

United States Department of Agriculture



Natural Resources Conservation Service
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Indianapolis, IN 46278

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SUBJECT: EOP – Black History Month

Purpose: To provide information on Black History Month

Expiration Date: September 30, 2007

February is celebrated as Black History month. It is the month in which we bear witness to the progress, richness, and diversity of African American achievement. During the 1920's an African American named Carter G. Woodson created and promoted Negro History Week. February was chosen because it included the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. In 1976 the month-long celebration was implemented. It is a time for Americans to reflect on both the history and teaching of African Americans whose contributions are still too little known.

The theme for the 2007 Black History Month is **“From Slavery to Freedom: The Story of Africans in the Americas”**. The transition from slavery to freedom represents one of the major themes in the history of the African Diaspora in the Americas. Under and against the rule of various powers, Africans experienced emancipation during the course of the nineteenth century. In some places, freedom came peaceably, in others it was accompanied by hard struggles, but no matter the path to freedom, African peoples in the New World had to continue to struggle for liberation.

This year's theme recognizes the struggle for slavery and freedom as the central theme of African American history and places before the nation and the world the historical importance of slavery and freedom in the making of modern societies in the Americas.

Indiana NRCS employees are a very diverse group. It is this diversity that is our strength. It is important for all of us to learn about the heritage and culture of the people we work with daily. Through understanding the differences in each culture, we can work together to improve service to our customers and employees.

Our Black Emphasis Program Manager has put together a number of links to sites that offer an array of information on the history, culture and contributions of African Americans. I hope you will take a little time and visit some of these sites. Check out the “February is Black History Month” link on the in.nrcs.usda.gov homepage. If you have plans to be in the State Office during the month of February, I invite you to take a moment to view our Black History display along with the informational materials.

If you have any questions about Black History Month, please contact Bennie Clark, Jr., NRCS Black Emphasis Program Manager, at 317-290-3200, x394 or by e-mail at Bennie.Clark@in.usda.gov.

/s/ Harold Thompson {Acting For}
JANE E. HARDISTY,
State Conservationist

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