future such as the expanding world population, and projections that the world population is estimated to grow to 8.9 billion by the year 2300, this makes it imperative to grow new farmers and ranchers in Washington State.

Slide 28. Have you heard of USDA

Survey reflects that up to 74% have heard of USDA. They may or may not know what programs USDA is totally responsible for, or how it is organized, or who is in charge if they would like farm assistance. From speaking to individual farmers one hears of the large cultural cap between first generation farmers and USDA programs. They both have different cultural practices which results in a lack of good communication.
Slide 29. Do you know where your local USDA farm service center is located?

Survey reflects that up to 62% do know the location of the centers. 37.7 said, they didn’t know where USDA is located. A knowledge gap exists between first generation farmer and USDA locations. If they cannot locate USDA, how can they be severed?

Slide 30. Which of the following USDA agencies are you aware of?

Survey reflects that 36% of Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State have knowledge of FSA and 22% for NRCS. Yet, 14% are not aware of any of the other USDA agencies. This is a challenge for USDA, will these agencies assist one another to reduce the existing gulf of knowledge that FSA and NRCS have acquired among first generation farmers? It’s up to USDA to develop a plan that will result in an increase of farming families they can serve.
Slide 31. Which agencies have assisted you?

Survey reflects 33% have been assisted by FSA and 17% assisted by NRCS and all others at lower level; while 34% stated that USDA has not assisted them at all. This data is a reflection of current USDA agency outreach effectiveness towards working with immigrant Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers. The task before USDA is not complete, and the response to the survey provides opportunities for USDA to become more effective in working with this fast growing population in Washington State. Here again, a good partnership with Hispanic/Latino farmer NGO’s can go a long way in creating a win-win scenario for Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in the State of Washington.

Slide 32. Did you participate in the 2007 (NASS) Census of Agriculture?

Survey reflects 31% of Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers participated in the 2007 Census of Agriculture. While 37.3% did not. The State of Washington USDA farm programs, USDA NASS must have a better count of Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers. The case must be made as to why? It is both important to farmers and to USDA to have an accurate count of Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers, as well as all farmers in the State.
Slide 33. What agency or NGO do you participate with?

Survey reflects that 51% of the Hispanic farmers/ranchers don’t participate with USDA agencies. If Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers are not informed of USDA and the programs it manages to assist beginning first generation farmer and/or established farmers, as well as rural communities how these new farmers achieve their full potential. This lack of access can lead to negative consequences to economic status of the State.

Slide 34. If you do not participate, why

Survey reflects that only one individual stated he/she didn’t need any assistance from USDA. The remainder expressed other barriers. Just has help is difficult to acquire, 17.4% and 18.5% said applications are difficult to complete, 12% said language was a barrier, while 41.3% responded it is was not applicable. Those barriers need more inquire in order to really access the
actual hindrance to access of program and services. This insight is helpful to program access and delivery. A close look at the data could offer up specific barriers that can be overcome by USDA, Extension and any other service agencies that target the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State.
Investing in Equity to Prepare the Next Generation of American Farmers

Individual Farmer Case Studies in Washington State

Qualitative Video Interviewing: the term “qualitative interviewing” is usually intended to refer to in-depth, semi-structured or loosely structured forms of interviewing. These were open-ended questions in an otherwise structured interview. (Mason, J. 2002)

The purpose for selecting this method of collecting qualitative data was to allow Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers to tell their own farming stories. The intention was that this method would complement the quantitative data. These interviews (5) were conducted in a face to face exchange. Four of the sites for the interviews were conducted at farm locations owned by the respective Hispanic/Latino operator. One interview was conducted in an office setting. The individual farmers were selected from those farmers who first attended the initial conference where the general survey (Turning Point®) was implemented. It was also the first time that Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers were introduced to this computer driven software program. The farmers in the face to face interviews came from the following counties: Yakima, Benton, Adams, Okanogan, Grant, Chelan, Douglas and Franklin in East Central Washington State. The following were the open ended questions that were asked in the open interviews:

1) Please give me your name, community, state and farming occupation?

2) How long have you been farming/ ranching?

3) Give us your farming/ ranching story?

4) Who assisted you with purchasing your farm or ranch?

5) Do you participate in USDA farming/ranching programs? Which ones?

6) Do you seek technical assistance? From whom?

7) Please describe your experience in working with USDA programs and/or staff?

8) If the USDA Secretary wants to work and have more Latino Farmer/Ranchers, what would you suggest to him?

Hispanic/Latino/a farmer interviews in Washington State.

Purpose:

This forum permitted the individual farmers to speak about the issues of barriers and their farm operations and what they had confronted in their efforts to farm. A set of open questions were developed, (refer to full report for the questions). The interviews were conducted in their own farm setting although there was one exception. The interviews lasted about 45 minutes, CD’s were developed of the interviews, and, to keep them manageable, they were edited to 5 minutes in length. The CD’s are included in the full report and will also be up-loaded into the project website. It was the intent of the project to provide USDA staff and management personnel unfettered access to the barriers identified by the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State.
Summary of Farmers and their comments:

We have concluded, after hearing directly from the Hispanic/Latino Farmers, that they are confronted by many of the same barriers as the non-Hispanic/Latino farmers. They are additionally challenged being a foreman or farm worker for someone else’s farm, and have little access to the USDA agencies and or Land Grant Institutions. They have depended on knowing someone and/or getting favors from those who have working knowledge of how they can obtain a loan. They have little knowledge of the working culture of USDA and its related agencies and vice versa. What we know is that Hispanic/Latino farmers come to the farm ownership with a whole lot of knowledge and experience on the production side of the farm operation but have serious knowledge gaps of the business practice of the farm. USDA and Extension would do well to fill in this gap in order for the Nation to have a successful crop of new farmers.

