

Department of Agriculture 2020 Equitable Relief Report

Section 1613 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (the 2002 Farm Bill) grants the Farm Service Agency (FSA) State Directors and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State Conservationists the authority to provide equitable relief to FSA participants in price, income support, production, or loss assistance programs and NRCS conservation programs. This relief is subject to financial limitations. Section 1613 also grants this authority to the Secretary of Agriculture, without any financial limitation, and the Secretary of Agriculture has delegated this statutory authority to the FSA Administrator and the Chief of NRCS. To qualify for relief, a participant must demonstrate that he or she acted in good faith to comply with program requirements. Forms of relief include the retention of benefits received under the program, continuity of benefits, re-enrollment of land for conservation, or other appropriate relief.

Section 278(d) of the Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 grants the Director of the National Appeals Division the same authority to provide equitable relief to program participants as provided to the Secretary.

The following table reflects information for calendar year 2019 as required by section 1613 of the 2002 Farm Bill.

Farm Service Agency

Number of Requests for Equitable Relief:	256
Number of Requests Denied:	47
Number of Requests Approved:	209

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Number of Requests for Equitable Relief:	68
Number of Requests Denied:	10
Number of Requests Granted:	58

National Appeals Division

Number of Requests for Equitable Relief:	139
Number of Requests Denied:	97
Number of Requests Granted:	42
(Including 18 cases involving money and 20 involving extensions of time)	
Number of Requests Mooted by Favorable Outcome in Appeal	0
Number of Requests No Authority to Grant Relief	0