

2021

***USDA LGBTQ+ PRIDE MONTH
OBSERVANCE***

June 24, 2021 • 1:00 pm ET

Virtual

**PROGRESS
IN ACTION**

LGBTQ+ Pride Month 2021



**United States Department of Agriculture
Equality USDA**



“Love is never wrong.”

~ Melissa Etheridge



Caption: Secretary Tom Vilsack and Deputy Secretary Jewel Bronaugh raise the Progress Pride flag at USDA's Whitten Building in Washington, D.C.

This month, USDA celebrates the diversity of our workforce and recognizes the contributions our LGBTQ+ colleagues make to drive our Nation forward toward a better, safer, healthier, and more equitable tomorrow.

Welcome

Meghan Walter
President, Equality USDA

Leadership Remarks

Tom Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture

Monica Rainge
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

Land Acknowledgment

Melissa Sturdivant
NRCS American Indian/Alaska Native Employee Association

History of Pride at USDA

Sharon Nance, Assistant State Conservationist, NRCS
Roseanne Luvisi, Program Specialist, FNS

Leadership Remarks

Jody McDaniel
Director, Eastern Field Operations
National Agricultural Statistics Services

Keynote Speakers

The GenderCool Project

Gearah Goldstein, Founder
Jennifer Grosshandler, Founder
Eevee, Champion

Ashlee Davis

Senior Manager, Diversity & Inclusion
Alliance Bernstein

Debi Jackson

Founder, Gender, Inc.

USDA Employee Videos

Closing Remarks

Roberto Contreras
Director, Civil Rights Division
Food & Nutrition Service

Speakers



Tom Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture



Monica Rainge
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Civil Rights



Ashlee Davis
Senior Manager
Alliance Bernstein



Jennifer Grosshandler
Founder
The GenderCool Project



Eevee
Champion
The GenderCool Project



Gearah Goldstein
Founder
The GenderCool Project



Dr. Jody McDaniel
Director, Eastern Field Operations
National Agricultural Statistics Service



Debi Jackson
Founder, Gender, Inc.



Roberto Contreras
Civil Rights Director
Food Nutrition Service

A Proclamation on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Pride Month, 2021

The uprising at the Stonewall Inn in June, 1969, sparked a liberation movement — a call to action that continues to inspire us to live up to our Nation’s promise of equality, liberty, and justice for all. Pride is a time to recall the trials the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ+) community has endured and to rejoice in the triumphs of trailblazing individuals who have bravely fought — and continue to fight — for full equality. Pride is both a jubilant communal celebration of visibility and a personal celebration of self-worth and dignity. This Pride Month, we recognize the valuable contributions of LGBTQ+ individuals across America, and we reaffirm our commitment to standing in solidarity with LGBTQ+ Americans in their ongoing struggle against discrimination and injustice.

The LGBTQ+ community in America has achieved remarkable progress since Stonewall. Historic Supreme Court rulings in recent years have struck down regressive laws, affirmed the right to marriage equality, and secured workplace protections for LGBTQ+ individuals in every State and Territory. The Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act broadened the definition of hate crimes to include crimes motivated by sexual orientation or gender identity. Members of the LGBTQ+ community now serve in nearly every level of public office — in city halls and State capitals, Governors’ mansions and the halls of the Congress, and throughout my Administration. Nearly 14 percent of my 1,500 agency appointees identify as LGBTQ+, and I am particularly honored by the service of Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, the first openly LGBTQ+ person to serve in the Cabinet, and Assistant Health Secretary Dr. Rachel Levine, the first openly transgender person to be confirmed by the Senate.

For all of our progress, there are many States in which LGBTQ+ individuals still lack protections for fundamental rights and dignity in hospitals, schools, public accommodations, and other spaces. Our Nation continues to witness a tragic spike in violence against transgender women of color. LGBTQ+ individuals — especially youth who defy sex or gender norms — face bullying and harassment in educational settings and are at a disproportionate risk of self-harm and death by suicide. Some States have chosen to actively target transgender youth through discriminatory bills that defy our Nation’s values of inclusivity and freedom for all.

Our Nation also continues to face tragic levels of violence against transgender people, especially transgender women of color. And we are still haunted by tragedies such as the Pulse Nightclub shooting in Orlando. Ending violence and discrimination against the LGBTQ+ community demands our continued focus and diligence. As President, I am committed to defending the rights of all LGBTQ+ individuals.

