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The 1890 Land-Grant Colleges

From the New Deal to the Black Farmers' Class-Action Lawsuit, 1930s–2010s

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The 1890 land-grant colleges initially embarked upon a mission not dissimilar to that of the 1862 colleges. They sought to prepare the sons and daughters of America's Black men and women in the "several pursuits and professions of life." These colleges hoped to provide students with the skills necessary to support themselves, their families, and their communities. That soon proved impossible. Within a few short decades of Booker T. Washington's "Cast Your buckets where you stand" speech, these new colleges and universities, led by a series of engaged presidents, realized that racial discrimination blocked their ability to accomplish what they had set out to do. As a consequence of that fatal impediment to Black economic success, these administrators and their schools gradually altered their mission. They focused much of their attention on securing the rights to which Blacks as Americans were entitled. To assist them in this quest, they formed themselves into an organization of presidents: these men worked collectively with little regard for state strictures and sought to involve the federal government in their equal rights battle. That collective took as articles of faith that the work of the Black land-grants had to be the fight for civil rights, self-determination, and self-agency for Black Americans. Black land-grant activities affirmed daily that supporting the struggles of disenfranchised people was work of the highest moral imperative. Only through that endeavor could the Black land-grants ultimately deliver on their original promise.

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The 1862 Morrill Land-Grant College Act, undertaken while the southern states were in rebellion, excluded those states until they were readmitted to the Union. When these states established their Morrill colleges, their segregationist policies practically excluded Blacks and left African American farm families without the support needed to develop an agricultural and mechanical arts education for young Blacks. Acknowledging a tremendous outcry from Blacks and their supporters, Congress, in 1890, passed a second Morrill Act. This act prohibited racial discrimination by compelling states either to permit Blacks to enter extant Morrill Act schools or to establish new, separate institutions of higher learning for African Americans. New schools formed by this act became known as the Black or 1890 land-grant colleges. Seventeen states, predominantly in the South, created separate land-grant institutions. Although each school's history was different, all of the 1890 land-grants experienced chronic underfunding, difficulties establishing a collegiate curriculum based in the agricultural and the mechanical arts, and discrimination in accessing federal funds for agricultural education. From the beginning and well into the twentieth century, money remained a major issue, but it did not prevent these institutions from establishing successful programs and activities that helped rural African American farm communities. Nor did lack of access to governmental agricultural programs inhibit the presidents of Black land-grants and their constituencies from working together to improve African American rural and farm life.[1]

The chapter focuses on a broad range of issues and topics to examine how the 1890 land-grant institutions addressed issues that Black families faced living in rural and agricultural America. Discussions will focus on presidential leadership and the president's operating philosophies concerning the mission of Black land-grants, their reactions to and assessment of certain components of the New Deal and related subsequential federal farm programs, educational outreach that addressed farm, family, and community needs, partnerships with government agencies and organizations, and Black land-grants' responses to the Black farmers' lawsuit against the USDA. Looking across the experiences of Black land-grants reveals how the educational mission of the Black land-grants changed over time. Their initial goal, which involved training adults and students to act as their own agent of change, eventually gave way to focusing on social and political

situations that were constraining Blacks. Black land-grants challenged the premise that higher education should be exclusively for whites, although leaders of Black land-grants during the pre-Civil Rights era accepted the ideology of separate but equal, as long as such an approach led to the democratization of the American society and opportunities for educated Blacks. This collective understood that the work of Black land-grants entailed the fight for civil rights, self-determination, and self-agency. Black land-grant activities affirmed daily that supporting the struggles of Black Americans was work of the highest moral imperative.

Leaders of Black land-grants were committed to supporting the educational, social, economic, and cultural needs of Black rural and agricultural communities. Although Black land-grants deeply affected Black life, they were significantly hindered by having to rely upon resources from the federal government, state farm agents, and state offices that were opposed to equality and Black progress. The struggle for inclusion and full democratic participation began with the vision and work of the presidents of the Black land-grants. Their efforts were sustained by various communities, groups, and organizations, as well as social, political, and economic forces that helped keep the 1890 land-grant institutions relevant.

Leadership: Presidents of the Black Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, 1930s–1950s

At the 1923 Southern Conference on Education in Negro Land-Grant Colleges, held at Tuskegee Institute, the Association of Negro Land-Grant Colleges was formed. Its purpose was to discover and address problems commonly faced by the constituencies the Black land-grants were to serve. Each of the seventeen schools would freely exchange ideas and stand willing to contribute pertinent knowledge and information. The founders recognized that the functions of the association were broad and needed to involve other historically Black colleges and universities, such as Hampton and Tuskegee institutes. They also realized they needed to collaborate with Black families, institutions, and organizations outside of academia. As a consequence, the presidents in March 1924 changed the name of their collective to the Conference of Presidents of Negro Land-Grant Colleges—a name that identified this group until its termination in 1956.[2]

During the early years of the conference, the presidents worked to gain respect and recognition for their colleges as institutions of higher learning.

They faced the major issues of funding, staffing, and curriculum. Funding was severely limited; the seventeen institutions were not eligible for some of the resources available to their white land-grant counterparts. The 1890 institutions had difficulty carrying out their missions. The federal government's lack of enforcement of federal nondiscriminatory laws meant that the 1890 institutions received less than one-twentieth the funds given to the 1862 white land-grants. The presidents at the seventeen Black colleges addressed the policy neglect and discrimination in 1935 at the group's annual meeting. They complained to Henry A. Wallace, then secretary of agriculture, that the Black colleges had received less than had been promised and that in 1933, "not one of the states that supported a separate land-grant college for Blacks had established an agricultural experiment sub-station in connection with the institutions responsible for serving Blacks in this capacity. Records of the federal government show that in the seventeen states providing land-grant outreach, Blacks comprised twenty-three percent of the population, but received only six percent of funds appropriated to the relevant states to support the work of black land-grant institutions."[3]

The 1890 institutions' initial mission was to train teachers to educate Black children in public and private schools; the Black land-grants functioned as normal schools, not as land-grant ones. In the states with Black land-grant institutions in 1928, Blacks were predominantly enrolled in private colleges—9,395 (73 percent) versus only 3,527 (27 percent) in Black land-grants. The land-grants understood that remedial work was necessary for a large portion of their student population so they concentrated on preparing students to seek a college degree. They emphasized the liberal arts: the classics, humanities, and basic sciences. Agriculture and mechanical arts training was minimal, offered either in separate institutes or through an occasional course. Black land-grants could not even attract trained teachers in these technical fields. States offered these specialists salaries that were slightly more than half of what white professors with similar training, ability, and experience received. It was not until 1931 that Black land-grants enrolled more students directly seeking a college degree than those requiring extensive college preparatory courses.[4] Early Black colleges had to spend most of their funding on subcollegiate-level institution. Despite these struggles, by the 1930s most of the 1890 land-grant colleges developed a bona fide four-year, standard degree program and received accreditation for their curriculum.

The 1930s were critical years for the Conference of Presidents. The

desperation of the Great Depression exacerbated the rural Black condition. The Black land-grants tried to ameliorate the situation. They worked to secure credit for Black farmers and establish ways to better utilize farm credits. The presidents of Black land-grants believed that solid economic footing for Black farmers was a major institutional objective in the 1930s, and they recognized that their conference had to be a public voice. They defined making credit available to Black farmers as a sign of inclusion and democratic participation, a kind of democracy that would result in significant improvement in farmers' standard of living. Therefore, they agitated for changes in credit policies and credit mechanisms, which would improve the condition and status of Black farmers.