Biography of the farmers who participated in the face to face interview exchange:

“My personal goal was to becoming a farm owner/operator since arriving in the US. I worked at Dr. Thompsons as a foreman for 27 years. I first leased my farm for 2 years; it is a 40 acre apple farm. In 2011 I purchased it from my employer, who is now retired. During this period, I was not contacted and or informed of USDA and it programs for “beginning farmers”. As a farmer operator today, I have very limited contact with any of USDA agencies.” Francisco Ponce

Francisco Ponce: A 45 year old Apple Farmer in Cowiche, Yakima County, WA. Mr. Ponce has lived in the Yakima Valley since immigrating in 1979. His father had worked since the 1960’s in agriculture in the US as well as working in their native Mexico. He set the path for his son to come to the US and pursue a career in agriculture.

Mr. Ponce had set the goal of becoming a farm owner/operator since arriving in the US. Mr. Ponce worked 27 years for Dr. Thompsons as a foreman. For 2 years he leased the 40 acre farm and in 2011 he purchased it from his employer who is now retired.

The 40 acre farm produces over 500 bins of apples each year. The farm has 4 varieties of apples with a 5th due to start producing by 2013. It was Mr. Ponce’s level of dedication that ultimately drove Dr. Thompson to sell him the farm, knowing that he would continue to produce quality fruit.

“I have been preparing for this most of my life, so I was able to avoid barriers that normally get in the way of one’s dreams”. Mr. Ponce settled with his family in Cowiche, WA. He raised 3 children alongside his wife Lourdes Ponce, 2 in their twenties and 1 in high school presently.

“My major barriers are a reliable stable workforce, rising cost of employee medical insurance, while having to contend with low fruit prices from the packing plants. I would like to see these issues addressed by the USDA with workable solutions.” Jesus Valencia

Jesus Valencia: farming Zillah, WA in Yakima County.

Mr. Valencia began working in agriculture at the age of 16 where the family raised beef cattle. Mr. Valencia emigrated from Michoacán Mexico in 1986. He began working in Cowiche, WA where he worked for 8 years in fruit tree production. He then worked for 5 years with his
brothers on a contract with the US Forest Service for 5 years. He returned to fruit tree production field work in 1999 with Congdon Orchards, where he works to this day.

In 2005, Mr. Valencia purchased 44 acres, 26 acres of cherries and 18 acres of Fuji apples. Mr. Valencia works full time as a foreman at Congdon Orchards and operates his orchard simultaneously with the help of his oldest son, 18 year old Jesus Valencia Jr.

Mr. Valencia has identified as barriers a reliable stable workforce and the rising cost of employee medical insurance. He must also contend with low fruit prices from the packing plants. He would like to see these issues addressed by the USDA and some solutions to come from any action taken.

Mr. Valencia and his son Jesus have attended all three educational series on conservation, financial management, and leadership development. They immediately applied conservation practices learned in the series to their farming operation.

Mr. Valencia has settled in Outlook, WA with his wife Rosa Valencia and their 3 sons. He will continue to produce quality fruit in the Yakima Valley.

"I have accomplishing my dream to own my farm although I have faced barriers along the way. It began when I found a 40 acre parcel for sale and proceeded to find financing for the purchase. Although I had a modest savings I needed to get a loan to complete the purchase. I did approach FSA and became very discouraged by the long time frame and the possibility of no funds being available even if my loan was approved. I gave up on USDA and found financing through Farm Credit Services." Jose Ramirez

Jose Ramirez: farming in Royal City, WA in Grant County.

Mr. Ramirez has been working in agriculture his whole life. He grew up on a farming village in the state of Guanajuato, Mexico and came to the US in 1985 to chase after his dream of one day owning his own farm. Since his arrival, he has worked in agriculture for 23 years.

Mr. Ramirez purchased 40 acres in 2007 and the following year, he began planting apple and cherry trees and built his own orchard. His apples are now producing fruit and the cherries are scheduled to produce in 2 more years. Mr. Ramirez holds down a full time job as manager of a 300 acre farm full time as well as his own fruit orchard.

Mr. Ramirez chose farming because it is his dream and a way of life to him and his family. He enjoys working outside and having the hands on experience of producing fruit and tending to land.

Mr. Ramirez feels he is accomplishing his dream and has faced barriers along the way. It began when he found the 40 acre parcel and proceeded find financing for the purchase. Mr. Ramirez had a modest amount of savings and needed to get a loan for the difference. He approached FSA and was discouraged by the long timeline and the possibility of no funds being available even if his loan was approved. He finally found financing through Farm Credit Services.
Mr. Ramirez is married to Rosa Ramirez, they have 4 school age children together and Jose has 3 adult children from a previous marriage. He believes the US is a great country where a person can work hard and make his dreams come true.

