

# NRCS Announces February as Black History Month

The 2008 theme is "Carter G. Woodson and the Origins of Multiculturalism." This year's theme honors Carter G. Woodson and others who have

pioneered diversity in America. America has always been a landscape of diverse people where virtually all ethnic and racial groups are represented

today. Yet the Nation's self-image has not always recognized its multicultural history.

## Civil Rights Committee Newsletter Best Article Competition

We are having a monthly best article award. An award will be bestowed on the person submitting the article voted as most appropriate by the Louisiana State Civil Rights Com-

mittee. Competition is expected to be fierce, so get your articles in early. Awards will be presented at the 2008 Louisiana NRCS Annual Awards Banquet.



## MEMBERS

Juanita Hoffpauir, Civil Rights Committee Chairperson

Nancy Vicknair, Civil Rights Program Manager/Advisor

Stuart Lee, State Outreach Coordinator

Steve Cruse, Area Conservationist

Vacant, Federal Women's Program Manager

Tania Nanna, Disability Employment Program Manager

Dawn Newman, Asian American/Pacific Islander Special Emphasis Program Manager

Donna Remides, Hispanic Emphasis Program Manager

Sam Willis, Limited Resource & Small-Scale Farmers & Socially Disadvantaged Producers Coordinator

Robert Spears, Black Emphasis Program Manager

John Rogers, American Indian/Alaska Native Emphasis Program Manager

David Williams, Veterans Special Emphasis Program Manager

Sarah Haymaker, District Conservationist

Alton James, Area Staff/RC&D Coordinator

James M. Marien, Soil Conservation Technician

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Louisiana State Civil Rights Committee Meeting on January 29, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. has been rescheduled and notification will be emailed. Committee meetings are held once every quarter the last Tuesday of the month: October, January, April and July. All NRCS employees are invited to attend. Minutes from each meeting are made available to all Louisiana NRCS employees.

## February 7, 2008-Chinese New Year Quiz (Year of the Rat)

From: [http://www.worldbook.com/wb/Quiz?Chinese\\_New\\_Year](http://www.worldbook.com/wb/Quiz?Chinese_New_Year)

- How many animals are represented on the Chinese calendar?
  - 10
  - 12
  - 14
- When does the Chinese New Year begin?
  - The first new moon after the beginning of winter
  - The first full moon after the beginning of winter
  - The second new moon after the beginning of winter
- When does the New Year celebration end?
  - At the first full moon following the first day of the New Year
  - At the first new moon following the first day of the New Year
  - At the second full moon following the first day of the New Year
- What festival marks the end of the New Year celebration?
  - Ancestors Festival
  - Dragon Festival
  - Lantern Festival
- What emperor do historians believe invented the Chinese calendar?
  - Huangdi
  - Liu Bang
  - Pu Yi
- What animal represents the year 4705 on the Chinese calendar and the year 2008 on the Gregorian calendar?
  - Horse
  - Monkey
  - Rat



If you were born in 1912, 1924, 1936, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996-you were born under the sign of the rat. Rats are quick-witted, smart, charming, and persuasive.



Answers: 1.B, 2. C, 3. A, 4. C, 5. A, 6. C

### SOME DATES TO REMEMBER

**FEBRUARY-AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH (BLACK HISTORY MONTH)**

**WEEK 1:**

February 2: Groundhog Day-USA and Canada

**WEEK 2:**

February 3: Setsubun (Bean-Throwing Festival)-Japan and Suayapa-Honduras

February 4: National Day-Sri Lanka

February 5: Shrove Tuesday-Christian

February 6: Waitangi Day-New Zealand, Ash Wednesday-Christian and Catholic and Lent Begins-Eastern Orthodox

February 7: Lunar New Year-China and Losar-Tibet

February 8: Nirvana Day-Buddhism

**WEEK 3:**

February 11: Kenkoku Kinen-no-Hi-Japan and Vasant Panchami-Hindu

February 12: Abraham Lincoln's Birthday-USA

February 14: St. Valentine's Day and Race Relations Day-USA

February 15: Flag Day-Canada

**WEEK 4:**

February 18: President's Day-USA

February 21: Lantern Festival-China and Taiwan and Shaheed (Martyr) Day-Bangladesh

February 22: George Washington's Birthday-USA and Abu Simbel Festival-Egypt

**WEEK 5:**

February 23: Republic Day-Guyana

February 24: Flag Day-Mexico

February 25: Fiesta sa EDSA (People Power Day)-Philippines and National Day-Kuwait

