

**ACCESSION NO:** 0220245 **SUBFILE:** CRIS  
**ROJ NO:** OKLXMUNDENDE209 **AGENCY:** NIFA OKLX  
**ROJ TYPE:** OTHER GRANTS **PROJ STATUS:** TERMINATED  
**CONTRACT/GRANT/AGREEMENT NO:** 2009-49400-06003 **PROPOSAL NO:** 2009-03860  
**START:** 01 SEP 2009 **TERM:** 31 AUG 2012  
**GRANT AMT:** \$525,000 **GRANT YR:** 2009  
**INITIAL AWARD YEAR:** 2009  
**INVESTIGATOR:** Mundende, D. C.  
**PERFORMING INSTITUTION:**  
LANGSTON UNIVERSITY  
LANGSTON, OKLAHOMA 73050

**ABILITY OF BEGINNING FARMERS AND RANCHERS PROJECT (VIBEF)**

**NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY:** The purpose of this project is for Langston University to deliver outreach and technical assistance so that beginning farmers and ranchers in Oklahoma can successfully acquire, own, manage, and operate farming and ranching enterprises. Through an aggressive outreach program, beginning farmers and ranchers (producers) will be informed about the availability and accessibility to federal, state, academic, and private foundations agricultural programs and services. Through the technical assistance program, producers will be trained in farm planning, alternative enterprises, production, marketing, recordkeeping, forage management, livestock management, and overall farm management. They will be assisted in applying for loans, cost-share programs, and grants. The specific objectives are provided above. Each year, the first 100 applicants will be enrolled in the program. By the end of the project, we anticipate 20 producers to apply for loans, 10 to enter into lease agreements, 30 to begin farming each year, and 10 families to get into goats production. Producers will have skills that will better prepare them to deal with a myriad of decisions on their farm or ranch. Producers will own and operate their enterprises, formulate and analyze alternatives, and make informed decisions to enhance their operations. Producers will be informed about available programs and services and gain access to those programs and services. They will set up alternative enterprises involving small ruminants (sheep and goats), fruits, and vegetables. Also, they will develop recordkeeping systems and discuss the importance of records, types of records to keep, and how to record information in their own. They would participate in insurance programs and services that require actual production records.

**OBJECTIVES:** (a) equip beginning farmers and ranchers with knowledge, skills, and abilities to own and operate farms and ranches, (b) promote the availability of and accessibility to USDA programs and services among beginning farmers and ranchers, (c) provide production and management strategies that enhance the financial viability of beginning farmers and ranchers, and (d) train beginning farmers and ranchers in farm business management.

**APPROACH:** Outreach: Farm visits (one-on-one encounters) and group community (group) meetings with producers, community leaders, and community-based organizations. Mentoring of new farmers with established farmers. Purpose: to identify producers and provide them with information on available programs and services. Technical Assistance: Technical assistance will be provided in group meetings as well as through one-on-one farm visits with prospective producers to train them so they can acquire the knowledge, skills, and abilities that SDAs can use to own and operate their farms and ranches, participate in USDA programs and services, and continue to be an important segment of the food and agricultural community. Workshops, agricultural field days, conferences, and on the farm-demonstrations will be employed. As much as possible, training will be held at locations convenient to producers.

**PROGRESS:** 2009/09 TO 2012/08

**OUTPUTS:** One hundred and forty-four (144) farmers and ranchers (hereinafter called producers) completed training through workshops and one-on-one farm visits. Over 72 workshops were conducted on the following topics: "So you want to be a farmer," "Agricultural risks," "Farm management," "Production management," "Marketing," "Farming on Indian land," "Financial management," and "Farming is a business." Additional in depth training on beef cattle, meat goats, and vegetables was provided for those who were interested in these enterprises. Although only 144 producers were certified as having completed the training, about 400 producers attended the sessions. We highlighted programs and services that USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Rural Development (RD), Risk Management Agency (RMA), National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), and Agricultural Research Service (ARS) offer. Additionally, producers were trained in understanding various financial statements, agricultural risks, and available risk management tools and strategies. Producers were assisted in setting up recordkeeping systems. About 6,600 producers received training in pasture/forage management, recordkeeping, animal breeding, risk management, financial management, marketing,