"I came to the US in the 1970's from Jalisco Mexico. I worked for 32 years as farm laborer and foreman in a hop farm. I have been farming on my own for 6 years. The operation consist of 110 acres of hops, 80 leased acres of corn, 110 leased acres of hay, and 20 head of angus cattle. My family works in the farming operation. All are involved in some facet of the farm and produce quality agricultural products. My major barriers are a reliable stable workforce."  

**Leon Loza**

**Leon Loza & Edelmira Loza:** has a family run farm in the Wapato area. Their son Leon Loza Jr. and daughter Claudia Loza are involved in the farming operation alongside their parents.

Mr. Loza came to the US in the 1970’s from Jalisco Mexico. He worked for 32 years as a farm laborer and foreman on a hop farm. He has been farming on his own for 6 years and produces various crops including aroma hops. In 1980 Edelmira and Leon married and settled in the Wapato area. They have 4 children.

The operation consist of 110 acres of hops, 80 leased acres of corn, 110 leased acres of roughage, and 20 head of angus cattle. Edelmira handles the payroll, accounting, and administrative work related to the farming operation. Mr. Loza and his sons work in the farming operation. All are involved in some facet of the farm and produce quality agricultural products.

The Lozas chose farming as their primary career because they all grew up farming and it became a way of life for them.

Mr. Loza and Leon Loza Jr. son participated in the Center for Latino Farmers conservation series offered as part of the OAO grant. Mrs. Loza and Claudia Loza participated in the financial series, and three of the 4 participating family members received certificates of completion for the courses they attended.

"I'm a female farmer originally from the Mexican state of Jalisco; I immigrated to the United States in 1990’s. My father had immigrated in 1980 and has been a farmworker and foreman since 1984. In 2005 my father and I made an informal agreement to purchase and operate an orchard together. My barriers that I have encountered have been pursuing an FSA 2012 operation loan as well as beginning farm loans have not kept up with the increase of farm land."

**Maria Carrillo**

**Maria Carrillo:** farms in Wapato, WA in Yakima County

Female farmer, originally from the Mexican state of Jalisco, Maria immigrated with two young children to the United States in 1990’s. Maria’s father Jorge Carrillo immigrated from Mexico in 1980. He has been working as a foreman on this farm since 1984. In 2005 Maria Carrillo and her father made an informal agreement to operating the orchard together.

In April of 2011 she began the process for obtaining an FSA loan to purchase a 26 acre farm. She is now approved and is waiting for the appraisal of the farm to be completed in order to close her loan.
The farm produces two (2) varieties of cherries, three (3) varieties of apples, and three (3) varieties of pears. Maria is involved in all aspects of the operation. She chose farming because she likes being her own boss and the freedom farming gives her to raise her children.

Maria has identified operations financing as one of the barriers she has encountered. She will pursue FSA financing for 2012 operation expenses and will continue to succeed in her farming operation.

Maria has been married 15 years to Jesus Gomez and they have 3 children. They live on the farm and will continue to produce quality fruit in the Yakima Valley.

The videos can be viewed at the Center for Latino Farmers website at http://www.centerforlatinofarmers.com/
Investing in Equity to Prepare the Next Generation of American Farmers

Educational Series & Focus Group Discussions

The Center for Latino Farmers (Center) was responsible for planning, coordinating, disseminating information, and overall implementation of project objectives. The Center’s Project Director and staff are highly commended for achieving the objectives of this very important project. Following is a summary and overview of the progress made toward achieving the project objectives:

Objective 1. Conduct a one day Stakeholders & Partners Listening Session/Small Farm Conference to highlight the project “Investing in Equity to Prepare the Next Generation of American Farmers” for USDA agencies and 200 SDFR.

The Stakeholders & Partners Listening Session/Small Farm Conference was held on February 25, 2011 in Yakima, WA with over 75 Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers from within the project target region in attendance. The USDA agencies who participated and partnered by providing workshops and information booths were the Farm Service Agency, Risk Management Agency, Rural Development, Natural Resource Conservation Service and the National Agricultural Statistic Service. Also, in attendance was the newly formed USDA Office of Advocacy and Outreach whose program for Outreach and Assistance to Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Program funded the Project. (Appendix C)

The Conference and Listening Session served to provide the target audience with the background and purpose of the research project as well as to provide an introduction of USDA agency programs and projects available to the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers. In addition, the Conference and Listening Session set the stage for gathering data from the target audience utilized in the research project. An introduction of the educational series was presented and additional subject matter for the three educational series was identified through the listening session-focus group process. All material presented was in both Spanish and English translations.

Objective 2. To identify 30 Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (SDFR) for an initial focus group to learn about the importance of water and soil conservation, the different groups managing those rights, and SDFR role as stewards of the land and then participate in a conservation educational series of 5 weeks, two times per week, three hours per session for 25 of which 20 will complete. The how to's of filling out and submitting NRCS applications will be part of the series utilizing USDA staff.

