



United States
Department of
Agriculture

May 3, 2016

Farm and
Foreign
Agricultural
Services

TO: All Employees

Foreign
Agricultural
Service

FROM: Phil Karsting
Administrator

1400
Independence
Ave, SW
Stop 1008
Washington, DC
20250-1008

SUBJECT: Civil Rights and Diversity Policy Statement

The Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) is fully committed to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's civil rights and equal opportunity goals in all programs and services, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex (including gender identity and expression), sexual orientation, disability, veteran status, marital or familial status, political beliefs, parental status, receipt of public assistance, genetic information, or retaliation for participating in equal employment opportunity activity.

As the Administrator, I make it my priority to support Civil Rights, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Diversity and Inclusion, Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR), and the Secretary's Cultural Transformation initiatives. I steadfastly acknowledge that FAS's most valuable asset is its diverse and multi-talented workforce. All employees must work together to reflect our commitment to equal opportunity, and reinforce our goals of tolerance and inclusion. All FAS staff will be held accountable for their conduct and performance as public servants.

Additionally, FAS is committed to the use of ADR as a tool for all employees to resolve areas of miscommunication, concern and dispute. ADR gives parties the opportunity to clear up misunderstandings at an early stage, find areas of agreement; and, incorporate those areas of agreement into a final resolution.

We all share in the responsibility of promoting equal access in the workplace and in our programs and services. Any employee who believes that his or her rights have been violated is encouraged to contact the FAS Office of Civil Rights at: (202) 720- 7233, or TTY: (202) 720-1228 within 45 (forty-five) calendar days of the alleged discriminatory event to begin the EEO complaint process.