



# Farm Service Agency PRESS RELEASE

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## Nominate and Make a Difference

**Jackson, MS-** June 12, 2008 - USDA State Executive Director Mickey L. Black announced farmer and rancher candidate nominations begin June 15 for local Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees. The nomination period continues through Aug. 1, 2008. Elections take place this fall.

"I encourage all producers to participate in the county committee election process by nominating candidates by the August 1 deadline," said Black. "We have seen the nomination of minority and women producers increase significantly in recent years, and we would like to see that trend continue."

To be eligible to serve on an FSA county committee, a person must participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA, be eligible to vote in a county committee election and reside in the local administrative area in which the person is a candidate.

Producers may also nominate themselves, and organizations representing minority and women may also nominate candidates. To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign form FSA-669A. The form and other valuable information about FSA county committee elections are available online at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>; click on News & Events, then County Committee Elections. Nomination forms for the 2008 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on Aug. 1, 2008.

FSA county committee members make decisions on disaster and conservation programs, emergency programs, commodity price support loan programs and other important agricultural issues. Members serve three-year terms. Nationwide, there are more than 7,800 farmers and ranchers serving on FSA county committees. Committees consist of three to five members who are elected by eligible local producers. FSA will mail ballots to producers beginning Nov. 3. The voted ballots are due back to the local county office either via mail or in person by Dec. 1. Newly elected committee members and alternates take office Jan. 1, 2009.

Between 2003 and 2006, the number of minority and women farmers and ranchers nominated as candidates to FSA county committees nationwide increased 35 percent. Additionally, the number of African American producers nominated as candidates tripled during the same period.

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