



**United States  
Department of  
Agriculture**



## StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity

[www.usda.gov/strikeforce](http://www.usda.gov/strikeforce)

# Puerto Rico

### Puerto Rico Fast Facts - 2015

State's Child Poverty Rate:	56.9%
State's Overall Poverty Rate:	45.1%
StrikeForce State Since:	2015
Number of StrikeForce Counties:	78
Total Outreach Events:	115
Number of Community Partners:	21
Total USDA Projects:	3,218
Total USDA Investments:	\$331 million

### Contacts

Contact us to be a partner, or to learn more about StrikeForce opportunities:

Jose.Castro@pr.usda.gov  
(787) 766-5206 ext. 117

Congressional Inquiries:  
(202) 720-7095

Media Inquiries:  
(202) 720-4623

### Some of Our StrikeForce Community Partners

University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez Campus

Agricultural Extension Service

Envirosurvey

ARCAP Water Solution

Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture

Foundation Sila María Calderon

Currently, 85 percent of our country's persistent poverty counties are in rural America. More than one third of rural Americans, and one in four rural children live in poverty. Kids growing up in families earning twice the poverty threshold are nearly three times as likely as other children to have poor health, are more likely to finish two fewer years of school, and are more likely to earn half as much money in their adult lives.

Growing the economy by investing in rural communities and increasing opportunities for families is key to our Nation's future. In 2010, Secretary Vilsack established USDA's StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity to address the specific challenges associated with rural poverty. Since then, StrikeForce teams have collaborated with more than 1,500 community partners and public entities to bring targeted assistance to rural areas experiencing chronic poverty.

These efforts have invested more than \$23.5 billion to create jobs, build homes, feed kids, assist farmers and conserve natural resources across more than twenty states. In 2016, StrikeForce expanded to include Florida, Missouri, Montana, and Ohio. Now, USDA StrikeForce teams will operate in 970 counties in 25 states and Puerto Rico. Each StrikeForce project is a commitment to America's economic future.

### StrikeForce At Work

#### Strengthening and Maximizing Food Funds at Elderly Day Care Centers

In May 2015, Acción Social de Puerto Rico became the first elderly daycare center sponsored under the FNS' Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). This achievement was made possible by collaborative efforts between the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service Caribbean Area Office and the Puerto Rico state agency that administer the CACFP and represents an ongoing effort to increase more sponsors for elderly day care centers in the Commonwealth.

All Acción Social de Puerto Rico centers are located in persistently-poor neighborhoods and rural towns. Therefore, bringing more sponsors under CACFP will benefit the elderly community in Puerto Rico.

In Puerto Rico, the consensus has always been to utilize more sponsors under the Puerto Rico Office of the Ombudsman for the Elderly. Many administrators of elderly centers are aware of the benefits offered by CACFP. More senior citizens are being fed healthy meals thanks to this partnership.

Through a collaborative and partnering opportunity with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), FNS is guiding these centers on ways to manage food funds from multiple programs. FNS has worked with both state agencies to maximize funds both for meals served at the centers, and those that are delivered to homes.

Some of these sites and other RD housing facilities received NRCS funding to assist with community gardens to increase the amount of healthy produce available to the residents. Additional work with producers illustrate the intersection of FSA, NRCS and RD assistance to improve and expand food production.

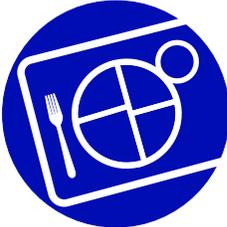
# StrikeForce Initiative for Rural Growth and Opportunity in Puerto Rico

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3,218 Projects in 2015 = \$331 Million Invested



214  
Jobs Created  
or Saved



4,461,552  
Summer  
Meals for Kids



196  
Farmers  
Assisted



2,033  
Home  
Investments



345  
Conservation  
Efforts



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