My Administration is taking historic actions to finally deliver full equality for LGBTQ+ families. On my first day in office, I signed an Executive Order charging Federal agencies to fully enforce all Federal laws that prohibit discrimination based on gender identity or sexual orientation. As a result, the Federal Government has taken steps to prevent discrimination against LGBTQ+ people in employment, health care, housing, lending, and education. I also signed an Executive Order affirming all qualified Americans will be able to serve in the Armed Forces of the United States — including patriotic transgender Americans who can once again proudly and openly serve their Nation in uniform — and a National Security Memorandum that commits to supporting LGBTQ+ Federal employees serving overseas. My Administration is also working to promote and protect LGBTQ+ human rights abroad. LGBTQ+ rights are human rights, which is why my Administration has reaffirmed America’s commitment to supporting those on the front lines of the equality and democracy movements around the world, often at great risk. We see you, we support you, and we are inspired by your courage to accept nothing less than full equality.

While I am proud of the progress my Administration has made in advancing protections for the LGBTQ+ community, I will not rest until full equality for LGBTQ+ Americans is finally achieved and codified into law. That is why I continue to call on the Congress to pass the Equality Act, which will ensure civil rights protections for LGBTQ+ people and families across our country. And that is why we must recognize emerging challenges, like the fact that many LGBTQ+ seniors, who faced discrimination and oppression throughout their lives, are isolated and need support and elder care.

During LGBTQ+ Pride Month, we recognize the resilience and determination of the many individuals who are fighting to live freely and authentically. In doing so, they are opening hearts and minds, and laying the foundation for a more just and equitable America. This Pride Month, we affirm our obligation to uphold the dignity of all people, and dedicate ourselves to protecting the most vulnerable among us. NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR., President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim June 2021 as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Pride Month. I call upon the people of the United States to recognize the achievements of the LGBTQ+ community, to celebrate the great diversity of the American people, and to wave their flags of pride high.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of June, in the year of our Lord two thousand twenty-one, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-fifth.

JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR.

**PROGRESS
IN ACTION**
LGBTQ+ Pride Month 2021



1953

Lavender Scare

President Eisenhower issued Executive Order 10450 which allowed federal employees to be investigated and fired for being LGBTQ+.



1969

Stonewall Riots

LGBTQ+ patrons of the Stonewall Inn in New York City fought back against a police raid, ignited a tradition of observing Pride in June.



1973

American Psychiatric Association

The board of the American Psychiatric Association voted 13-0 to remove homosexuality from its official list of psychiatric disorders.



1985

AIDS Walk

The AIDS Project Los Angeles organized the first AIDS Walk to raise money and awareness in the fight against AIDS & HIV.

PROGRESS IN ACTION

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1993

USDA History

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) added sexual orientation to its nondiscrimination policy under Secretary Mike Espy.



1994

Equality USDA

(USDA GLODE)

LGBTQ+ Employee Resource Group for USDA employees and retirees was organized.



2009

USDA Special

Emphasis Program

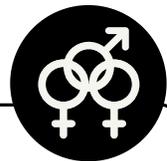
Secretary Tom Vilsack signed Departmental Regulation 4230-002, creating a Special Emphasis Program for LGBTQ+ employees.



2011

USDA Gender Identity and Expression

Secretary Vilsack added gender identity and gender expression into USDA's Civil Rights Statement.



USDA Agencies and Offices

Office of the Secretary | Departmental Administration | Office of the General Counsel
Office of the Inspector General | Office of Communication | Office of the Executive Secretariat
Office of the Chief Information Officer | Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
Office of the Chief Financial Officer | Office of Congressional Relations
Office of Energy and Environmental Policy | Office of Budget and Program Analysis
Office of Chief Economist | Office of Tribal Relations | National Appeals Division
Agricultural Marketing Service | Agricultural Research Service
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service | Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion
Economic Research Service | Farm Service Agency | Farm Production and Conservation Business Center
Food and Nutrition Service | Food Safety and Inspection Service | Foreign Agricultural Service
Forest Service | National Agricultural Library | National Agricultural Statistics Service
National Institute of Food and Agriculture | National Food Conservation Service
Risk Management Agency | Rural Business Cooperative Service | Rural Housing Service
Rural Utilities Service | Rural Development | Office of Operations & Management



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