Black land-grant institutions' presidents in the 1930s championed diversity of learning and living. At their 1934 conference, building knowledge dominated conversation. The group argued that to ensure farm profitability, students should receive a strong, general agricultural course, including classes on animal husbandry, field crops, vegetable growing, dairying, farm management, economics, rural sociology, diseases, plant families, and poultry husbandry. The presidents recognized that teachers also required professional training to provide the instruction that diversified rural and farm culture demanded.[5] Educational training Educational training for teachers at the vocational high schools as well as at the mechanical and agricultural colleges was a major topic, since these individuals were responsible for implementing workshops and programs in communities to improve knowledge associated with farming and home economics, so that the youth and adults would gain a better understanding regarding how to improve their standard of living and income as skilled rural laborers. The 1935 conference gave overwhelming attention to the type of curricula (secondary and collegiate) needed at the agricultural and mechanical schools to prepare students for extension work. The presidents wanted to chart best practices as a way of establishing past and present trends for extension agent training.[6] The 1937 conference focused on soil conservation. It called on their agricultural specialists and field staff to address soil-conservation needs typically experienced by Black farmers. That agenda included participation in land-grant conservation programs, which entailed training farmers in new methods of production and encouraging the planting of crops such as pulpwood trees to preserve forests.[7] The 1937 conference also emphasized new and evolving opportunities for land-grant colleges. The keynote address discussed how the land-grants could move beyond agriculture to include training related to

industry, business, home economics, and health.[8] The 1938 conference continued a discussion of the aforementioned issues addressed at the 1937 conference as essential needs that had to be addressed if the Black community was to survive the Great Depression. Suggestions for Black farm families' improvement in such areas as agriculture and business would require Black land-grants establishing better relationships with the USDA and its Federal Tenant Purchase Program. It also called on the land-grant schools to participate in rural development efforts, engage in rural rehabilitation, create and maintain cooperatives, and organize local agricultural conferences.[9]

That complicated, critical agenda fueled conference discussions throughout the 1930s. It also provided the foundation for the meetings in the 1940s and 1950s. The presidents continued to expand curriculum areas to better prepare their students for a wider variety of opportunities. They also sought equal opportunities for graduates who had been denied positions because of their race, and they help land-grants as a group adjust to social change. The latter included helping Black farmers keep abreast of changing New Deal policies and their evolving consequences.

Black Land-Grants' Reaction and Assessment of New Deal Policies

The presidents of Black land-grants also examined the implications of federal policies, including the sometimes negative effects and behaviors that federal offices spawned. In 1933, for example, the presidents of these institutions looked at the role of small southern farms in relation to the Future Land Utilization Program.[10] They found too little effort went into helping the smallest farmers: African American growers and producers. The presidents called for a federal redress of the imbalance. Later at the 1937 conference, they sought to restore Black farm tenants' confidence and morale. The presidents stipulated that Black land-grants study the local conditions of tenancy and make recommendations to alleviate unfavorable situations.[11] In 1938, the presidents worked together to develop a good relationship with the Farm Security Administration.[12] These leaders also addressed the impact of the Farm Credit Administration, demanding that it work through their institutions to provide services essential to equipping rural people with requisite farm management and finances knowledge.[13] Addresses given at a conference of Black agricultural leaders and farmers at Prairie View, Texas, in August 1936 discussed the importance of Black farmers to the Agricultural Adjustment Act

(AAA) and the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act.[14] In short, the presidents believed it was the responsibility of their institutions to establish logical approaches to address the needs of Black rural farmers and find ways to develop greater effectiveness in extension programs.[15]

Academics, intellectuals, and journalists, the majority of whom were Black, regularly criticized federal agencies and offices and New Deal farm programs because of the limited resources provided to Black land-grants and the communities they were supposed to serve. In 1936, Ralph J. Bunche declared that New Deal programs were primarily a means to enhance middle-class capitalism while simultaneously worsening the condition of the poor.[16] J. Phil Campbell showed the meager benefits the Federal Emergency Relief Administration provided Black farm families in terms of income improvement, rural rehabilitation, training for industrial employment, development of rural work centers, and rural education.[17] In 1936, *Crisis* magazine published an article titled "A Black Inventory of the New Deal." In it, John R. Davis decried the Agricultural Adjustment Administration and Public Works projects for their failure to help Black citizens.[18] He expanded the critique later that year in the *Journal of Negro Education*. He argued that New Deal policies did little to help Black farm families; they gave minimal attention to their poor standard of living, the need for crop and acreage reduction, mass unemployment, evictions, terrorism against tenant farmers and sharecroppers, and robbery.[19] Public critiques of New Deal farm programs, along with a sustained assessment of the ways in which Black farmers and rural communities and their land-grant institutions were being treated, enabled the presidents of the 1890 colleges to establish additional and different kinds of collaborations and partnerships. Through these new mechanisms, the voices of the Black land-grants could be heard and their constituencies might be included in public farm policy. But it would be some decades later following the 1960s uprisings when constituencies of Black land-grants and of Black farmers began to be heard.

Collaborations and Partnerships with Government Agencies and Organizations

Black land-grant colleges and federal offices sometimes collaborated to resolve issues among the Black rural and farm populations, often with mixed results. For example, in Louisiana, Black farmers and sharecroppers viewed the federal government's agricultural programs as a cross between

confusion and tolerance. They objected to the activities of state officials, local bankers, and merchants. But in 1937, life for Black farmers and rural communities seemed to be improving: a study of farming and industrial employment conducted in the Southeast by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration showed comparable social and economic data for part-time farmers and for nonfarming industrial workers. By 1939, studies indicated that federal policies had gained traction among Black people. The Farm Security Administration Rehabilitation Program studied 50,000 Black families as part of a survey of 116,000 typical southern families and found only small differences between black and white families.[20]

The fruitful collaboration between federal offices and Black land-grants encouraged these schools to seek additional collaboration. At the nineteenth annual conference meeting in Chicago in 1941, the Conference of Presidents' theme was "Cooperation with Federal Agencies with Particular Reference to Agricultural Extension Services and the National Defense Program." Thomas N. Roberts, a special assistant to the director of personnel at the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), gave a paper that showed nearly nonexistent Black involvement in agency activities except in the extension service and the Farm Security Administration. Discussion ensued but no commentator attributed the imbalance to racism. No one argued that the USDA needed to reach out to Black land-grants. In 1942, at a meeting of the presidents of Black land-grants at Hampton Institute, the group broached again partnering with the federal government to help Blacks on farms and in rural communities. This time, they included the voice of a major Black intellectual, W. E. B. DuBois, in the mix. DuBois submitted a proposal to the Black land-grants presidents assessing the impact of the nation's entry into World War II and the economic and social changes the war would bring to Americans, especially Black people. Working under the conference theme "National Planning for the Prosecution and Winning of the War, Long-Time Issues of Postwar Collapse and Reconstruction, and Their Effects upon the Negro Land-Grant Colleges," the presidents wrestled with questions of how to involve their institutions and students in three major areas: the armed forces, war industries, and agriculture. Maintaining that a job applicant's skill and ability should be the only factors considered by an employer, not race, religion, or any other condition, they spoke with a stronger political voice. They registered special concern that the USDA was employing Blacks primarily in custodial positions, that the navy not only was refusing to recognize Negro colleges as participating in the V-1 program but had not

worked out a plan for the employment of Negro officers, and that Black colleges continued to be drastically underfunded because states were not sharing equitably the funds designated for land-grant colleges.[21]

These ongoing struggles for inclusion and sustained efforts to empower rural Blacks and Black farmers through education and employment prompted the presidents of the Black land-grants to send representatives to Washington, DC to speak with President Harry S. Truman. They met with him on October 22, 1946. Because Blacks had fought in uniform and participated in wartime productions programs, presidents of the Black land-grants and their representatives wanted President Truman to know that Black colleges were willing and ready to help educate Americans, especially with the support of the G.I. Bill created to educate veterans. In a prepared statement presented by Drs. Sherman D. Scruggs of Lincoln University, Rufus B. Atwood of Kentucky State College, and John W. Davis of West Virginia State College, they declared:

> We represent officially the publicly supported land-grant colleges of seventeen southern states in which approximately seventy-five percent of Negroes of America live. . . . The progress of these colleges is important to the advancement of the South and the Nation. They are located in states which are rich in the number of children and poor in wealth; where a separate school system is maintained for Negroes; where schools for Negro youth are conducted in churches, lodges, old stores, tenant houses, or whatever building is available; where oftentimes in entire counties, high schools for Negroes do not exist and where publicly supported professional training for Negroes is nonexistent. The Director of Selective Service has pointed out that of 347,038 registrants of the first two registrations prior to Pearl Harbor, 220,052 were Negroes. . . . Equalizing educational opportunity for all American youth is important to our National well-being. Federal Aid to education in areas of need is a necessity.[22]

