

Declaration of Gary L. Sandoval


I, Gary L. Sandoval, hereby state and declare the following:

1. I am over 18 years of age, Hispanic and a United States citizen. My date of birth is December 15, 1951. My mailing address is P.O. Box 88, Antonito, Colorado 81120.
2. I have been a farmer for 40 years. I started farming when I was 10 years old helping my father with all types of ranch and farm work. I learned how to plow, harvest, cut and chisel hay, and I also raised cattle through feeding, milking and calving.
3. My farm is currently 180 acres. I grow alfalfa and raise cattle.
4. I applied for a loan each year from 1981 to 1986 and 1988 to 1992 at the Farmers Home Administration office in Alamosa, Colorado. None of these loans was approved.
5. After my loan application was rejected, the agency did not offer me any information about appeal rights or other options available to me. I never received any explanation why my loan applications were rejected, but on one occasion I was told that I needed more ranching experience. The personnel at the FmHA office always treated me rudely.
6. One year I was told by the people at the FmHA office not to bother putting in an application because no money was available for loans. On another occasion I was told not to put in an application but instead to call the FmHA office and they would tell me whether any money was available. The persons with whom I dealt at the office were Tom Compton, Allen Stiles, Melvin Gross, Scott Miller, David Wecholtz, Arnold Davis and Don Steerman.
7. In 1988, I applied for a loan at the FmHA office in Alamosa, Colorado and was told by Dolores Sanchez, the Assistant County Superintendent, that my application was not filled out correctly. She told me to fill the application out correctly and then come back. She was very rude and did not assist me or tell me what was wrong with the application.
8. I complained about the loan rejections on several occasions either in person or by telephone. I complained first to the loan officer and then to the supervisor. I also complained to FmHA employee Richard Gomez, County Commissioner Ranger Duran and FmHA County Committee member Stanley Garcia with no result.
9. I believe the loan applications of Anglo farmers were being treated differently from mine. The Bagwells and Sowards from Manassa were applying for loans at

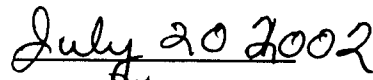
the same time I was being told money was unavailable, and I assume their loans were approved because they were purchasing land and cattle. I know of another instance where other young Anglo farmers, including a 16 year-old, received a farm loan at a time when my loan application was rejected.

10. Because I was unable to get these loans, I was unable to advance as a rancher by purchasing land and livestock at a time when they were available and affordable.
11. I believe I was qualified for the loans I applied for and the agency discriminated against me because of my Hispanic ethnicity.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the above statement is true and accurate to the best of my personal knowledge.



Gary L. Sandoval



Date