



**PIGFORD ASKS OBAMA TO INTERVENE ON BEHALF OF HISPANIC FARMERS IN GARCIA SUIT
NAMED PLAINTIFFS JOIN FORCES**

Washington, DC, November 18, 2009...Hispanic farmers involved in a discrimination suit against the US Department of Agriculture today welcomed a letter in support of their cause to President Obama from Tim Pigford, named plaintiff in an identical class-action suit, *Pigford v. Glickman* by African American farmers settled in 1999. "Tim Pigford knows exactly how much we have suffered from USDA's decades of discrimination – because the same thing happened to him and his fellow African American plaintiffs. We welcome his support in our attempt to get justice," said Lupe Garcia, named plaintiff in the *Garcia v. Vilsack* lawsuit and a spokesman for Justice for Hispanic Farmers.

In his letter, Mr. Pigford pointed out that Hispanic, Native American and women farmers "have suffered the same discrimination by USDA as African American farmers"; he reminded the president that Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has strongly and consistently expressed his desire to settle all pending discrimination cases; and he asked Mr. Obama to "direct the Secretary of Agriculture and the Attorney General to begin immediately good faith negotiations to resolve the pending discrimination lawsuits brought on behalf of Hispanic, Native American and women farmers." "You, sir," wrote Mr. Pigford, "are in a unique position to end once and for all USDA's all-too-well deserved reputation as 'the last plantation' and to bring long-overdue accountability and transparency to the USDA-administered farm credit and non-credit farm benefit programs."

Garcia v. Vilsack was originally filed in 2000. Noting that African American farmers have already received \$1 Billion and the current administration has promised them an additional \$1.25 Billion, Mr. Garcia noted that, "Many of our farmers have died before they could see justice done. The President has declared repeatedly that he wants to close the chapter on discrimination. We ask that he close the entire book and we thank Mr. Pigford for joining us in that request."