They concluded their statement by asking President Truman to consider four areas of concern: (1) expanding personnel and support for the cooperative agricultural and home economics extension service work for needed programs in adult education; (2) providing for organized research in the institutions and appropriate access to experimental station facilities within the respective states, so that current information essential for sound agricultural and rural life be made readily available; (3) activating additional ROTC units in the interest of military preparedness and peace; and (4) making equipment, surplus property, buildings, and land more easily available to meet the demands being made on the Black land-grant institutions for training veterans.[23] Within this presentation, the presidents reminded President Truman that "Racism is probably the weakest link in our democracy, and it is time in our own interest as a nation to do something about it."[24]

Black college presidents remained diligent in their efforts to attack racism and discrimination. A most critical moment happened in the 1950s when the presidents complained that much discrimination existed in federal projects and outreach programs. A letter concerning the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) to Dr. Lewis Webster Jones, president of the University of Arkansas and head of the Executive Committee of the Land-Grant College Association, from R. B. Atwood, president of Kentucky State College and secretary of the Negro Conference, put the case simply: "As you know, the TVA will not enter into research or other projects with the Negro Land-Grant Colleges because it has already contracted with the white land-grant colleges in each Valley State. Our requests to the TVA have met with little success. Several institutions have requested that their college farms be made TVA test Demonstration Farms; we also have a Cooperative Social Studies Project (sociological) for which we need financial support, and which, some of us feel, falls within the area of research aidable from TVA funds. It is suggested that your Committee can aid the Negro Land-Grant Colleges and establish and maintain a closer, more active working relationship with the TVA, at least in the seven states located in the TVA region."[25] On February 1, 1951, after one year and three months of discussion, the TVA entered into a research agreement with the land-grant colleges in the Tennessee Valley and the Conference of Presidents of Negro Land-Grant Colleges. The title of the agreement was "Study of Social and Economic Change as It Affects the Negro Population of the Tennessee Valley Region."[26] The presidents of North Carolina A&T, Alcorn A&M, Fort Valley State College, Kentucky State College, Virginia State College, and Tennessee A&I State College participated; their universities were located in the Tennessee Valley region. They conducted the study in three phases. In phase one, each school analyzed census data that related to population, farm mechanization, farm electrification, selected crops, farm tenure, occupations, and other trends from 1920 to 1950 in each county of the seven-state region. In phase two, the schools studied census data to determine whether there had been an increase or

decrease in Black farm ownership. In phase three, the universities provided recommendations for training and service programs based on the research findings.[27]

Black land-grant institutions' collaborations and partnerships with government agencies and community organizations increased in particular from the 1940s through the 1970s. Research studies and community projects were established with such offices as the US Farmers Administration, the US Bureau of Agricultural Economics, the US Extension Service, the US Office of Education, the state experiment stations, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, the US Census Bureau, and the US Commission on Civil Rights. Many of these efforts involved collecting data about the work that Black land-grants were doing regarding farm life and standards of living, collegiate agricultural education, farm-ownership programs, rural employment, equal opportunity and equal treatment of the 1890 institutions and the constituents they served, participation in federal farm programs, and youth programs for rural and farm children.[28] Working with and through these offices, the presidents of the Black land-grants labored to enhance the physical, material, cultural, economic, and social life of their students and the communities these land-grants were established to serve.

The Work of Black Land-Grant Colleges: Conferences, Extension, and Cooperatives

The real-life work of Black land-grants evolved through their outreach. The presidents of Black land-grants believed the 1890 act had created the opportunity to expand, define programs for, and better determine Blacks' educational needs.[29] They believed defining and implementing an educational mission that included these objectives were critical to empowering Black farmers and rural communities to become more progressive and independent.

Conferences were one of the ways Black land-grants chose to exercise leadership and engage in community building to empower people. Sessions at these conferences educated Black youth, farmers, and women. Discussions at conferences organized by Black land-grants focused on issues related to improving standards of living as well as questions that attempted to define ways Black rural and agricultural communities could move forward through partnerships with the 1980 institutions. In doing so, conference leaders encouraged Blacks to develop not only community philosophies about progress, but strategies that would allow them to continue participating in life

conferences, the kinds that would help Black rural families understand how to modernize and adjust to rural and agricultural changes. Everyone who was engaged in helping farm families improve their lives and communities needed to be trained to give assistance.

Black land-grants' presidents utilized provocative thematic approaches at their conferences to address issues that their institutions were facing. At the thirteenth annual conference, held in Washington, DC, in 1935, the theme was "The Need of the Negro Land-Grant Colleges." This meeting featured eight guest speakers, including Henry A. Wallace, secretary of agriculture. From the US Department of Commerce, Eugene Knicles Jones, in a talk titled "Studying Vocational Opportunities for Negroes," emphasized that for Black Americans to be able to take advantage of increasing opportunities, Black land-grant colleges must have the resources and personnel to prepare students. He said it was crucial for each Black land-grant college to have a field agent, whose chief duties would be compiling the types of occupations that would be available to graduates as well as placing graduates in positions that offered apprenticeship privileges, and instituting a follow-up system to check on the vocational progress of graduates. He advised Black land-grants to hold annual conferences emphasizing consumer and growers' cooperatives, credit unions, agricultural economics, small farm ownership, and crop diversification. Erwin H. Shinn of the extension service gave a speech titled "Professional Training of Negro Extension Work." He emphasized curricula that those who held federal positions related to agriculture wanted to see developed in Black land-grants. These included training (1) teachers of agriculture, home economics, and the related sciences for both college and secondary positions; (2) extension workers in agriculture and home economics and to some extent subject-matter specialists in these fields; and (3) practical farming and farm homemaking and their scientific underpinnings.[30]

At the regional conference of Black land-grant presidents meeting In Petersburg, Virginia in 1937, district agents, persons working in groups that had been divided by the 1890 presidents into districts based upon geographical location, emphasized similar types of training and thinking. Their meeting focused on the need for farm ownership, advancement in tenant farming, problems associated with cotton production, more effective utilization of extension services, advanced farm and home demonstrations, and participation in government programs. In 1939, the Black land-grant institution of the University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff convened a conference

for state supervisors and Black teachers involved with providing agricultural education. Through reports, speeches, and roundtable discussions involving fifty-one participants from fourteen states and the District of Columbia, the meeting focused primarily on methods of instruction in agriculture and mechanics. It also emphasized farmer and teacher training in vocational and agricultural fields and in technical education. Its final thrust was means to increase community participation in government programs run by Black land-grants.[31]

One of the leading institutions involved in organizing Black land-grant conferences was Tuskegee University. In 1950, with the support of the seventeen Black land-grants, Tuskegee held a conference to address the problems of small Black farmers in the South. Discussions focused on problems, changes, and trends in southern agriculture, major areas in which targeted research could solve problems, and the types of programs that would enable Black farmers to become economically secure.[32] Each of the aforementioned Black land-grant conferences stressed the specific needs of Black farmers within the context of farm, family, and community.