Alternative enterprises, plasticulture/gardening, goat management, beef/livestock management, and soil management. PARTICIPANTS: Of the 144 producers who completed the training, 74 or 52.1 percent were males and 70 or 47.2 percent females. The majority were African Americans (51.4 percent) and Native Americans (41.7 percent); there were 10 Caucasian American producers or 6.9 percent. TARGET AUDIENCES: Socially disadvantaged producers in 44 Oklahoma counties, mainly African Americans, Native Americans, underserved Caucasian Americans, and women, were targeted. PROJECT MODIFICATIONS: Not relevant to this project.

**IMPACT:** 2009/09 TO 2012/08

Over 6,500 producers attended meetings and training workshops and one-on-one farm visits. 561 producers who were assisted with applications for grants, loans, and cost-share programs received \$2.3 million. These funds assisted producers in owning farms, operating farms, establishing conservation practices, and purchasing equipment or reeding livestock. Forty new individuals established recordkeeping systems. All of the participants indicated that their knowledge and skills had improved. We still need to do a follow up survey to find out what exactly the producers have established as a result of their training. Native Americans who never thought of going to an USDA Service Center can now go there and receive service. They now apply and receive grants and loans to help them in their enterprises.

**PUBLICATIONS (not previously reported):** 2009/09 TO 2012/08

0 publications reported this period

**PROGRESS:** 2010/09/01 TO 2011/08/31

OUTPUTS: The second group of 53 beginning farmers and ranchers (producers) has been trained. Four training locations were set up at Anadarko, Beggs, Hugo, and Tatum. The main purpose was to provide information and skills that would make a producer become successful. In-depth training on beef cattle and meat goats was provided for those producers. Topics included: "So you want to be a farmer" "Agricultural risks," "Farming is a business," "Production and management," "Marketing," and "Understanding Indian land." A total of 162 producers attended the workshops, but we could only certify 53 who completed 4 out of 6 workshops. The breakdown of those who completed the training was as follows: 31 African Americans (23 males, 8 females) and 22 Native Americans (11 males, 11 females). Additionally, we trained over 100 producers on farm financial management (including recordkeeping) during the Annual Small farms Conference in May. We highlighted some of the programs and services provided by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Rural Development (RD), and Risk Management Agency (RMA) during community meetings and at the Small Farms Conference in Oklahoma City in November. The need for good recordkeeping systems was highlighted. Producers were taught the importance of keeping good records, kinds of records to keep, and tools used in keeping records. PARTICIPANTS: Those who completed the training were: 31 (58.5%) African Americans and 22 (41.5%) Native Americans. Sixty-four percent were men and 36 percent women. TARGET AUDIENCES: Socially disadvantaged producers in 44 Oklahoma counties, who are mainly African Americans, Native Americans, underserved Caucasian Americans, and women, were targeted. On a limited basis, we also worked with Hmong producers and some Spanish-speaking individuals. PROJECT MODIFICATIONS: Nothing significant to report during this reporting period.

**IMPACT:** 2010/09/01 TO 2011/08/31

Fifty-three (53) producers completed their initial training on farming and ranching as a business. As a result of these efforts, 5 farm operating loans and three farm ownership loans were approved. The Kiowa Tribal Conservation District continued to implement conservation practices as a result of a \$750,000 Conservation Innovation Grant it received from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. One youth loan was approved, one rural housing loan was approved, and producers received livestock emergency funds due to the extreme weather conditions that Oklahoma went through in addition to the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) cost-share. Producers continued to adopt meat goat and vegetable production as business enterprises. This is a major achievement because for a long time producers did not want to engage in vegetable or goat production. All they wanted to raise were beef cattle. A total of 254 producers received \$2,291,150. Of this number, all the plasticulture gardens, two farm operating loans, one youth loan, and one rural housing loan were for beginning farmers and ranchers.

