

## FARM FUTURES

### Resolving Civil Rights Cases Discussed by Vilsack

*Black farmers protest at USDA.*

(4/29/2009)

#### **Farm Futures Staff**

The National Black Farmers Association held a protest across from the USDA Headquarters in Washington, D.C. on Tuesday. At issue was discrimination against their members years ago by USDA and the failure to receive promised compensation.

During the protest Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack was speaking to a gathering of the National Association of Farm Broadcasting at USDA. Among his remarks he discussed the civil rights situation.

"We are reviewing all civil rights claims that were filed from 2000 on to make sure that they were handled properly," Vilsack said. "We are going to do a complete review of our policies and procedures to make sure that we are administering them as fairly, and as reasonably and as balanced as we possibly can."

According to Vilsack USDA has also put a halt on the foreclosure of many minority farms and is working with the Department of Justice and the Office of Management and Budget to see if some of these outstanding cases can be resolved in a more expeditious way than in the past.

Vilsack told the broadcasters that there would be changes made in handling past discrimination cases and changes to make sure there is no future discrimination problem.