Between 1930 and 1960, the presidents of the Black land-grants defended their colleges in the face of what they considered unfair criticism. They objected to statements and points of view put forth that they believed were out of step with reality. For example, in a 1935 letter to Henry A. Wallace, they wrote: "The magnitude of the educational program for white citizens may attract so much attention that attention is distracted from how little is being done for the Negro citizens. . . . All of this may happen unwittingly, but the fact remains that as the program for white citizens proceeds and expands, the program for Negro citizens lags behind, and at a low level. The minds of many citizens, both white and colored, become confused and then, sometimes complacent; we assume that all is well with our citizens; what is generally considered to be everybody's business turns out to be no nobody's business—and the Negro suffers."[33]

In addition to meetings set up to further the professional development of administrative leaders at the 1890 land-grants, the Conference of Presidents of Negro Land-Grant Colleges partnered with the presidents of some Black private and public colleges to provide an array of services. The expanded programming was designed to prepare students and adults in rural communities for a variety of occupations. Within this context, the presidents of Atlanta University, Central State College in Ohio, Hampton Institute, Howard University, Savannah State College, Texas Southern University, and

Tuskegee were given associate membership in the conference. To be more inclusive of the voices of Black researchers and scholars and of Black institutions of higher education that were concerned about the needs of poor Black people, the aforementioned associated colleges and institutes, which did not carry the land-grant designation, agreed to utilized their faculty, primarily in the social sciences, to conduct research concerning problems Black Americans in rural communities faced. For example, Professor E. Franklin Frazier, a sociologist at Howard University, served as coordinator of a research program called "The Land-Grant Program in Cooperative Social Studies." With a group of other scholars, he conducted research on Black communities and their experiences with demographic changes, land tenure, availability of health care, changing economic problems, occupational opportunities, and the quality and variations within family relations. Other leading scholars involved in the project included W. E. B. DuBois of Atlanta University, Ambrose Coliver (assistant to the commissioner of the US Department of Education), and Charles S. Johnson of Fisk University, all of whom worked together to address specific problems facing the Black community. With the addition of the associate institutions, Black land-grants were able to shift their attention primarily from a single focus on rural development and agricultural education to preparing members of the Black community and students so as to raise the standard of living for Black families, to overcome inequality, poverty, and poor health, to deal with rapid mechanization and industrialization, and to call for the integration of higher education.[34]

Especially in the 1950s, Black farmers found a rhythm for developing alliances and organizations to address the needs created by segregation, discrimination, and oppression. In 1956, for example, Black farmers in Clarendon County, North Carolina, organized the Clarendon County Improvement Association to circumvent discrimination. It provided small loans, farm supplies, and services to Blacks. When area gins would not accept cotton from Black farmers, the cooperative transported it to distant facilities. When Black growers could not sell their goods because of discrimination, Black farmers and producers formed vegetable cooperatives. In the 1960s, the Federation of Southern Cooperatives was created by representatives from twenty-two cooperatives throughout the South. Many of the initiators of cooperative development were religious leaders and churches active in improving life in Black communities. In the early 1970s, some Black churches and cooperatives bought land for self-sufficient farm settlement and market production. Through the mid to late 1970s and into the 1980s

and 1990s, Black farmers cooperatives gained some financial stability and, as a collective, developed several operations, including vegetable-packing facilities to serve large supermarkets. They also established high earning pecan businesses, while some of the pepper growers created their own brand of hot sauce. Further, in the 1990s, the development of Southern Alternatives, a pecan-marketing cooperative in Georgia, exemplified a new emphasis on commercialization, with Black growers removing the middlemen from the profit-making process. Hoping to keep Black farming alive and pass it on to future generations, Black cooperatives are currently taking steps to teach younger generations about farming,[35] sometimes with the help of Black land-grant institutions.[36] Four modern, up-to-date, cooperative cotton gins were owned and profitably operated by Black farmers in the Delta section of eastern Arkansas. Agricultural cooperatives had been started by poor Black farmers in Harris County, Georgia, and Halifax County, Virginia.[37] Many *New York Times* articles have discussed the actions of Black cooperatives and their attitudes about surviving as independent participants in agricultural production.[38]

Revitalizing Black Farm Life, Family Living, and Community Struggles (1950s–1990s)

As the African American community exerted greater pressure for inclusion and equality and the right to engage in society as full citizens, the presidents of the Black land-grants stepped up their outreach. Between the 1950s and the 1970s, these institutions focused more intensely on quality-of-life issues. Family, farm, and community formed the core of Black land-grants' work. Diversification in farming emerged as a major development that would help Black farm families earn a profitable living and depend less on the production of cotton. Black land-grant presidents supported dairying and poultry and livestock production as farming enterprises. North Carolina A&T University focused, for instance, on dairying and emphasized a course of study that would be useful for anyone wishing to transition to dairying. Supervisors provided farmers with results of surveys that showed progress, as a small percentage of Blacks experienced profit-making with dairying, and they cited cases where at least two Black families had experienced great success.[39]

Land acquisition remained a critical need for Black farmers during the Civil Rights Movement. This idea was not new, but the ways in which the presidents addressed it were different. By now, sufficient evidence showed that the Farmers Home Administration and the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service had been ineffective in helping Blacks transition into landowners. In the 1960s, Black farmers began to ask how the Black land-grants could help with racialized issues when the presidents had dissolved their own independent organization (the Conference of Presidents of Negro Land-Grant Colleges) and had joined the dominant white association (now called the Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities). During the first twenty years after the end of World War II, racism in American agriculture became more entrenched. The influence of racial factors and the impact of economic demands, such as profit-making on land tenure in the South had devastating consequences for Black farmers. Comparisons between Blacks and whites revealed great disparities in the differences of land, in the opportunities to purchase available land, and in mortgage titles.[40]

Black land-grants began to focus their energy and training on the homes and health of rural Blacks. Nutritional needs were a serious health-related issue. Through surveys of southern communities, Black land-grants discovered alarming nutritional deficiencies among rural Blacks, as evidenced by the large number of cases of indigestion, constipation, low vitality, and general physical disability. The extension service encouraged Black farm families to grow gardens and to cure and can pork products by providing demonstrations on food planting and food preparation.[41]

While organizing leadership conferences to discern how best to inform and educate Black rural and farm communities, the presidents of the Black land-grants engaged in safe politics as far as voicing opposition to discrimination involving Black farmers. Farm conferences paid tribute to the country's Black farmers and to Black agricultural leaders for their patriotic contributions during World War II. The presidents critiqued both federal offices and their leaders' failure to implement policies or to recognize the success of Black farmers. These conservative approaches prevented their constituencies from becoming dismayed by politics or fearful of retaliation because of positions the presidents had taken on farm programs.

Health was perhaps the most important family-life issue that Black land-grant presidents tackled. Segregation made it difficult for Blacks, especially southern ones, to get access to competent medical care. Black researchers decried incidences of illness, the lack of available health care, and the cost of medical services, as well as the effects that income, location, and occupational status had in terms of Blacks' access to such services.[42] Black land-grants

held health fairs and conferences on health, and they sent extension workers into communities to help provide basic medical care, to recommend clinics and doctors, and to work with elderly and young adults regarding prevention of common colds and childhood measles and chicken pox.

The socioeconomic situation of Black farmers and rural communities remained a critical issue. Therefore, revitalizing such communities had to involve protest. Although the presidents of the 1890 institutions did not actively or directly engage in the Civil Rights or Black Power movements, their researchers did through the print media. In this way, Black land-grants helped articulate the struggles and needs of Black rural and farm communities. Although federal agencies increased funding and programming for these populations, support remained limited and sometimes was not provided in a timely manner. The Black land-grant presidents, students, and community supporters reached out to media outlets for help in voicing the needs of these historically Black institutions. Among the hundreds of leading media outlets that gave their voices to this struggle, *Opportunity*, *Atlantic Monthly*, the *New York Times*, the *New Republic*, the *Nation*, *Civil Rights Digest*, and *Ebony* publicized the struggles of Black farm communities. For example, *Opportunity* published articles that discussed white violence against Black farmers because some Black workers and landowners were perceived to be too political, as they associated with socialist and communist groups whom the white elite believed were encouraging Blacks to retaliate against whites with violence at Camp Hill, Alabama.[43] The *Atlantic Monthly* reported that Black sharecroppers in the Arkansas and Mississippi deltas showed aggression toward what they perceived as oppression. Newspaper articles described the attitudes and responses of both the white landowners and Black sharecroppers and the dishonest methods of exploitation typically used by both groups.[44] *Social Forces* detailed attempts by community leaders to suppress efforts by communists to organize Black tenant farmers in east-central Alabama into a sharecroppers' union. Articles in the New York Times provided details about battles over wages. Writers often focused on the state of Mississippi. In 1965, they reported that forty-eight Black tenant farmers, including women and children, in southeast Greenville, Mississippi, were determined to keep their strike going through the winter to emphasize their demands for better wages and working conditions. They had adequate provisions for the winter and were running a cooperative workshop to generate income. Cash contributions for the cause were being sought from many different sources, including northern philanthropists.

