

June 2014



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Alaska State and County FSA Updates

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Alaska FSA State Director News

Election Season Is Beginning!

The Farm Service Agency is one of the few federal agencies that give Alaskan producers a voice to assure that federal programs fit the unique conditions in Alaska. The members serving on our two County Committees provide important feedback and real, on-the-ground information to help USDA programs meet the needs of Alaska farmers, ranchers, and growers.

This fall, you will have a chance to vote for new members in the Mat-Su Valley and the Delta region. But right now, we are looking for Alaska producers who are interested in serving on a County Committee in those areas. Do you know a local farmer who would make a good member? See the information below on how to nominate a neighbor. Or consider nominating yourself! Even if you don't want to run for office, be sure to look for your ballots in the fall, and don't forget to vote!

Elections

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to ALL farmers and ranchers, whether beginning or long-established, large or small. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. County committee members are a critical component of the operations of FSA. They help deliver FSA farm programs at the local level. Farmers and ranchers who serve on county committees help with the decisions necessary

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to administer the programs in their counties. They work to ensure FSA agricultural programs serve the needs of local producers.

County committees provide local input on commodity price support loans and payments, conservation programs, incentive, indemnity and disaster payments for some commodities, emergency programs and payment eligibility.

FSA county committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal rules. County committee members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions.

For election purposes, counties are divided into local administrative areas, or LAAs. Each LAA contributes one producer to serve a three-year term on the Farm Service Agency county committee.

Committee Meetings:

Northern Co. check AK website
Southern Co. check AK website

Nominations

Nominees must complete and sign form FSA-669A available at USDA Service Centers and online at:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections>

Nomination forms for the 2014 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on Aug. 1, 2014.

Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in an FSA program may be nominated for candidacy.

2014 Elections are being held in the following LAAs

Southern County LAA-3

LAA-3 Matanuska Borough.

Northern County LAA-2

LAA-2 Area beginning where the Clearwater road intersects the AK Hwy NE to north line of Southeast Fairbanks census area, proceeding NE to Canadian border, then SE following Canadian border, where the Alaska Gateway Regional Educational Attendance Area (AKGREAA) line intersects the Canadian border, turning NW following AKGREAA line to the AK Hwy, then proceed NW on AK Hwy to Clearwater road.

Election Period

June 15, 2014 – COC nomination period begins.

Aug. 1, 2014 – Last day to file nomination forms at the local USDA Service Center

Nov. 3, 2014 – COC ballots mailed to eligible voters

Dec. 1, 2014 - Last day to return voted COC ballots to the USDA Service Center

Jan. 1, 2015 - Newly elected county committee members take office

Who Can Vote

Agricultural producers of legal voting age may be eligible to vote if they participate or cooperate in any FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm also may be eligible to vote. Members of American Indian tribes holding agricultural land are eligible to vote if voting requirements are met. More information about voting eligibility requirements can be found in the FSA fact sheet titled "FSA County Committee Election - Eligibility to Vote and Hold Office as a County Committee Member." Producers may contact their local USDA Service Center for more information.

Don't Miss Out on Voting

Ballots will be mailed to voters by Nov. 3, 2014, and must be returned to the FSA county office or postmarked by Dec. 1, 2014. Eligible voters must contact their local FSA county office before the final date if they did not receive a ballot.

For more information about county committee elections, contact the county office staff.

For More Election Information

For more information about FSA county committees, visit a local FSA or USDA Service Center or the Web site at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections> or <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ak>

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