Sembrando Raices Conservation educational series began on March 15, 2011 and terminated on April 13, 2011. The entire 10 sessions/30 hours of the conservation educational series, taught in Spanish, were held in Yakima, WA with a total of 35 beginning Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers registering for the program. The purpose of the training was to assist the new farmers and ranchers become more knowledgeable on conservation issues in an attempt to conserve soil and water, reduce costs, acquire food safety techniques, reduce the use of unneeded fertilizers and pesticides, and overall, to increase the sustainability of farm land for the next generation of farmers and ranchers. The series began with a pre-test of conservation issues to be discussed throughout the curriculum of the educational series. In addition, a project survey was also
administered to those who did not attend or participate in the survey taken during the Small Farm Conference and Listening Session in February. Of the 35 registered, 29 completed the series and had very inspiring testimonials. A post-test was conducted by the Center for Latino Farmers staff to determine the learning curve of the participants. The Center for Latino Farmers recognized 18 of the participants with Certificates of Completion for attending 80% or more of all the entire series. (Appendix D)

The sessions were in partnership with local, state and federal agencies that deal with conservation issues. The Center for Latino Farmers staff coordinated the recruitment of farmers and the presenters for the series. This was accomplished through newsletters, telephone conversations, one-on-one contact, and radio programs.

**Objective 3. To select 30 SDFR and provide an educational Building Financial Capacity series for 30 SDFR for 6 weeks, one day a week for a 2 ½ hours per session in the evenings from 6:00pm to 8:30 pm. The participants will serve as focus group in regard to personal finances and their current situation with FSA.**

The Personal Financial Responsibility educational series began on April 26 and terminated on May 25, 2011. After identifying the need to expand the curriculum, the Center for Latino Farmers staff followed the same schedule as the previous educational series to meet two times a week for five weeks and for three hours per session. This series was also taught in Spanish. A pre-test was conducted on the first meeting to identify participants’ prior knowledge of educational material to be discussed throughout the series. In addition, a project survey was also conducted to those who did not attend or participate in the survey taken during the Small Farm Conference and Listening Session in February or the Conservation educational series. (Appendix E)

The personal financial series was developed specifically to create financial literacy awareness for issues such as credit, family budgeting, recordkeeping, personal financial statements, business financial statements, balance sheets and profit and loss, business tax, and reporting employees. They also learned about the different types of lending institutions, different types of loans available, i.e., farm loans, personal loans, mortgage loans, and how interest rates are calculated. Participants were given a post-test at the completion of the series to determine the learning curve of the group. The Center for Latino Farmers staff coordinated the recruitment of farmers and the presenters for this series. This was accomplished through newsletters, telephone conversations, one-on-one contact, and radio programs.

**Objective 4. To select 30 SDFR for a focus group to identify barriers in their participation in county committee elections and other trade groups, and facilitate an educational series of 5 weeks, two times per week, three hours per session for 25 SDFR of which 20 will compete to increase participation and develop leadership for a new generation of American farmers to allow them to become more involved in trade groups as the Grower’s League or others, increase their knowledge of the function of county committees and their role in determining budgets and promoting changes in regard to legislation in preparation for the next farm bill.**

The Agriculture Leadership Development educational series began on June 7, 2011 and terminated on July 6, 2011. The entire series was conducted over a five week period meeting on Tuesdays and Wednesdays for three hours per day in Yakima, WA. Based on the subject matter
and the need for understanding and communicating in English when assuming a leadership role, this series was taught only in English with limited Spanish translation. A pre-test was administered to determine the basic knowledge the participants had of various leadership components to be discussed in the educational series. Since all participants had already completed the general project survey, we did not have to administer it during this series. Only 10 Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers participated in the educational series due to a late harvest based on the unusual spring cold weather. Many have asked that the Center for Latino Farmers to reschedule the series at a later date when they would be available to participate. (Appendix F)

The Leadership Development educational series focused on preparing and connecting SDFR’s to become informed in an effort so that they could become more involved with agriculture trade organizations, community groups, agriculture coops, agriculture committees and boards; to increase their knowledge of the agriculture industry; to understand how USDA FSA county committees function and about federal legislation that determines their funding and policy (Farm Bill); and how those funds are distributed per state and the set asides that are available to them; as well as the process for providing input in the 2012 Farm Bill legislation. Participants were given a post-test at the completion of the series to determine the learning curve of the group.

The Center for Latino Farmers staff coordinated the recruitment of farmers and the presenters for this series. This was accomplished through newsletters, telephone conversations, one-on-one contact, and radio programs.

**Objective 5. Conduct a one day Stakeholders & Partners’ Listening Session for SDFR and USDA staff from local service centers, state and federal offices to have the representatives from the NALHFR Research & Policy Office present the findings of the data collected in regard to the SDFR barriers that have been documented as part of the focus groups, workshops and conference participants from the February Conference.**

Over 60 Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers attended a full day Small Farms Conference on August 10 at the Yakima Convention Center in Yakima WA hosted by the Center for Latino Farmers (Center) in partnership with USDA state agencies. The material presented was translated in Spanish for those who requested the service. The overlapping harvest seasons due to the cold spring had many of the farmers and their families working/harvesting on the conference day, so the anticipated attendance was less than expected. All attendees agreed that the quality of the information presented was far beyond their expectations. (Appendix G)

The conference entitled “Breaking Down Barriers”: Investing in Equity for the Next Generation of American Farmers & Ranchers” focused on providing information to socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers on issues that impact their farm operation. Trade association leadership shared information to Hispanic/Latino farmers about the local and national economy. WA Growers Clearing House, shared data on the fruit industry trend, and challenged the farmers to be aware of what is happening to their fruit once it leaves their hands. Cowiche Growers representative discussed the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) industry plans. They emphasized that it is not a USDA requirement but a national and international industry standard being adapted to maintain better quality and safer food for all consumers.
Keynote speaker Dr. David Schweikhardt, Prof at the Dept of Agricultural, Food, and Resource Economics at Michigan State University (MSU) spoke about the policies of the Farm Bill implemented. Michelle Radice, Director of the Outreach & Diversity for the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) discussed the importance of having all farmers/ranchers counted since it determines the funding allocations and services needed for each state.