The strikers were urging other Black tenant farmers throughout the South to walk off their jobs at planting time in the spring.[45] According to *The Nation*, thousands of sharecroppers in the Mississippi Delta faced eviction and loss of income as a result of the one-dollar increase in the minimum wage. Delta planters announced that workers would be replaced by a more intensive use of weed-killing chemicals and mechanical cotton-pickers. The writer repeated popular suggestions offered by presidents of the 1890s, leaders of the Black communities, and by white farmers who were rapidly modernizing their farms through technology.[46]

The public outcry from Blacks about discrimination and segregation led the presidents of Black land-grants to ask the federal government and the USDA for more funds and additional extension agents to help the 1890s achieve their work agricultural, mechanical, and technical work with Black communities. Newspaper reports and editorials helped shed light on the federal government's neglect in implementing and enforcing federal farm programs and civil rights protections to ensure democratic participation. Emmett Peter Jr. discussed in *The New Republic* how Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman had instructed Agriculture Extension and other USDA agencies in the South to end discrimination and to encourage Black farmers to participate in the federal programs to which they were entitled. He appointed a fifteen-member advisory committee to review the department's plans and monitor progress.[47] In 1968, *Civil Rights Digest* documented racial discrimination against Blacks in the Cooperative Extensive Service, especially in salaries, promotions, and services, outlined new USDA regulations for eliminating these practices, and established procedures for filing complaints.[48] Through a photojournalistic piece by James Peppler, *Civil Rights Digest* also illustrated poverty, discrimination, and the economic dependency of rural Black citizens, particularly in sixteen Alabama counties.[49]

One of the ways in which the Black land-grants could address the struggles of Black farmers and rural communities was through extension services, home economics, and research. The formal extension work of the 1890 land-grants took place via the Cooperative Extension Service after 1914. Extension remained segregated through the 1970s in some places, but it nonetheless delivered significant training, courses, programs, health care, and other services. Extension in the Black land-grants remained woefully underfunded until 1972, when the presidents of the Black land-grants and their allies complained bitterly about the USDA. Only then did Congress establish extension programs to redress the imbalance: the Agricultural

Environmental and Consumer Protection Appropriation Act provided opportunities for predominantly Black land-grant institutions to plan extension education programs on their own. This act became the foundation of the 1980 extension redraft. It gave colleges and universities autonomy to parcel out funds set aside by Congress according to local priorities.[50]

Of the various extension efforts, home economics had the greatest immediate impact on the social and material conditions of rural Blacks and Black farmers. According to Walter Washing, president of Alcorn State University in Mississippi, "Some economics programs not only integrate knowledge and services from various disciplines to enable individuals and families to improve their quality of well-being, but home economics uniquely touches the hearts and spirits of people and bestow[s] on them human value, character, and dignity—the very preservation and progression of humanity."[51] The presidents of the Black land-grants believed that home economics held answers to many problems. It came to bear on health, health care, nutrition, sanitation, and domestic activities such as sewing, dressmaking, needlework, costume design, and hat making. By creating domestic science programs and bringing this kind of training into the community, the Black land-grant presidents established home economics units at their colleges to help individuals and families become self-sustaining and contributing members of society. Home economics programs were tremendous successes, both for students and for the communities the Black institutions served. These programs bolstered respectability for Black people as progressive home managers and provided skills necessary for community leadership and support. While the teaching of home economics at each of these 1890 land-grants has changed dramatically over the years, the fundamental purpose has not deviated from the original mission. In the twenty-first century, the presidents remain vested in building humanity among Black people by training students who can help develop strategies for managing life situations.[52]

The success of the extension and home economics programs encouraged the presidents of the Black land-grants to pursue research as the final frontier for addressing the needs and concerns of Blacks living on farms and in rural America. For seventy-seven years (1890–1967), these institutions lacked state and federal financial support for research. The 1890 act specified that the new schools were not eligible for Hatch Act funds or those subsequent to them. During this period, funding for experimentation and research was bringing increased status and recognition to white land-grant

universities. State research support for the Black land-grants lagged far behind, but formal federal research support began in 1967 with development of the Cooperative State Research Service (CSRS). The CSRS was a response to pressure from Black faculties and their supporters. With increased funding for research at the Black land-grants came many changes in rural and farm life. CSRS has promoted better understanding of health, nutrition, home economics, and life needs, household and farm management, crop and produce diversification, the development of markets, improvement in livestock production, and more profitable farming techniques. According to Leedell W. Neyland, each of the Black land-grants, along with Tuskegee and Hampton universities, has made great strides in agricultural research since 1967, when the CSRS first organized federal support.[53] Nevertheless, the Black land-grants have had to conduct their research within a climate of discrimination and segregation while a disproportionate amount of funds have been allocated to the white land-grants. Researchers and presidents at the Black land-grants continue to request more funding. The advocacy of the presidents on behalf of their constituencies is one of the main reasons why many Blacks continue to see the land-grant system as ideal for accessing higher education.[54]

Black Farmers' Collaboration with Black Organizations and Other Black Institutions

Beginning in the 1950s, researchers in the marketing and production wing of the USDA published studies to illuminate issues related to the participation of rural Blacks and Black farmers in American agriculture. The result of these efforts, *Success Stories: Negro Farmers*, primarily provided information about individual Black farmers in USDA programs.[55] Articles about Black self-help successes began to appear in the popular press. These included stories about a wealthy young Black farmer in Beaufort, North Carolina,[56] a communal farm near Wayside, Mississippi,[57] a multipurpose center in Bricks, North Carolina,[58] a 376-acre Black Muslim farm in Ashville, Alabama,[59] a former sharecropper who became a wealthy farmer in Jackson, Georgia,[60] and the National Baptist Convention's purchase of 5,000 acres of land in Liberia for the purpose of setting up a Black version of the Peace Corps.[61] In 1963, Tuskegee Institute announced plans for an experimental training program to prepare impoverished Black tenant farmers for city life. In keeping with their emphasis on collaborating with Black farmers, Black

organizations, and Black community institutions, such as churches, Black land-grants executed plans that included rural and urban Blacks working together to address city poverty. For example, farmers who worked with extension agents from Tuskegee studied city life, giving special attention to the ways in which they could help Blacks—many of whom were rural migrants, former tenants, and sharecroppers from the South—grow food in yards and other limited city spaces to help with the chronic issues of health and nutrition poor Blacks faced daily within their inner-city environments.[62]

Despite the success some Black farmers experienced, the vast majority had unpleasant encounters with the USDA and the local offices created to assist them. Discrimination and intimidation were so prevalent that the USDA issued an order to treat all clients equally. Responding to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, many groups demanded that racial segregation and discrimination be abolished. The presidents of Black land-grants, members of their faculties and their supporters, and members of the associated institutions urged the USDA to provide equal opportunities and additional support for the 1890 colleges. Movement toward research appropriations began in 1965, when Congress authorized the USDA to fund research at colleges and institutions that were ineligible under previous legislation. Congress's Public Law 89-106 made it possible for Black land-grants to get funding from the National Academy of Sciences while shoring up funding for agricultural and food research and greater assistance for agricultural experimental stations in the states where the Black land-grants existed. Conversations concerning the increasing need for more funding for 1890 institutions grew less polite in the 1960s following the passage of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and the Voting Rights of 1965. These pieces of legislations made it possible for the presidents of Black land-grants to focus on the need for increased research allocations to their institutions. Support for Black land-grants' struggle to obtain more funding came from the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC) and the Rural Sociological Society (RSS). Because of this collaborative approach and pressure from allies, Black land-grants received $8,880,000 in 1972.[63] From the 1970s onward, funds for research at Black land-grants continued to increase.

In the 1970s and the 1980s, the funding needs of Black farmers did not receive the same attention as did funding requests from the presidents of the Black land-grants. Lack of access to these dollars remained a great concern, but the USDA responded slowly to discrimination complaints. It

issued statements reminding its agents, as well as state and local offices, that discrimination would not be tolerated. Despite these efforts, discrimination was tolerated, and Black farmers persisted with their complaints well into the 1980s. Struggles around this issue peaked in the 1990s, when Black farmers brought a class-action suit against the USDA.

