

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Farm Service Agency
100 USDA, Suite 102
Stillwater, OK 74074

For: County Offices

COC Advisor Recommendation and Appointments

Approved by: State Executive Director



1 Overview

A

Background Handbook 16-AO (Rev.. 3), Part 3 Section 2 furnishes instructions regarding recommendations and appointments of advisors to the COC.

B

State Policy Advisors are needed to be a voice for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

C

Purpose The purposes of this Notice are to:

- instruct County Committees to determine if there are groups in the county that are underrepresented on the County Committee.

Note: Exhibit 1 provides information that will assist the County Committee in making this determination.

Disposal	Distribution
March 1, 2004	County Offices

OK Notice AO-1063

1

Overview (Continued)

C

Purpose (Continued)

- remind County Executive Directors and County Committees of their responsibility to appoint advisors to the County Committee if it is determined there are underrepresented groups
- provide a format to recommend appointment of County Committee Advisors (Exhibit 1).

2 Action

A

County Executive Director/County Committee Requirements

Reference 16-AO (Rev. 3), paragraph 155 B.

County Committees shall review the makeup of the County Committee and Exhibit 1 to determine if there are groups that are underrepresented on the County Committee.

- If there are underrepresented groups including females, County Committees shall:
 - **contact organizations** that represent individuals who are underrepresented on the County Committee.

Note: County Executive Director **shall** make personal contacts with group leaders to ensure they understand the duties and responsibilities of County Committee Advisors (Exhibit 4).

- solicit candidates for County Committee Advisor from each underrepresented group.

Note: The group(s) should be encouraged to offer candidates who are:

- willing to serve with the County Committee members
- interested and active in farming in the county or area.

- recommend a County Committee Advisor(s) to the State Committee as necessary, to ensure that the interest of underrepresented producers are fairly represented.

Note: This includes the appointment of a tribal representative as County Committee Advisor to represent Native American interest in the county or area.

OK Notice AO-1063

2 Action (Continued)

B

Newly Appointed Advisors Reference 16-AO (Rev. 3), paragraph 155 C.

Newly appointed advisors shall:

- take an oath of office on FSA-586 (Exhibit 2)
- receive FSA-332A, describing the duties of County Committee members (Exhibit 3)

C

Contacting Group Leaders Reference 16-AO (Rev. 3), paragraph 155 B.

County Committee shall consult leaders of minority and female groups to:

- explain the need for County Committee Advisors
- request assistance to identify prominent eligible candidates to consider as advisors
- discuss the method for selecting nominees, from which the individuals will be selected and recommended to State Committee.

Note: Document contacts by County Committee or County Executive Director in the County Committee minutes. County Committee may recommend more than 1 advisor, if determined necessary.

D

Advisor Eligibility Reference 16-AO (Rev. 3), paragraph 156 A.

Nominees recommended to State Committee to serve as County Committee advisor shall be:

- actively participating in farming in the county or area
- willing to serve as an advisor, if appointed.

E

Recommending to State Committee Reference 16-AO (Rev. 3), paragraph 156 B.

County Committee shall submit nominees and supporting information to State Office no later than January 30, 2004, so the nominee information can be reviewed and presented to the State Committee during their February 2004 meeting. Exhibit 1 has been provided for submission of County Committee Advisor nominees.

Note: All counties are required to submit Exhibit 1. The County Committee must determine the need for a County Committee Advisor during their first meeting in January. Action is to be documented in the COC Minutes.

2. Action (Continued)

F

Appointing Advisors Reference 16-AO (Rev. 3), paragraph 156 C.

State Committee shall appoint County Committee Advisors as initiated by the State Committee or County Committee.

OK Notice AO-1063

- Any county having underrepresented voters are encouraged to submit County Committee Advisor recommendations.
- State Committee will confirm advisors to County Committees for a 12-month period not to exceed nine consecutive years.
- The appointment will be effective March 1, 2004.

**G
District Director
Requirements**

Reference 16-AO (Rev. 3) paragraph 111 D

District Directors shall make every effort to meet at least twice annually with each County Committee Advisor. District Directors shall meet to ensure that the advisor is:

- contributing to the County Committee meetings
- properly and effectively portraying the opinions and concerns of the groups represented.

If it is found that the advisor is not effectively contributing, District Director shall obtain:

- the necessary information to determine the barriers prohibiting the advisor from fulfilling the duties and responsibilities
- the need for additional training.

District Directors will report their findings to the State Executive Director.

District Directors should review “Duties of County Committee Advisors” in 16-AO (Rev. 3), paragraph 158 A, prior to meeting with County Committee Advisors.

