



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Foreign  
Agricultural  
Service

Farm  
Service  
Agency

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**TO:** Farm Service Agency Employees

**FROM:** Jonathan Coppess  
Administrator, Farm Service Agency

**SUBJECT:** Welcome Greeting

**DATE:** August 6, 2009

FSA Employees,

As I finish my fourth full week on the job, I want to take the opportunity to say hello to everyone, introduce myself and share some of my preliminary thoughts on our agency and the tasks ahead. I am honored to be appointed Administrator of the Farm Service Agency, and I welcome the opportunity to work with you all in serving America's farmers and ranchers.

By way of introduction, let me share with you the two experiences that helped shape my approach to this job. First, I was raised on my family's farm in Ohio, where my father and brother now farm land that has been in my family for seven generations. I have tremendous respect and admiration for America's producers and for this agency's mission to serve them. Second, working for Senator Ben Nelson of Nebraska taught me the value of listening closely to the thoughts, concerns and wisdom of the people who are affected by the decisions we make here in Washington, D.C. These formative experiences will guide me during my time at FSA.

I have a very simple philosophy – "Get the job done, and get it done right." Our job at FSA is one of service: to the farmers and ranchers who rely on the programs we administer; to the members of Congress who have created these programs as a contract with the citizens they represent; to the President and Secretary who rely on us to carry out our duties fairly and competently; to every taxpayer expecting us to be responsible stewards of their tax dollars; and, finally, to each other as we work together to accomplish these tasks.



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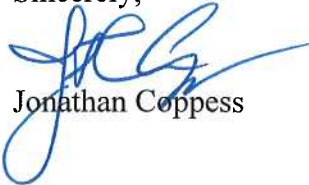
As we begin our time together, I would like us to focus on the following general priorities:

- (1) Programs – It has been over a year since the 2008 Farm Bill was passed by Congress. Although a considerable amount of progress has been made, much work remains to fully implement the bill, especially with respect to the new disaster programs and the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP). We are expediting implementation, but must do so without sacrificing program integrity, customer service or quality. Competent, effective program administration is vital to FSA's reputation, credibility and success.
- (2) People – I know that FSA is full of dedicated, hardworking and talented people. We need to build upon this great foundation. We can start by improving our communication within FSA and throughout the Department; helping us all to work together better. I also want to work with you to train and improve our workforce so that FSA can continue to serve this and future generations of producers.
- (3) Systems – The programs we deliver are becoming increasingly more complicated and the farmers we serve are becoming more technologically advanced. FSA cannot afford to continue trying to serve those customers with antiquated systems and inefficient processes. My goal is to put the tools in place for employees at all levels of FSA to do their jobs effectively; this includes making improvements to daily business processes, as well as updating old technology.

I am eager to learn more about FSA and I look forward to meeting employees around the country – in the field offices, at the Kansas City and St. Louis offices, and at the national headquarters in Washington, D.C. I am honored to be a part of this team and am excited about working alongside all of you in the days, weeks, months and years ahead.

Please know that I am dedicated to this position and I am committed to providing the leadership and support that FSA needs to continue serving and strengthening American agriculture. In short, I will give it my all, and I thank each of you for doing the same.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Coppess



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