**PUBLICATIONS:** 2010/09/01 TO 2011/08/31

0 publications reported this period

**PROGRESS:** 2009/09/01 TO 2012/08/31

OUTPUTS: One hundred and forty-four (144) farmers and ranchers (hereinafter called producers) completed training through workshops and one-on-one farm visits. Over 72 workshops were conducted on the following topics: "So you want to be a farmer," "Agricultural risks," "Farm management," "Production management," "Marketing," "Farming Indian land," "Financial management," and "Farming is a business." Additional in depth training on beef cattle, meat

oats, and vegetables was provided for those who were interested in these enterprises. Although only 144 producers were certified as having completed the training, about 400 producers attended the sessions. We highlighted programs and services that USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Rural Development (RD), Risk Management Agency (RMA), National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), and Agricultural Research Service (ARS) offer. Additionally, producers were trained in understanding various financial statements, agricultural risks, and available risk management tools and strategies. Producers were assisted in setting up recordkeeping systems. About 6,600 producers received training in pasture/forage management, recordkeeping, animal breeding, risk management, financial management, marketing, alternative enterprises, plasticulture/gardening, goat management, beef/livestock management, and soil management. PARTICIPANTS: Of the 144 producers who completed the training, 74 or 52.1 percent were males and 70 or 47.2 percent females. The majority were African Americans (51.4 percent) and Native Americans (41.7 percent); there were 10 Caucasian American producers or 6.9 percent. TARGET AUDIENCES: Socially disadvantaged producers in 44 Oklahoma counties, mainly African Americans, Native Americans, underserved Caucasian Americans, and women, were targeted. PROJECT MODIFICATIONS: Not relevant to this project.

**IMPACT:** 2009/09/01 TO 2012/08/31

Over 6,500 producers attended meetings and training workshops and one-on-one farm visits. 561 producers who were assisted with applications for grants, loans, and cost-share programs received \$2.3 million. These funds assisted producers in owning farms, operating farms, establishing conservation practices, and purchasing equipment or breeding livestock. Forty new individuals established recordkeeping systems. All of the participants indicated that their knowledge and skills had improved. We still need to do a follow up survey to find out what exactly the producers have established as a result of their training. Native Americans who never thought of going to an USDA Service Center can now go there and receive service. They now apply and receive grants and loans to help them in their enterprises.

**PUBLICATIONS:** 2009/09/01 TO 2012/08/31

0 publications reported this period

**PROGRESS:** 2009/09/01 TO 2010/08/31

OUTPUTS: The first group of 70 farmers and ranchers has been trained beginning in April. Producers have ranged from those who have farmed for less than 10 years to those who are just beginning to consider farming. We had four locations where the same information was provided. The topics were: "So you want to be a farmer", "Agricultural skills," "Farm management," "Recordkeeping," "Production and management," and "Financial management." Livestock (beef cattle and meat goats) production and management were emphasized. Some of these producers also attended the 19th Annual Small Farmers Conference where many other skills were honed. The breakdown of the participants is as follows: African Americans (35), Native Americans 31, Caucasian Americans (4), Men (40), and Women (35). Each participant was furnished with a binder, in which all the handouts were kept. We introduced participants to the plasticulture program that is administered by the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry (ODAFF). The last session will feature programs and services that USDA agencies provide. At the conclusion of the session, participants will be given certificates of completion of the training. PARTICIPANTS: See above on outputs. TARGET AUDIENCES: Socially disadvantaged producers in 44 Oklahoma counties who are mainly African Americans, Native Americans, small and underserved Caucasian Americans, and Women. PROJECT MODIFICATIONS: Not relevant to this project.

**IMPACT:** 2009/09/01 TO 2010/08/31

One of the objectives is to increase in the number of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers applying for USDA programs and services. As a result of these efforts, we are in the process of assisting 10 individuals with farm operating loan applications, 4 individuals with farm ownership loan applications, 1 rural housing loan/grant application and 1 plasticulture demonstration project. Several Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) projects are under way, 1 youth loan has been approved, and 8 producers have started keeping records. Presently, participants are being matched with experienced farmers (mentors) so they can begin their mentorship program this coming year. The challenge is that some of them want to be compensated for the time they spend with producers, and we did not budget for that activity. On a sad note, one of the mentors died on 10-17-2010, while assisting another farmer.

**PUBLICATIONS:** 2009/09/01 TO 2010/08/31

0 publications reported this period