



### **Level the Field for Minority Farmers!**

*Pass the Minority Women & Children Equality Inclusion Act - Amend the 1914 Smith-Lever Act  
A Fight for 13 Years by One Woman Farmer to include Minority Children  
who have been LEFT OUT of the Act since 1914!*

Three recent national headlines make Oklahoma and the issues facing minority farmers more relevant than ever - the state has been ravaged by severe storms, COVID cases are rising, and a troubled justice system has caused the largest incarceration of women in the entire country. And, what about the children of those women, where do they go? All this threatens the livelihood of minority farmers - add this to the burden of **racial and gender inequity inherent in the current provisions of federal law**. It's a wonder that minority farmers, especially the women who own and run farms, find the will to plow ahead.

Headquartered in Oklahoma and founded by **Tammy Gray-Steele** - a second generation Black woman farmer - the **National Women in Agriculture Association** [NWIAA,] is the largest non-profit women in agriculture organization in the world. She has been seeking for the past 13 years to pass legislation that will re-distribute the balance of funding by the 1914 Smith-Lever Act, which has customarily only benefited white farmers. NWIAA is advocating for more equitable and sustainable support of minority and women farmers who are NOT currently being reached by the USDA's valuable extension programs. Research indicates that the **1914 Smith-Lever Act has NEVER been amended, except in 1994 when it added Native Americans**.

**Joe Biden promised Black Women that he would reward their motivation to vote him into the Presidency; ensuring that minority farmers – and their children – have equal access to federal farm support and help America to obtain a more sustainable and food-secure future.**

**The Minority Women & Children Equality Inclusion Act** would increase targeted funding for the 1890 Land-grant colleges, which currently share only 6% of the annual \$300 million Smith-Lever appropriation. NWIAA has existing partnerships with several of these historically Black colleges, as well as Native American tribal organizations, for which it develops and administers education and economic development programs to build and support minority participation in the agricultural sector. In many struggling areas of the country, both rural and urban, it is minority farmers who are best positioned to meet the needs of underserved communities. **In places like Oklahoma City, NWIAA is working to promote agriculture as a productive and sustainable career opportunity in rural areas for those locked in generational cycles of POVERTY, CRIME, and INCARCERATION.**

The new legislation also seeks to engage minority youth in agriculture, by chartering NWIAA as a pilot provider of 4-H and FFA services for the populations who are now disproportionately marginalized by those programs. The mission is "engaging youth to reach their fullest potential while advancing the field of youth development." With a more equitable share of funding, NWIAA will reach underserved and at-risk youth in the over 30 states where it already has chapters, providing life-skills, career opportunities, and mentorship youngsters need to become prosperous citizens. Whether or not these children become professional farmers, learning to grow nutritional produce for themselves, their families, and their neighbors will pay countless dividends at the grass-roots level.

#### For More Information:

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