



United States
Department of
Agriculture

StrikeForce for Rural Growth and Opportunity TEXAS

<http://www.usda.gov/strikeforce>

Texas Quick Facts

StrikeForce state since.....2012
 Number of SF counties: Increasing from 9 to 96 in 2014
 Total outreach events FY13.....55
 Number of partners.....32



Contacts

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Some of Our Partners

Casa del Llano

Latinos in Agriculture Organization

MAFO

National Center of Appropriate
Technology

Rio Bravo Resource Conservation
& Development Area

Texas Agri-Life Extension

Texas Department of Agriculture

Texas Hunger Initiative

Texas Mexico Border Coalition

Texas Rural Cooperative Center

Texas Small Farmers & Ranchers

Texas Soil and Water Conservation
Districts

University of Texas Pan American

Rural Americans face many unique challenges every day and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides assistance to help rural communities prosper. Unfortunately, 85% of America's persistent poverty counties are in rural America – and we can't allow these areas to be left behind.

That is why in 2010, Agriculture Secretary Vilsack launched the StrikeForce for Rural Growth and Opportunity (StrikeForce) - a coordinated effort to increase economic opportunities and address the needs of rural communities suffering from persistent poverty. In collaboration with over 400 partners, including other federal agencies, community based organizations, state based agencies and local partners, USDA is providing targeted technical assistance and other support to leverage results.

Since then, StrikeForce has spread to over 700 counties across twenty states and is showing significant results. Since the inception of StrikeForce, USDA has invested more than \$9.7 billion in target areas to support 80,300 projects.

Highlights

Since the inception of StrikeForce in Texas, outreach efforts have focused on reaching *colonia* (unincorporated towns) residents and nontraditional customers by working with numerous community based organizations and the University of Texas Pan American to host outreach events. Based on the programs available, outreach efforts were increased to socially disadvantaged and limited resource farmers and ranchers, women landowners and organic farmers.

Recognizing that the majority of *colonia* residents are Hispanic— and that Texas has more than 8% of all the Hispanic farmers nationwide— a "Starter Kit" was created in both Spanish and English that included four fact sheets promoting the financial and technical assistance offered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. These outreach events and Spanish publications have helped to reach a wider audience. A position also was created and filled with a Spanish-speaking individual to assist in and around the StrikeForce counties in recognizing successful socially disadvantaged producers who can serve as mentors to others.

Because *colonia* residents' lack some of the most basic necessities like water and sewer, funding through programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program has helped increase the profitability for socially disadvantaged and limited resource producers, and women landowners.

