

## Anderson@Large

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### Black Farmers Say 'Enough is Enough'

In 1999, a landmark settlement was reached in *Pigford vs. Glickman*, a class action lawsuit filed against the U.S. Department of Agriculture by black farmers who alleged racial discrimination.

In approving the consent decree, U.S. District Court Judge Paul L. Friedman acknowledged USDA's past discrimination. Friedman said the settlement was "a fair resolution of the claims brought in this case and a good first step towards assuring that the kind of discrimination that has been visited on black farmers will not continue into the next century."

The consent decree was hailed as the largest civil rights settlement in U.S. history. USDA set aside \$2.3 billion to settle the claims of black farmers whose loan applications were wrongly rejected.

But an investigation by the Environmental Working Group found that nearly nine out of ten claims were denied; 81,000 out of 94,000 farmers received nothing. Most claims were denied because they were filed late.

Nine years into the next century, black farmers still are waiting for compensation. Dr. John W Boyd Jr., president of the National Black Farmers Association, said:

We have pressed USDA and Congressional leadership for additional funds to compensate all eligible black farmer late filers. Congress has bailed out Wall Street, auto makers and America's top banks. It is time to elevate our plight.

So, they will pack their mules and hold a rally today at 10:00 a.m. at the USDA.



Boyd added:

We will be asking President Obama to finish what he started as a U.S Senator when he sponsored the black farmers late claim language that passed into law in the farm bill in May of 2008.

For more info, go here.

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