February 26: Intercalary Days-Baha'i

February 28: 228 Memorial Day-Taiwan

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# Carter G. Woodson and the Origins of Multiculturalism

*Those who have no record of what their forebearers have accomplished lose the inspiration which comes from the teaching of biography and history*  
Carter G. Woodson

**Black History Month 2008**

NRCS  
NRCS is an Equal Opportunity Employer

## Religious Discrimination

From: *The U.S. Equal Opportunity Commission*-<http://www.eeoc.gov/types/religion.html>

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits employers from discriminating against individuals because of their religion in hiring, firing, and other terms and conditions of employment. Title VII covers employers with 15 or more employees, including state and local governments. It also applies to employment agencies and to labor organizations, as well as to the federal government.

Under Title VII:

- Employers may not treat employees or applicants more or less favorably because of their religious beliefs or practices - except to the extent a religious accommodation is warranted. For example, an employer may not refuse to hire individuals of a certain religion, may not impose stricter promotion requirements for persons of a certain religion, and may not impose more or different

work requirements on an employee because of that employee's religious beliefs or practices.

- Employees cannot be forced to participate -- or not participate -- in a religious activity as a condition of employment.
- Employers must reasonably accommodate employees' sincerely held religious practices unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the employer. A reasonable religious accommodation is any adjustment to the work environment that will allow the employee to practice his religion. An employer might accommodate an employee's religious beliefs or practices by allowing: flexible scheduling, voluntary substitutions or swaps, job reassignments and lateral transfers, modification of grooming requirements and other workplace practices, policies

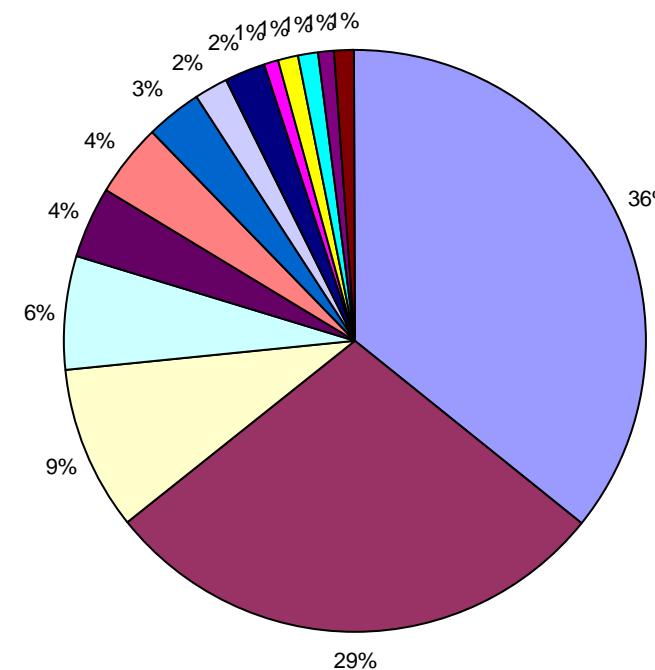
and/or procedures.

- An employer is not required to accommodate an employee's religious beliefs and practices if doing so would impose an undue hardship on the employers' legitimate business interests. An employer can show undue hardship if accommodating an employee's religious practices requires more than ordinary administrative costs, diminishes efficiency in other jobs, infringes on other employees' job rights or benefits, impairs workplace safety, causes co-workers to carry the accommodated employee's share of potentially hazardous or burdensome work, or if the proposed accommodation conflicts with another law or regulation.
- Employers must permit employees to engage in religious expression, unless the religious expression would impose an undue hardship on

the employer. Generally, an employer may not place more restrictions on religious expression than on other forms of expression that have a comparable effect on workplace efficiency.

- Employers must take steps to prevent religious harassment of their employees. An employer can reduce the chance that employees will engage unlawful religious harassment by implementing an anti-harassment policy and having an effective procedure for reporting, investigating and correcting harassing conduct.

It is also unlawful to retaliate against an individual for opposing employment practices that discriminate based on religion or for filing a discrimination charge, testifying, or participating in any way in an investigation, proceeding, or litigation under Title VII.



## Louisiana Distribution of Selected Religious Groups, 2001

From "American Religious Identification Survey 2001" by Barry A. Kosmin, Egon Mayer, and Ariela Kapar (The Graduate Center of the City University of New York)