During the conference, Juan Marinez of Michigan State University & Edmund Gomez of New Mexico State University from the Latino Policy Research and Development Institute presented a preliminary briefing on their research identifying barriers for Hispanic/Latino farmers & ranchers in accessing USDA programs and services.

USDA WA State administrators’ presentations and overall conference participation was very much welcomed by the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in attendance. Those that participated were: Judy Olson-Farm Service Agency (FSA); Dave Paul- Risk Management Agency (RMA); Roylene Rides-at-the-Door, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS); Dave Knopf- WA State Director, National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). Roni Baer-Rural Development (RD), Nestor Hernandez, President of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Yakima County also was in attendance.

A reception was held from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. for those who attended the conference. At that time three farmers were recognized for their participation in intensive 30 hr educational series during the last five months on the topics of conservation, financial literacy and leadership. Jesus Valencia, Jr. for his “Outstanding Participation” Conservation Series; Lucy Rojas Reyes “Outstanding Participation” Financial Literacy Series; Angel Perdido “Outstanding Participation” Leadership Series.
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Barriers Identified with Selected Recommendations

When USDA Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack took office in January of 2009, he promised to make the USDA more efficient, transparent and overall, more effective. And, most importantly, Secretary Vilsack claimed to make civil rights a top priority by taking definitive action to improve the Department’s record and to move USDA into a new era as a model employer and foremost service provider. Based on his vision, Secretary Vilsack and the Department developed the USDA Strategic Plan for 2010-2015 and are “determined to administer by and adhere to the Strategic Plan” as reported by a USDA news release.\(^{35}\) The USDA Strategic Plan for 2010-2015 \(^{36}\) was showcased at the USDA 2010 Cooperators Conference which was targeted at the U.S. Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers and the organizations and universities that assist them.

The overall goal of the project is to define the barriers, whether real or perceived, for equitable participation and utilization of USDA programs by Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers, beginning at the local USDA service centers in Washington State, and by utilizing this data, develop recommendations for USDA to better serve the Hispanic/Latino community. This study has identified the following barriers that prevent or reduce participation and utilization of USDA programs by Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State. These barriers were identified directly and indirectly (inferred) from the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers the project surveyed, interviewed and through focus group meetings conducted in Washington State starting in February 2011 through August 2011.

Based on the USDA Strategic Plan for 2010–2015 and the Secretary’s commitment to improve USDA; USDA and the Secretary are given a golden opportunity through this study to reach out to the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State. This study is offering recommendations for USDA to improve their outreach efforts to assist Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers to become equitable participants in USDA programs in Washington State. These recommendations were developed within the “Core Values” of the USDA Strategic Plan for 2010-2015 which include:

“Transparency- Making the Department’s management processes more open so that the public can learn how USDA supports Americans every day in every way.

Participation- Providing opportunities for USDA constituents to shape and improve services provide by the Department.

Collaboration- Working cooperatively at all governmental levels domestically and internationally on policy matters affecting a broad audience.


Accountability - Ensuring that the performance of all employees is measured against the achievement of the Department's strategic goals.

Customer Focus - Serving USDA's constituents by delivering programs that address their diverse needs.

Professionalism - Building and maintaining a highly skilled, diverse, and compassionate workforce.

Results Orientation - Measuring performance and making management decisions to direct resources to where they are used most effectively.  

The following are the barriers with recommendations this study has identified:

USDA Barriers

1. USDA agencies, including: FSA, NRCS, NASS, RD, RMA and Cooperative Extension Service have not made adequate efforts in marketing their specific programs and services to the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State.

Recommendation: USDA must identify a local target advisory committee to determine the effectiveness of their current outreach efforts. Resources must be included to provide adequate outreach efforts and strategies to overcome the current outreach deficiencies.

2. USDA NASS has not captured the true count of “all” Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State over the past 20 years.

Recommendation: USDA NASS needs to make every effort to count “all” Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State in the 2012 Census of Agriculture. This could be accomplished by developing contacts with local NGO’s, CBO’s and hiring local enumerators.

Hispanic/Latino Barriers:

3. Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers have difficulty in comprehending English and with reading and writing the English language.

Recommendation: USDA needs to make an effort to provide translators who are versed in the Mexican dialect, and when translating USDA material, keep in mind the educational level of the target audience.

4. Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State have difficulty in comprehending agriculture policy and USDA program eligibility.

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37 Ibid.
**Recommendation:** USDA needs to simplify programming policy to Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State in an effort to inform and educate them on USDA agriculture policy, program eligibility, production, management and marketing strategies.

5. **Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers have difficulty in finding assistance from USDA programs and services.**

**Recommendation:** USDA needs to ask the Hispanic/Latino farmers what is the best course of reaching out to them that would allow easy access to USDA programs and services.