The Black Farmers' Lawsuit against the USDA

Complaints about discrimination made it difficult for the USDA to claim a strong civil rights record in agriculture and farming in the 1980s. Based on past practices, Black farmers charged that the USDA had consistently tolerated racial discrimination in distributing program benefits, which mostly went to white farmers and excluded minority and limited-resource farmers and ranchers. Many Black farmers and those working for the USDA now view the 1980s as the critical period, when racist practices and retaliation against protesters peaked. The resurgence of conservatism during this time was accompanied by a rapid decline in access to certain public agricultural programs. In the 1990s, the USDA attempted to ameliorate that criticism but seemed unable to establish the right kind of policies that Black and small farmers needed. By the 1990s, Black farmers and their advocates complained that the way in which the USDA allowed local county committees to function disrupted their ability to farm successfully and profitably. At least 94 percent of county committees had no female or minority representation, even though women and minorities comprised a considerable portion of the southern farm population. Minority producers were 4.7 percent of eligible voters but held only 2.9 percent of county committee seats. Women constituted 28.8 percent of eligible voters but held only 1.5 percent of county committee seats. The General Accounting Office found that in 1995, only 36 of the 101 counties with the largest concentration of minority farmers had at least one minority county committee member.[64]

Despite legislation created to help minorities remain in agriculture, the number of African-American farmers had decreased by 98 percent by 1997, while the number of white Americans who farmed declined by 66 percent. Documentation of Black land loss began in 1971, when the Black Economic Research Center (BERC) sponsored a two-day conference at Clark College in Atlanta. It argued that between 1950 and 1969, the number of acres of farmland fully or partly owned by Blacks had dropped from 12 million to 5.5 million. The reduction continued because Black farmers could not acquire

capital and, as some Black farmers believed, the USDA allowed white landowners to manipulate local USDA offices to maintain their domination of agricultural life and production. Due to Blacks' struggle to hold onto land, an Emergency Land Fund (ELF) was created to help Black farmers acquire land as well as maintain ownership. This work led to collaboration between ELF and BERC to implement a strategy of tracking Black land loss. A report by R. S. Browne from the 1971 conference that was published in 1973 described the outcome of a dozen projects dealing with this particular issue.[65]

During the 1990s, Black farmers became increasingly vocal in blaming the USDA of racial discrimination. They charged that the USDA had long tolerated the unequal distribution of program benefits and the misuse of power to influence landownership and farm profitability. They blamed the USDA for enforcing regulations that, intentionally or not, prevented minority and limited-resource farmers and ranchers from accessing the benefits of the same programs that had enabled larger nonminority producers to weather changes in agriculture since the 1930s. They accused the USDA of exhibiting insensitivity toward the differing needs of minority and limited-resource farmers and maintained that it had neglected its responsibility to reach out and serve all.

The 1990s were ripe for protest. Some Black farmers demanded action that would produce results. On December 12, 1996, Black farmers from every region of the country demonstrated outside the White House, calling upon President Bill Clinton to demand fair treatment in implementing federal agricultural lending programs. Thereafter, Daniel R. Glickman, secretary of agriculture, established the Civil Rights Action Team (CRAT) within the USDA to investigate the Black farmers' charges. He authorized listening sessions throughout America to field complaints and ordered the USDA to produce a summary in a timely manner.

The USDA sponsored twelve listening sessions in eleven different locations in January 1997 to learn about Black and minority farming experiences. Nine listening sessions were held with farmers and producers, typically called customers, and three with USDA staff employees. Each session was designed to address gender and race as they related to interactions between USDA local offices and African Americans, Native Americans, Hispanics, and Asians. Farmers and staff employees who did not speak at the listening sessions were allowed to submit recorded or written statements to CRAT. In addition, the USDA established an e-mail address, a fax

number, and a hotline for comments. Details varied from family to family, but the general themes focused on loan processing, delays in approval of loans, and lack of information and help necessary to participate in USDA programs. Farmers, too, orally documented their concern about declining number of minority farmers and farms; many indicated they believed that the USDA was involved in a conspiracy to take land from minority farmers so that wealthy landowners could gain access to it.

At these sessions, farmers described a pattern of discriminatory behavior. The most serious accusation concerned how Black farmers were treated personally and how their farm business was not treated as a serious agricultural enterprise. Some claimed that their paperwork was dismissed and that they had been disrespected. Others emphasized loans that had arrived long after planting season, arbitrary reductions in loan amounts, and a much higher rejection rate than that experienced by white applicants. An overwhelming majority of Black farmers accused the USDA of ignoring research that would help small-scale and limited-resource farmers, and of failing to include minority populations in outreach efforts to raise awareness of federal programs. Finally, minority farmers indicated that official complaints of discrimination had been processed slowly, if at all, and that the USDA often continued with foreclosure proceedings even when a relevant discrimination complaint had been filed. Members of CRAT heard more than thirty separate complaints at the USDA-authorized listening sessions.[66]

Meanwhile, some Black farmers and their advocates developed grassroots strategies to enable them to be heard. Their activism included protest marches in Detroit, Chicago, Atlanta, Washington, DC, and other major cities. They organized letter-writing campaigns, sent messages to churches, e-mailed local and national politicians, conducted major fund-raisers to help farmers, and established national and regional farm organizations to address media questions concerning the struggle. Among the many issues they raised, none seemed more pressing than the fight against Black farm foreclosure and the snail's pace at which the USDA handled complaints. Black farmers clearly linked these two issues to the ready loss of land and farms.

The Black farmer protest led to *Pigford v. Glickman*, a 1999 class-action lawsuit against the USDA. Black land-grant institutions were largely absent from this battle. Tuskegee and other institutions held conferences concerning the lawsuit and continuous Black land loss.

Developments within the state of Kentucky were critical to events

surrounding the lawsuit. Major protests occurred there, especially in the Henderson area. Harry Young, an African American farmer, received considerable publicity for opposing USDA agents. The House of Representatives in the Kentucky General Assembly passed a provision urging the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, Kentucky State University (a Black land-grant), the University of Kentucky's College of Agriculture, and the Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy to assess the economic conditions and needs of Black farmers in Kentucky, to cooperate with other stakeholders (including the USDA), and to identify the Black farmers in Kentucky who were affected by the Pigford case. The economic and demographic data were to include an analysis of the impact of Black farmers on Kentucky's economy. Kentucky State University took the lead in contacting other Black land-grants to identify programs that were being offered to help Black farmers. All information was to be reported to the Kentucky Joint Committee on Agriculture by July 1, 2012. To date, however, there has been no effort on the part of the state or the Black land-grants that shows a significant involvement with the current struggles of Black farmers and the implications of the class-action lawsuit in this way. Only Tuskegee, an associated partner, has been involved in organizing meetings and holding forums. This lack of participation may be the result of institutions that have had, and still have to have, a working relationship with the USDA and that still need its resources. Many claimants in the lawsuit continue to experience difficulties securing compensation for the discrimination they have experienced, even though other groups, such as Latinos, women, and Native Americans, have successfully utilized the Black farmers' class-action legislation to sue for justice for themselves.[67]

Black Land-Grants and the Future

Although it appears that an overwhelming majority of Black land-grants were not involved in directly supporting the Black farmers in the Pigford case, it is clear that they collectively believe that their next level of involvement with Black rural communities and farmers should focus on entrepreneurship and outreach. They have to remain engaged with federal offices and they have to continue recruiting African American students with an interest in agriculture and rural life. Much of their work centers on empowering communities through entrepreneurship, helping small-scale and limited farmers with food and crop production, increasingly utilizing technology and digitalization to improve constituent services, and developing

relationships with federal agencies to shore up funding. Toward this end, rural development cooperative agreements with the 1890 institutions have been created to strengthen the capacity of rural communities to undertake innovative, comprehensive, citizen-led, long-term strategies for community and economic development. In other contexts, many Black land-grants are expanding their research capacity by developing expertise in areas such as homeland security and national defense, cyberinfrastructure, environmental observatories, food security, energy expenditures, genomics, and material science. These new initiatives do not diminish other Black land-grants' efforts. As long as students are interested in higher education from agricultural and rural perspectives, Black land-grants will be vital to the social, political, and economic life of all people, especially African Americans.

