

Winston Helps Black Farmers Obtain Up to \$500,000 to Help Remediate USDA's Discriminatory Lending Practices



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As part of the firm's Racial Justice & Equity CEASE Initiative, Winston & Strawn attorneys recently developed training materials to assist Black farmers in applying for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Discrimination Financial Assistance Program.

For more than a century, Black farmers have suffered well-documented racial bias and discrimination in the USDA's loan programs. Today, Black farmers own less than 1% of all farms in the United States, compared to 14% in 1920. To help right this longstanding inequity, Congress appropriated \$2.2 billion for the USDA Discrimination Financial Assistance Program in August 2022.

Farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners who have experienced discrimination by the USDA in its farm lending program have from July 7, 2023, until October 31, 2023, to apply for up to \$500,000 in relief. The Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Land Assistance Fund—a regional cooperative and rural economic development organization, which was born out of the Civil Rights movement and exists to save Black-owned farms and land—is using the manual Winston developed to help its members file for and receive this desperately needed financial relief.

"Discrimination against Black farmers damaged their ability to sustain their farms and led to many losing their land. We are thrilled to play even a small role in helping these farmers receive some level of justice and financial relief that is long overdue," said New York partner **Sean Kelly**.

The Winston team that developed the guidebook was led by **Sean Kelly** and included **Hamza Khan**, **Brittini Reaser**, and **Christina Wheaton**. Partner **Kobi Kennedy Brinson** provided strategic guidance on the project.

[Learn more about Winston's commitment to excellence in serving the public interest and our Racial Justice & Equity CEASE Initiative.](#)

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