6. **Most Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers have difficulty with expressing their needs and comprehending educational material presented at workshops, seminars and conferences in the English language, and in most cases, they also lack USDA cultural competency skills.**

**Recommendation:** USDA must recruit Hispanic/Latino service providers from within the target area that possess the skills to adequately assist the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers.

7. **Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers have difficulty in completing appropriate USDA program applications.**

**Recommendation:** USDA must re-evaluate the need of complicated and comprehensive program application documents. With the assistance of local advisory committees, NGO’s, Extension Service, FSA, NRCS, and RMA education specialists, appropriate application documents could be developed that would meet USDA requirements and be “producer friendly”.

8. **Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers have a difficult time in accessing capital for purchasing farms and/or operation loans.**

**Recommendation:** USDA must develop strategies within FSA that reach out to Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State in an effort to provide capital resources to purchase and/or provide for operation loans. The administrative rules need to be reformed and become more flexible in order to insure that these farmers and ranchers can obtain the desired loans to purchase farms.

9. **Hispanic/Latino farmers have not acquired the skills to monitor plant, soil, insect, and pest conditions on their farms, and therefore, they have become dependent on the purchasing contract companies to determine the chemical application of fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, etc., to their fields which may present economic and environmental hardships in the future.**
**Recommendation:** USDA NRCS and Cooperative Extension Service should re-evaluate and develop effective outreach production and management educational programs (i.e. IPM, private pesticide application, soil testing and interpreting results, cost of production, etc.) that target the Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State.

**10. The FSA operating loans take too long to process and close.**

**Recommendation:** It is imperative that access to working capital be made available on timely bases in order to achieve a successful operating year. Therefore, producers need to know when and how to access the application process so that working capital is at hand when it is needed.

**11. Most Hispanic farmers and ranchers do not have knowledge of USDA FSA disaster programs and what records they must keep to apply or qualify for them.**

**Recommendation:** In partnership with USDA and Latino farmer NGO’s, there needs to be a program that develops educational workshops that attend to the subject matter and the process of how disasters are declared, how the sign-up process for these programs works, and the overall application process. Hispanic/Latino farmers lack the education on how to advocate for themselves. If farmers can be taken on a step-by-step process on what types of records they need to have on hand, it would expedite assistance to them.

**12. The Hispanic farmers and ranchers lack the understanding and importance of advocacy due to their lack of leadership opportunities and language barriers.**

**Recommendation:** A working partnership needs to be created by USDA consisting of Hispanic/Latino farmer NGO’s, HSI’s and other colleges and universities who work with Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers. The partnership can be charged with the development of an educational workshop series on how programs are authorized, developed, and implemented.

**13. Most Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers are not enrolled members of established farm organizations; therefore, do not have a voice on matters of farm policy and advocacy.**

**Recommendation:** Both in-reach and out-reach efforts from farm agriculture organizations and by individual Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers to one another is desirable. This effort will achieve both representation and positive outcomes to this new and emerging American farmer and rancher population.

**14. Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Washington State are experiencing difficulties in maintaining a reliable and stable workforce and having to compete for any available farmworkers with larger farms who can afford to pay higher wages and ultimately, due to the stringent immigration policies that farmers are facing today.**
**Recommendation:** The Secretary of Agriculture should work closely with Congress to expedite the immigration reform process in the country to insure that a reliable and stable farm worker workforce will be made available not only to Washington State Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers, but nationally as well.
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Background of Researchers

Juan Marinez

Michigan State Extension

Prior to this study, the researcher has had the opportunity to work with Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers in Michigan. This experience has been ongoing for the past 38 years with formal studies in both Extension and Research in both formal and informal Educational settings. Work related to this study was conducting surveys through personal interviews with more than 132 Hispanic farmers and ranchers in south west, Michigan. Farmers were visited continuously, for almost two years in their communities in order to collect information. The published study was in the Journal of Extension, “Exploring Agriculture Census Undercounts Among Immigrant Hispanic/Latino Farmers an Alternative Enumeration Project” October 2005. Because of this study and related work over 40 presentations were made at State, Regional, and National Agriculture conference. On the research outcome that were contributing to the Changing Face of Agriculture.

Edmund Gomez

New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension Service

The researcher serves as Assistant Department Head and College Professor under New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension Service’s Extension Agriculture Economics Department. He also serves as director for the Rural Agricultural Improvement and Public Affairs Project (RAIPAP) and the Northern New Mexico Outreach Project based at the NMSU Sustainable Agriculture Science Center at Alcalde, NM. These projects are committed to rural economic development and outreach in north central New Mexico and provide extension education programs in leadership and organizational development, value added agriculture, sustainable agriculture and small business development serving predominantly Hispanic/Latino and Native American small-scale, limited resource producers. He currently serves as state coordinator for the USDA National Small Farm Program and served on the USDA National Commission on Small Farms, with major contribution to Policy Goal 6 and minority farmer and rancher issues. He served as a member of the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service Advisory Committee, chair of the Diversity Committee. He served as national co-chair and as state host chair for the Third National Small Farm Conference and served on both the steering and the program committees for the Fourth and Fifth Conferences. He has been asked to testify by the U.S House of Representatives, Committee on Resources on the impact of federal land use policies on Hispanic rural communities in northern New Mexico. Under his leadership and guidance, the RAIPAP Staff received the 2008 National Award for Diversity from the USDA CSREES, Extension Committee on Organization and Policy and the National Extension Diversity Taskforce.
Appendix A: Survey Instrument—USDA Agencies
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USDA Agency Questions

1. What is your agency?
   a. USDA Farm Service Agency
   b. USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service
   c. USDA Risk Management
   d. USDA Rural Development
   e. Other?