Black land-grant leaders must remain engaged and continue to voice their concerns about discrimination, the racialization of their schools and constituencies, and the ways in which they have been excluded from federal and state opportunities. This spirit must guide the Black land-grants in considering the plight of Black farmers and rural Blacks, just as the presidents who created the Conference of Presidents of Negro Land-Grant Colleges did as they implemented the 1890 land-grant vision. There can be no implementation without full representation and understanding that all the work is, indeed, political. The work that the Black land-grants have performed on behalf of Black people has been not only useful and effective but lifesaving, educationally relevant, and socially engaged; it has empowered Blacks to think differently about democracy and participation. Although not perfect, the Black land-grants have worked hard to improve the educational, social, and economic order that makes life livable for the people they were created to serve.

Notes

1. For a discussion of the early history of Black land-grant colleges and universities, see Leedell W. Neyland, *Historically Black Land-Grant Institutions and the Development of Agriculture and Economics* (Tallahassee: Florida A&M University Foundation, 1990); Barbara Cotton, ed., *The 1890 Land-Grant Colleges: A Centennial Review* (Washington, DC: Agricultural History Society, 1992); Wayne F. Urban, *Black Scholar: Horace Mann Bond, 1904–1972* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1992); and Ralph D. Christy and Lionel Williamson, eds., *A Century of Service: Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, 1890–1990* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1992).

2. See Neyland, *Historically Black Land-Grant Institutions*, 77–93.

3. Ibid.

4. John W. Davis, *Land-Grant Colleges for Negroes* (Institute: West Virginia State College Bulletin, Series 21, Number 5, April 1934), 12.

5. Rufus B. Atwood, "Agriculture in the Negro Land Grant College," *Conference of Presidents of Negro Land Grant Colleges, Proceedings* 13 (November 1935): 41–46. See also Davis, *Land-Grant Colleges for Negroes.*

6. Erwin Henry Shinn, "Professional Training for Negro Extension Work," *Conference of Presidents of Negro Land Grant Colleges, Proceedings* 13 (November 1935): 27–37.

7. F. D. Bluford, "What Part Should the Negro Land Grant Colleges Play in Soil Conservation?" *Conference of Presidents of Land Grant Colleges, Proceedings* 15 (November 1937): 64–67.

8. Arthur Howe, "New Fields of Opportunity and How the Land Grant Colleges Can Meet Them," *Southern Workman* 67, no. 2 (February 1938): 37–44.

9. John W. Davis, "Negro Land Grant Colleges," *School and Society* 47, no. 1213 (March 26, 1938): 44–413.

10. Benjamin F. Huebert, "The Role of the Small Southern Farm in the Future Land Utilization Program," *Opportunity* 11, no. 9 (September 1933): 264–68.

11. J. B. Watson, "Ways and Means of Relief for Farm Tenancy," *Conference of Presidents of Negro Land Grant Colleges, Proceedings* 15 (November 1937): 53–56.

12. Issac Fisher, "Conferences of Presidents of Negro Land-Grants Colleges," *Proceedings of the Annual Conferences of the Presidents of Negro Land-Grant Colleges, 1932–1933 and 1935–1938* (November 1938): 52–56.

13. George F. Hudson, "Educational Implications of the Farm Credit Administration," *Conference of Presidents of Negro Land-Grant Colleges, Proceedings* 16 (November 1938): 48–52.

14. Cully A. Cobb, "The Negro Farmer and the AAA," Addresses 1, Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Agricultural Conservation Program, Southern Region, Washington, DC, 1936.

15. Erwin Henry Shinn, "The Need for an Enlarged Program of Agricultural Extension Service in Negro Land-Grant Colleges," *Conference of Presidents of Negro Land-Grant Colleges, Proceedings* 16 (November 1938): 32–41.

16. "Aid to Negroes under FSA Rehabilitation Program," in handbook of labor statistics, 1941, *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Bulletin* 694, no. 1 (1942): 599.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. John R. Davis, "A Survey of Problems of the Negro under the New Deal," *Journal of Negro Education* 5, no. 1 (January 1936): 3–13.

20. "Aid to Negroes under FSA Rehabilitation Program," 599.

21. Neyland, *Historically Black Land-Grant Institutions,* 83.

22. "Statement of Presidents of Land-Grant Colleges for Negroes as presented to the Honorable Harry S. Truman, President of the United States, White House, Washington, DC, October 22, 1946." In *Historically Black Land-Grant Institutions and the Development of Agriculture and Economics, 1890–1990,* Leedell W. Neyland (Tallahassee, FL: Florida A&M University Foundation, Inc., 1990): 83–84.

23. Neyland, *Historically Black Land-Grant Institutions,* 85.

24. *Proceedings of the Conference of the Presidents of Negro Land-Grant Colleges,* special session, Atlantic City, February 21–26, 1948: 103.

25. President R. B. Atwood, Kentucky State College and Secretary of the Conference, to President Lewis Webster Jones, President of the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, November 8, 1949.

26. *Proceedings of the Conference of Presidents of Negro Land-Grant Colleges,* October 17–19, 1950, Frankfurt, Kentucky State College, 34. See also Neyland, *Historically Black Land-Grant Institutions,* 87.

27. Neyland, *Historically Black Land-Grant Institutions,* 87. According to the agreement between the TVA and the presidents of the selected Black land-grants, the TVA was responsible for taking care of the expenses associated with maintaining the office of the director, including the salary, travel, material, and supplies. The participating 1890 institutions had to contribute research personnel services, office space, supplies, and facilities. The effective date of this agreement's initiation was February 20, 1951, and it was scheduled to expire on February 20, 1953.

28. See US Census Bureau, *The Negro Farmer in US, Census of Agriculture, 1930* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1933); US Office of Education, *Negro Conference,* US Office of Education, Vocational Division, Miscellaneous Publication 2377 (Beltsville, MD: National Agricultural Library, 1940); United States Bureau of Agricultural Economics, *Farm Tenancy in Arkansas* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1941); United States Department of Agriculture, Office of Personnel, *The Negro, the USDA, and the Negro Land-Grant College* (Washington, DC: USDA, October 25, 1945); United States Extension Service, War Food Administration, *1940 Rural Farm Negro and Rural Negro Youth, Ages 10–19 and 4-H Club Negro Enrollment, Ages 10–20 for the Years, 1941–1944* (Washington, DC: Extension Service, 1945); United States Department of Agriculture, Office of Personnel, *Negro Employment in the USDA,* September 30, 1945–January 31, 1946 (Washington, DC: USDA, 1946); United States Farmers Home Administration, *How Supervised Credit Programs Help Negro Farm Families Better Live—As Shown by Reports of Articles from the Nation's Press* (Washington, DC: Farmers Home Administration, 1951); Arnold C. Anderson and Mary Jean Bowman, "Tenure Changes and the Agricultural Ladder in Southern Agriculture," *Kentucky Agricultural Experiment Station,* Bulletin 634, 1955; Nelson L. Leray and Wayne C. Rahrer, "Employment of Black Manpower in Calvert County, Maryland," *Maryland Experiment Station* Bulletin 467, March 1960; Nelson L. Leray, George Wilber, and Grady B. Crowe, "Plantation Organization and the Resident Labor Force, Delta Area, Mississippi," *Mississippi Agricultural Experiment Station,* Bulletin 606, October 1960; Leslie J. Silverman, *Follow-up of Project Uplift, the MDTA E & D Project Conducted by Florida A&M University, BSSR 369* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Social Science Research, July 1964, 1967); R. Steptoe and B. Clark, "The Plight of Rural Southern Blacks and Some Policy Implications," *Southern University*

A&M College Bulletin 55, July 1969: 21–35; US Commission on Civil Rights, *Equal Opportunity in Farm Programs: An Appraisal of Services Rendered by Agencies of the USDA* (Washington, DC: GPO, February 1965); US Commission on Civil Rights, Alabama State Advisory Committee, *The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service in Alabama Black Belt* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1968).

