

NRCS Director Retires

Yes, the rumors are true—Director Lawrence T. Yamamoto is retiring July 1st after serving 34 years with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). A strong supporter of locally grown agricultural products and caring for our islands resources, Larry will truly be missed.

A graduate of the University of Hawaii, he began his career when NRCS used to be the Soil Conservation Service. Previous NRCS positions held include Soil Conservationist, District Conservationist, State Resource Conservationist, and Assistant State Conservationist for Operations. As a result of his experience and working on different islands, Larry was recognized for countless accolades, including “Manager of Year” by the Federal Executive Board and the “Presidential Award” by the Federal Asian Pacific American Council.

In addition to helping people help the land, Larry was also supportive in the Civil Rights arena. For example, he reminds all farmers and ranchers that are Hispanic and/or Female, to register at www.farmerclaims.gov if you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000. You may be eligible and should apply for compensation if you sought a farm loan or farm-loan servicing from USDA during that period and was either denied, provided late, approved for a lesser amount than requested, approved with restrictive conditions, or if USDA failed to provide an appropriate loan service. If you believe these actions occurred because you are Hispanic or female, please call toll free (888) 508-4429 or access the farmer claims website listed above.

Following the retirement of Lawrence T. Yamamoto, the NRCS Chief announced that Angel Figueroa is the newly selected incoming Director of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service for the Pacific Islands Area. Mr. Figueroa will take the reins as Director in late July. For more information about NRCS, visit www.pia.nrcs.usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