2. Years of service in this agency?
   a. 1 – 5 years
   b. 6 – 10 years
   c. 11–20 years
   d. 21 years or more

3. Other than English, how many languages do you speak comfortably?
   a. 1
   b. 2
   c. 3
   d. 4 or more

4. What are these language(s)? (Select all that apply)
   a. American Indian Dialect
   b. Spanish
   c. Other

5. Have you worked outside of Washington State for your current agency or other USDA agency in the past?
   a. Yes
   b. No

6. Do you currently work with Hispanic/ Latino farmers and ranchers?
   a. No
   b. Yes

7. As part of your job, how often do you work with Hispanic/ Latino farmers and ranchers?
   a. Every Day
   b. Several times per week
   c. Once a week
   d. Couple times a month

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8. Do you interact with Hispanic/Latino’s outside the work area?
   a. Every Day
   b. Several times per week
   c. Once a week
   d. Couple times a month
   e. Once a month
   f. Never

9. What is your comfort level from one (very comfortable) to five (not comfortable) working with Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers?
   a. 1
   b. 2
   c. 3
   d. 4
   e. 5

10. What can you recommend as a USDA employee, that USDA provide training to improve your level of comfort in working with Hispanic/Latino farmers and ranchers.
    a. Language competency
    b. Culture competency
    c. Mentorship
    d. Other

11. What are barriers that keep you from working with Hispanic/ Latino farmers and ranchers on a regular base? (Select all that apply)
    a. Don’t not reside in my service area
    b. Language barriers
    c. Culture behaviors
    d. Don’t seek services
    e. Not eligible to participate in programs
    f. Other

12. What are barriers that you think the Hispanic/ Latino farmers and ranchers having accessing and/or participating in your agency’s programs? (Select all that apply)
    a. Not aware of our programs
    b. Lack an understanding
    c. Not eligible
    d. Language barriers
    e. Culture barriers
    f. Other
13. What are changes that USDA can make to attract more Hispanic/Latino farmer and rancher participation in USDA programs? (Select all that apply)
   a. Improve outreach efforts
   b. Streamline application process
   c. Provide hands-on assistance
   d. Policy changes
   e. Other

14. What would you do to improve your agency’s outreach efforts? (Select all that apply)
   a. Hire a state wide bilingual/bicultural Hispanic/Latino outreach specialist
   b. Hire County Service Center program outreach assistant
   c. Identify all Hispanic/Latino farms and ranches in Washington State
   d. Implement annual cultural and language competency training to all agency employees
   e. Implement ongoing agency workshops to update Hispanic/Latino farmers and their partners
   f. Other
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**Appendix B: Survey Instrument – General**
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General Survey / Encuesta General

1. Gender / Genero
   a. Male/Hombre
   b. Female/Mujer

2. Age / Edad
   a. 18-24
   b. 25-30
   c. 31-40
   d. 41-50
   e. 51-60
   f. 61 or more / o mas

3. Place of birth / Lugar de nacimiento
   a. USA / EEUU
   b. Mexico / México
   c. Other / Otro País

4. Education Level Attended / Nivel educativo
   a. No, schooling / Sin estudio
   b. Elementary / Primaria
   c. Junior High / Secundaria
   d. High School / Preparatoria
   e. Community College / Colegio 2 años
   f. College or more / Colegio o mas

5. Primary language / Idioma principal
   a. Spanish / Español
   b. English / Ingles
   c. Other / Otro

6. Language spoken at home? / Idiomas que hablan en casa
   a. Spanish / Español
   b. English / Ingles
   c. Spanish & English / Español e Ingles
   d. Other / Otro

7. Household size? / ¿Cuántas personas viven en su casa?
   a. 1
   b. 2
   c. 3
d. 4
e. 5
f. 6 or more / o mas

8. Years living in USA / Años viviendo en EEUU
   a. 1 – 5
   b. 6 – 10
   c. 11 – 20
   d. 21 or more / o mas

9. Citizenship / Ciudadania
   a. U.S. Citizen / Ciudadano
   b. Legal Resident / Residente legal
   c. Other / Otro

10. Marital Status / Estado civil
    a. Married / Casado/a
    b. Single / Soltero/a
    c. Separated / Separado/a
    d. Divorced / Divorciado/a
    e. Widowed / Viudo/a
    f. Other / Otro

11. Are you a farm worker?
    ¿Es usted trabajador del campo?
    a. Yes / Si
    b. No / No

12. Do you want to buy a farm?
    ¿Quieres comprar un rancho/huerta?
    a. Yes / Si
    b. No / No
    c. N/A / No aplica

13. Do you have off farm income?
    ¿Tiene un trabajo fuera del rancho?
    a. Yes / Si
    b. No / No
    c. N/A / No aplica

