

# Breaking Barriers for Beginning Hispanic Farmers in Ranchers

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## Introduction

The U.S Department of Agriculture has developed grants and assistant programs for small farm outreach, training and technical training. Their aim is to enable participants to operate and manage their enterprises independently and produce adequate income. Therefore, in effort to reach and aid small scale farmers and ranchers a project has been funded under the USDA-NIFA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program in alliance with the University of Texas A&M-Commerce.

## Need for Innovation

Hispanic farmers and ranchers in the United States may lack awareness of agricultural information. Information such as agricultural programs, agencies, organizations, production resources, management practices as well as in finances and marketing which is due to several constraints and barriers.

## Constraints or Barriers:

- Language barriers
- Institutional discrimination
- Limited access to information on market and loan programs
- Lack of culturally similar role models who are farm and ranch owners or operators

## Purpose

The purpose of this project is to provide Hispanic farmers and ranchers who are seeking to establish their own farm or ranch operation with relevant training and greater access to information, organizations, and agencies involved in support for farmers and ranchers.

## Methods

Population for this study consists of prospective and part-time Hispanic-Latino farmers and ranchers within the population of Hopkins County, Texas who are interested in owning or managing their own operation.

This is a three-year outreach project utilizing novel approaches which include:

- Instruction in Spanish
- Spanish/ English materials and handouts
- Promotion through local Spanish radio and churches
- Providing cultural sensitivity training for local ag-related businesses
- Focus on family/ social networks for reinforcement

## Cost

This is a grant-funded project with a total budget exceeding \$800,000 for the three-year period. The project is funded under the USDA-NIFA Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program Grant No.: 2010-49400-21729 .



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## Results

Project is currently underway

- Recruiting graduate assistants and staff members
- Organize advisory committee
- Initial contact with members of the target audience
- Developing promotional strategies
- Prioritize topics for initial training

## Discussion

Challenges thus far:

- Recruitment of graduate assistants and staff who are fluent in both English and Spanish with agricultural-related degrees
- Recruitment of members for the advisory committee members
- Finding unbiased members of different sectors of the agriculture industry.
- Participation of the population due to the cultural and social barriers

## Future Plans

Year 1 (Summer 2011)

- Developing, and delivering relevant training and information matching participants' interest and needs in business management and production techniques
- Cultural sensitivity training for agricultural lenders, agencies, and organization serving Hispanic clientele

Year 2 & 3

- Additional training on other complementary topics related to owning and operating agricultural and agribusiness operations
- Expand outreach program to include adjoining counties