29. John W. Davis, "The Negro Land-Grant College," *Journal of Negro Education* 2, no. 3 (July 1933): 312–28.

30. Neyland, *Historically Black Land-Grant Institutions*, 79.

31. "Conference of Presidents of Negro Land-Grants," *Proceedings*, 1939, University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff. See also Clyde L. Orr, "An Analytical Study of the Conference of Presidents of Negro Land-Grant Colleges" (unpublished dissertation, Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky, 1959) and Joel Schor, *Agriculture in the Black Land-Grant System to 1930* (Tallahassee: Florida A7M University, 1982).

32. Lewis Wade Jones, "Changing Status of the Negro in Southern Agriculture," *Tuskegee Institute Rural Life Information Series Bulletin*, June 3, 1950. See also William N. Elam, "Report of Conference of State Supervisors and Negro Teacher Trainers in Agricultural Education," US Office of Education, Vocational Division, Miscellaneous Publication 2377 (National Agricultural Library, Beltsville, Maryland, 1940).

33. "Conference of Presidents of Negro Land-Grants to the Honorable Henry A. Wallace, Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, DC," November 1935. Letter was presented while the presidents were holding their annual conference in Washington, DC. A copy of the letter exists in the archive of Kentucky State University Library, Frankfurt, Kentucky. See also Clyde L. Orr, "An Analytical Study of the Conference of Presidents of Negro Land-Grant Colleges" (unpublished dissertation, Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky, 1959). At the President of Negro Land-Grants Conference in Washington, DC, in 1935, where the letter that was to be delivered to Henry A. Wallace was read, conference participants discussed a number of critical needs. These included the need for more monetary and human resources as well as the desire of young people to have an organization that they could utilize as their own to learn more about vocational training. Research on new farm techniques, improved ways to conserve the soil, and farm diversification remained important discussions because Black farmers and the agents working with them wanted up-to-date information. Conference participants also discussed activities for New Farmers of America (NFA), which was organized in Tuskegee, Alabama in 1935 and became a national organization for African American young men. The NFA was a youth organization established with the support of the presidents of the Black land-grants to educate Black youth about vocational agriculture and the mechanical arts.

34. Neyland, *Historically Black Land-Grant Institutions*, 87–93.

35. "Closing Ranks on Poverty: Cooperatives Give New Hope to Poor People of the South," *Ebony* 26, no. 10 (August 1971): 86–90, 94–96.

36. United States Department of Agriculture, *Black Farmers in America, 1865–2000: The Pursuit of Independent Farming and the Role of Cooperatives* (Washington, DC: USDA, Rural Cooperatives Service, RBS Research Report 194, 2003), 1–19.

37. Isabella C. Wilson, "Sickness and Medical Care among the Negro Population in a Delta Area of Arkansas," *Arkansas Agricultural Experiment Station*, Bulletin 372, March 1939.

38. Ibid.

39. W. L. Kennedy, "Opportunities in Dairying for Negro Farmers of North Carolina," *Journal of Dairy Science* 38 (November 1955): 1301–4.

40. Monroe N. Work, "Racial Factors and Economic Forces in Land Tenure in the South," *Social Forces* 15, no. 2 (December 1936): 205–15.

41. E. B. Evans, "What Do Negro Farmers Eat?" *Extension Service Review* 14, no. 3 (March 1943): 44.

42. Wilson, "Sickness and Medical Care among the Negro Population in a Delta Area of Arkansas."

43. "Communism and the Negro Tenant Farmer," *Opportunity* 9, no. 8 (August 1931): 234–35. Newspaper reporters indicated that some members of the white establishment characterized the action as social, while others called it political. Reports as well as newspaper and magazine articles discussed editorials that explained the cause of the outbreak of violence at places like Camp Hill, Alabama, as an attempt by Black sharecroppers to organize with the assistance of communists. This particular editorial argues that Blacks knew nothing about communist philosophy but assumed they did know about miserable wages, grinding work, debt, poor schools, forced labor, and peonage.

44. David Lewis Cohn, "Sharecropping in the Delta," *Atlantic Monthly* 159, no. 5 (May 1937): 579–88.

45. Gene Roberts, "Striking Negro Farmers Brace for Cold Weather," *New York Times*, November 17, 1965, p. 25, col. 1.

46. "Off the Land," *Nation* 204, no. 9 (February 27, 1967): 262.

47. Emmett Peter Jr., "On the Outside Looking Out," *New Republic* 152, no. 26 (June 26, 1965): 18.

48. William Payne, "Job Opportunity for Farm Agents," *Civil Rights Digest* 1, no. 3 (Fall 1968): 13–15.

49. James Peppler, "Commission on Hearing on Rural Poor Black Belt, Alabama," *Civil Rights Digest* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1968): 20–28.

50. Neyland, *Historically Black Land-Grant Institutions*, 147–89.

51. Quoted in ibid., 190.

52. For a discussion of the development of home economics at the seventeen Black land-grants, see C. Vincent, *Southern University and A&M College: Its Agricultural Development* (Baton Rouge: Southern University and A&M College, 1990); E. Fields, *Historical Profile of Home Economics Programs at 1890 Colleges/Universities* (Baton Rouge: Southern University and A&M College, Home Economics Unit, 1990); M. Furness, *Historical Profile of Home Economics Programs at 1890 Colleges/Universities* (Normal: Alabama A&M University, Division of Home Economics, 1990); R. D. Pace, *Historical*

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53. Neyland, *Historically Black Land-Grant Institutions*, 110–19.

54. Ibid., 110–46.

55. James P. Davis, ed., *Success Stories: Negro Farmers*, 16 vols. (Little Rock, AR: US Production and Marketing Administration, Field Services Branch, 1948–1954).

56. "New Booker T. Washington: Cast His Buckets," *Ebony* 20, no. 3 (January 1965): 66–68, 70–71.

57. Roy Reed, "Negroes Start Communal Farm to Escape Mississippi Poverty," *New York Times*, July 25, 1966, p. 17, col. 1.

58. Warren Marr, "Self-Help in the Black Belt," *Crisis* 75, no. 8 (October 1968): 283–87.

59. James T. Wooten, "Black Muslims Would Sell Farm to Klan," *New York Times*, March 17, 1970, p. 32, col. 2.

60. "1000 Acre Tycoon: Former Georgia Sharecropper Finds Fortune in Cotton Ranching," *Ebony* 27, no. 9 (July 1972): 90–94, 96.

61. John Wicklein, "Group of Baptists Spurs Farm Plan," *New York Times*, March 15, 1967, p. 39, col. 2.

62. John D. Pomfret, "Farmers in South Study City Life," *New York Times*, September 22, 1963, p. 86, col. 1.

63. Neyland, *Historically Black Land-Grant Institutions*, 110–13.

64. See US Department of Agriculture, Civil Rights Action Team (CRAT), *Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Agriculture* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1997). See also Valerie Grim, "Between Forty Acres and a Class Action Lawsuit: Black Farmers, Civil Rights, and Protest against the US Department of Agriculture, 1997–2010," in *Beyond Forty Acres and a Mule: African American Landowning Families since Reconstruction*, ed. Debra A. Reid and Evan P. Bennett (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012), 271–96.

65. R. S. Browne, "Only Six Million Acres: The Decline of Black Owned Land in the Rural South" (New York: Black Economic Research Center, 1973).

66. Although the listening sessions created a forum for dialogue, none of them produced any real solutions to problems or answers to questions that affected Black farmers' ability to survive. But the USDA ordered CRAT to gather data, and plenty of it was found. Only a fraction of the findings from the oral testimonies from the twelve listening sessions was included in the February 1997 report the CRAT team prepared. But the report made possible a Black farmers' lawsuit because the CRAT team indicated discrimination had taken place and the USDA was liable. Overall, the report found little accountability within the USDA, especially in its local offices, and county officials who had allegedly discriminated against minority farmers went unpunished. See Pete Daniel, *Dispossession: Discrimination against African American Farmers in the Age of Civil Rights* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

67. See also Grim, "Between Forty Acres and a Class Action Lawsuit."