14. What is your gross nonfarm yearly income?
    ¿Qué es su ingreso personal bruto anual?
    a. Less than / menos de $1,000
    c. $1,001 to $10,000
    d. $10,001 to $20,000
    e. $20,001 to $30,000
f. $30,001 to $40,000

g. $40,001 to $50,000

h. More than / Más de $50,001

i. N/A / No aplica

15. Status of farm / Status de su rancho

   a. Paid off / Pagado
   b. Mortgage-payments / Préstamo- está haciendo pagos
   c. Leasing / Renta
   d. Personal Contract / Contrato personal
   e. Share cropping / A medias
   f. N/A / No aplica

16. Do you own or operate a farm/ranch?
   ¿Opera o es usted dueño de un rancho/huerta?

      a. Yes / Sí
      b. No / No
      c. N/A / No aplica

17. How many years have you owned your farm?
   ¿Cuántos años lleva de ser dueño de su rancho?

      a. 0-5
      b. 6-10
      c. 11-20
      d. 21 or more / o más
      e. N/A / No aplica

18. What county is your farm located?
   ¿En qué condado está su rancho?

      a. Yakima
      b. Okanogan
      c. Chelan
      d. Grant
      e. Adams
      f. Franklin
      g. Benton
      h. Douglas
      i. Other / Otro
      j. N/A / No aplica
19. Where did you learn how to farm?
¿Donde aprendio a ser ranchero?

a. Mexico / México
b. USA / EE.UU
c. Other Country / En otro país
d. N/A / No aplica

20. Were you a farm worker, before purchasing your farm?
¿Trabajo en el campo antes de ser ranchero?

a. Yes / Si
b. No / No
c. N/A / No aplica

21. Who financed your farm purchase?
¿Quién financio su rancho?

a. Farmer Contract / Contrato personal
b. Family member / Familia
c. Bank - Farm credit / Banco
d. USDA-FSA
e. Other / Otro
f. N/A / No aplica

22. How were you helped?
¿Como le ayudaron?

a. Packaging your loan / Solicitud de préstamo
b. Farm business plan / Plan del rancho
c. Teaching of USDA programs / Informando sobre programas del USDA
d. Technical Assistance / Ayuda en general
e. Other / Otro
f. N/A / No aplica

23. What is your principal crop?
¿Qué es su cosecha principal?

a. Tree fruit / Arboles frutales
b. Vegetables or other row crops / Vegetales
c. Grapes or other vine/cane fruit / Uvas
d. Livestock(chickens, goats, sheep, cattle) / Ganado (animales)
e. Hay / Pastura
f. N/A / No aplica
24. What do you grow?
¿Qué productos cosecha/crece?

a. Tree fruit / Arboles frutales
b. Vegetables or other row crops / Vegetales
c. Grapes or other vine/cane fruit / Uvas
d. Livestock(chickens, goats, sheep, cattle) / Ganado (animales)
e. Hay / Pastura
f. N/A / No aplica

25. How many acres do you own/lease?
¿Cuántos acres opera (dueño/renta)?

a. Less than 20 / Menos de 20
b. 31-40
c. 41 or more / o más
d. N/A / No aplica

26. Have you received technical farm assistance?
¿A recibido asistencia técnica con su rancho?

a. Yes / Sí
b. No / No
c. N/A / No aplica

27. Who provided you the help with your farm?
¿Quién le ayudó con su rancho?

a. Family / Familia
b. Friends / Amistades
c. Previous owner / El dueño anterior
d. USDA
e. Center for Latino Farmers
f. N/A / No aplica

28. Prior to today, Have you heard of USDA?
Antes del día de hoy, ¿Había escuchado del USDA?

a. Yes / Sí
b. No / No

29. Do you know where your local USDA farm service center is located?
¿Sabe usted donde se localiza la oficina local del USDA?

a. Yes / Sí
b. No / No
30. Which of the following USDA agencies are you aware of?
¿Cual de estas agencias del USDA reconoce?

a. FSA
b. NRCS
c. RMA
d. RD
e. NASS
f. WA State Extension
g. None / Ninguna

31. Which USDA agencies have assisted you?
¿Que agencias del USDA le han ayudado?

a. FSA
b. NRCS
c. RMA
d. RD
e. NASS
f. WA State Extension
g. None / Ninguna

32. Did you participate in the 2007 (NASS) Ag Census?
¿Participo en el Censo de agricultura del 2007 (NASS)?

a. Yes / Si
b. No / No
c. N/A / No aplica

33. What USDA agencies and/or NGO do you participate with?
¿Con que agencias de USDA y/o no gubernamentales participa?

a. FSA
b. NRCS
c. RD
d. Farm (bank) credit
e. Washington State Extension
f. Center for Latino farmers
g. N/A / No aplica
34. If you do not participate, Why?
¿Si usted no participa, Por qué?
   a. Do not need help / No necesita la ayuda
   b. Help is hard to get / La ayuda es difícil de conseguir
   c. Provider is not friendly or helpful / No son amigables
   d. Provider don't understand my need / No entienden mis necesidades y problemas
   e. Applications are hard to complete / Las solicitudes son difíciles de llenar
   f. Do not speak my language / No hablan mi idioma
   g. N/A / No aplica
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Center for Latino Farmers

Investing in Equity to Prepare the Next Generation of American Farmers

Appendix C: Stakeholders & Partners Listening Session February 25, 2011

Press Release

Agenda

Post Conference Newsletter