OK Notice AO-1062

Exhibit 1

_____ County

COC ADVISOR NOMINEE(S)

Due: January 30, 2004**

COUNTY POPULATION BY RACE

American Indian	Asian	Black	White	Hispanic	Other
No. _____	No. _____	No. _____	No. _____	No. _____	No. _____
% _____	% _____	% _____	% _____	% _____	% _____

CURRENT MAKEUP OF THE COC

<u> </u> American. Indian	<u> </u> Asian	<u> </u> Black	<u> </u> White	<u> </u> Hispanic	<u> </u> Other
<u> </u> Female	<u> </u> Female	<u> </u> Female	<u> </u> Female	<u> </u> Female	<u> </u> Female
<u> </u> Male	<u> </u> Male	<u> </u> Male	<u> </u> Male	<u> </u> Male	<u> </u> Male

The _____ County FSA Committee has reviewed the population of the county by race, reviewed the makeup of the COC, and determined the following groups are underrepresented:

 American Indian Asian Black White Hispanic Women None

(If the COC has determined all groups are fairly and/or adequately represented on or by the COC please sign and return to the STC. If the COC determines groups are not adequately represented, please continue.)

The following groups that represent individuals that are underrepresented on the COC have been contacted according to 16-AO, (Rev. 3), Par. 155A, to explain the need for COC advisors and to solicit COC advisors. (Please indicate which race or gender the group or organization represents.)

_____, _____, _____,
 _____, _____, _____,
 _____, _____, _____

Based on the above, the _____ County FSA Committee submits the following nominee(s) to serve as Advisor(s) to the FSA County Committee.

_____: Race American Indian Asian Black White Hispanic Other
 Name Gender Female Male
 Willing to serve and fulfill the advisors responsibilities according to Par. 158
 of 16-AO (Rev. 3) if appointed? Yes No
 Actively participating in farming in the county or area? Yes No

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_____: Race American Indian Asian Black White Hispanic Other
 Name Gender Female Male
 Willing to serve and fulfill the advisors responsibilities according to Par. 156
 of 16-AO, (Rev. 3) if appointed? Yes No
 Actively participating in farming in the county or area? Yes No

 Chairman COC Date

(If additional space is needed please use additional page.)

REPRODUCE LOCALLY. Include form number and date on all reproductions.

FSA-586 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
 (06-09-97) Farm Service Agency

**County FSA Committee (COC)
 Members, Advisors, And Employees
 OATH OF OFFICE AND SERVICE OBLIGATION**

1. STATE	2. COUNTY
3. NAME OF COMMITTEE MEMBER OR EMPLOYEE	4. POSITION

I, the undersigned, do solemnly swear (*or affirm*) that I will faithfully, fairly, and honestly perform to the best of my ability all duties entrusted in me as a committee member or employee. I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purposes of evasion; and that I will, under the guidance of the State or County FSA Committee, as applicable, faithfully discharge the duties of this office, including carrying out and obeying the laws, regulations, and procedures of FSA and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

WITNESS	SIGNATURE OF COMMITTEE MEMBER OR EMPLOYEE (<i>Seal</i>)	DATE
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This program or activity will be conducted on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, marital status, or disability.

REPRODUCE LOCALLY. Include form number and date on all reproductions

FSA-332A
6-19-97

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Farm Service Agency

DUTIES OF COUNTY FSA COMMITTEE MEMBERS

As a member of the farmer-elected County FSA Committee, you are a vital link in the effective administration of farm programs within your county. You and the other members of the County Committee are responsible for carrying out programs in full accordance with the regulations, national and State policies, procedures, and instructions. To ensure farmer understanding and wide program participation, committees must see that County Office operations are farmer oriented and that farmers receive timely and quality service. Give balanced attention to all programs and carry out your responsibilities effectively, efficiently, and impartially. Some of your important duties are:

1. Serve under the general supervision of the State FSA Committee.
2. Employ a qualified county executive director to carry out committee decisions and policies and to direct day-to-day operations of the County Office.
3. Meet regularly to make policy decisions on program administration in the county, to act on cases involving individual farmers, and to review office operations to ensure that administrative funds are being used efficiently and for the purposes intended.
4. Ensure farmer and public understanding of FSA programs through an effective public information program which includes public meetings.
5. Develop and carry out an active outreach program. Work actively with farm, agribusiness, civic, and communications leaders and community committee members.
6. Promote good working relationships with other agricultural agencies serving the county.
7. Supervise FSA Committee elections as prescribed by regulations and procedures.
8. Discuss plans with the FSA district director periodically on policies and problems.
9. Make recommendations to the State FSA Committee on needed changes in programs and their administration.
10. Conduct hearings and reviews as needed or requested by the State FSA Committee.
11. Provide work place environment free from discrimination.
12. Avoid appearance of conflict of interest.

This program or activity will be conducted on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, marital status, or disability.