

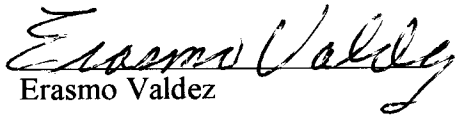
## Supplemental Declaration of Erasmo Valdez

I, Erasmo Valdez, 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 January 20, 1941. My mailing address is 10878 Mile 2 West Road, Mercedes Texas 78570.
2. I have been a farmer my entire life. From 1963 to 1965 I served as the Ranch Foreman and from 1965 to 1967 I was the Ranch manager at the Rosenthal Farm Co. in Mercedes, Texas. I have been farming independently since approximately 1968.
3. On February 23, 2004 the Hidalgo County Farm Service Agency (FSA) denied my operating loan application. My application contained a farm plan that cash flowed; I also met every requirement necessary to be approved for an operating loan. When I questioned why FSA had denied my loan application, I was just given what I viewed as lame excuses. I requested a reconsideration hearing and on April 2, 2004 FSA again denied my application.
4. On July 1, 2004 I then submitted a written discrimination complaint to the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Office of Civil Rights (OCR) regarding the denial of my operating loan application.
5. In October 2004 I received an affidavit from Shawntey Fox, who certified herself as an investigator with the OCR, and claimed to be investigating my complaint. I provided her with written responses to each of her inquiries.
6. Almost two years have now passed and I have not yet received any information from the USDA regarding the final results of their investigation of my written complaint.
7. In March 2005 USDA Deputy Assistant Secretary of Civil Rights, Paul Gutierrez, and Calvin Gibson of the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Civil Rights visited Edinburg, Texas and met with me in my office. I showed them all of my documentation and discussed the circumstances surrounding my discrimination complaint. Mr. Gutierrez assured me that he would see that this matter was thoroughly investigated and promised me that I would promptly be informed of the investigation's results.
8. Over a year and a half has passed since I complained to Mr. Gutierrez and the OCR has still failed to send me any further information regarding the findings of my civil rights investigation. Based on my personal experience, I feel that writing

and submitting my discrimination complaint was a complete waste of my valuable time.

I have reviewed the foregoing Declaration, consisting of eight (8) numbered paragraphs, and declare, under penalty of perjury that it is true and correct to the best of my personal knowledge.

  
Erasmo Valdez

Date

