



2023 County Committee Elections Stakeholder Toolkit

Nominations for local USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committee elections begin on June 15. Committee members are a critical component of the day-to-day operations of FSA. They help deliver FSA farm programs at the local level. Agricultural producers who serve on committees work to make FSA agricultural programs serve the needs of local producers. All nomination forms for the 2023 election must be postmarked or received in the local FSA office by Aug. 1, 2023.

We need your help to spread the word eligible farmers and ranchers. This toolkit includes:

- Talking Points
- A Suggested Newsletter Article
- Graphics
- Social Media Suggestions

If you have any questions, please contact Minnesota FSA State Outreach and Public Affairs Coordinator Ellyn Oelfke at ellyn.oelfke@usda.gov.



Talking Points

Important Election Dates

- June 15, 2023: The nomination period begins.
- Aug. 1, 2023: Last day to file nomination forms.
- Nov. 6, 2023: Ballots mailed to eligible voters.
- Dec. 4, 2023: Last day to return completed ballots to the USDA Service Center.
- Jan. 1, 2024: Newly elected county committee members take office.

Background on Nomination Process

- Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in an FSA program may be nominated as a candidate for the county committee. Individuals may nominate themselves or others as a candidate.
- Additionally, organizations representing minority and women agricultural producers may nominate candidates. It is important for county committee elections to reflect America's cultural diversity and the diversity of our agricultural operations.
- To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign nomination form FSA-669-A, or FSA-669-A-3 for urban county committees. The form includes a statement that the nominee agrees to serve if elected. These forms are available at USDA Service Centers and online at fsa.usda.gov/elections.
- All nomination forms for the 2023 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by the August 1 deadline.

Eligibility

- 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 (LAA) up for election.
- A cooperating producer is someone who has provided information about their farming or ranching operation(s) but may not have applied or received FSA program benefits.

Background on Elections

- It is crucial that every eligible producer participates in these elections, as FSA county committees are an important link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- Elections are occurring in certain LAAs. Producers can find out if their LAA is up for election and if they are eligible to vote by contacting their local FSA county office.
- A new county committee election GIS locator tool is available to FSA customers providing the ability for them to identify the LAA they or their farming or ranching interests are located in.
 - The tool allows customers to search by using an address, their current location or by using map tools to zoom to the area of interest.
- FSA county committees are comprised of 3 to 11 elected members from local administrative areas, each serving a three-year term.
- FSA county committee members are local agricultural producers who help ensure fair and equitable administration of FSA farm programs in their county or multi-county jurisdiction. They are under the general supervision of the State Committee and are the eyes and ears of the producers who elected them.
 - Committees should share information about FSA opportunities within the community.
 - Committees represent the priorities of producers and serve as their voices in the community.
 - Committees ensure USDA's farm programs continue to serve local agricultural producers and families.

Urban County Committees

- Since inclusion in the 2018 Farm Bill, the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production has established 17 FSA County Committees devoted exclusively to urban agriculture.
- The 17 Urban County Committees are located in the following cities:
 - Phoenix, Arizona
 - Atlanta, Georgia
 - New Orleans, Louisiana
 - Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota
 - St. Louis, Missouri
 - Albuquerque, New Mexico
 - Cleveland, Ohio
 - Portland, Oregon
 - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
 - Dallas, Texas
 - Richmond, Virginia
 - Chicago, Illinois



- New York, New York
 - Detroit, Michigan
 - Grand Rapids, Michigan
 - Los Angeles, California
 - Oakland, California
- Urban farmers participating or cooperating in USDA programs in these areas are encouraged to participate by nominating and voting.

Tribal Agricultural Landowner Voting Eligibility

- For purposes of FSA county committee elections, every member of an American Indian tribe is considered an agricultural landowner if the land on which the tribal member's voting eligibility is based is tribally owned or held in trust by the U.S. for the tribe, even if the individual does not personally produce a crop on that land.
- Tribal agricultural landowners 18 years and older can contact their USDA Service Center to register.
- After you provide FSA with your contact information, including a current mailing address, you will be updated as an eligible voter in the election database.



Suggested Newsletter Article

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is now accepting nominations for county committee members. Elections will occur in certain Local Administrative Areas (LAA) for members. LAAs are elective areas for [Farm Service Agency](#) (FSA) committees in a single county or multi-county jurisdiction. This may include LAAs that are focused on an urban or suburban area.

County committee members make important decisions about how Federal farm programs are administered locally. All nomination forms for the 2023 election must be postmarked or received in the local FSA office by Aug. 1, 2023.

Agricultural producers may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee if they:

- Participate or cooperate in a USDA program;
- Reside in the LAA that is up for election this year; and
- Meet basic eligibility requirements.

A cooperating producer is someone who has provided information about their farming or ranching operation to FSA, even if they have not applied or received program benefits. Customers can locate their LAA through a new GIS locator tool available at fsa.usda.gov/elections.

Individuals may nominate themselves or others and qualifying organizations may also nominate candidates. USDA encourages minority producers, women, and beginning farmers or ranchers to nominate, vote and hold office.

Committee members are vital to how FSA carries out disaster programs, as well as conservation, commodity and price support programs, county office employment and other agricultural issues.

Urban and Suburban County Committees

The 2018 Farm Bill directed USDA to form urban county committees as well as make other advancements related to urban agriculture, including the establishment of the Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production. FSA established county committees specifically focused on urban agriculture. Urban committee members are nominated and elected to serve by local urban producers in the same jurisdiction. Urban county committee members will provide outreach to ensure urban producers understand USDA programs and serve as the voice of other urban producers and assist in program implementation that support the needs of the growing urban community.

A list of cities with county committees for urban agriculture can be found at fsa.usda.gov/elections.

More Information



Producers should contact their local FSA office today to register and find out how to get involved in their county's election, including if their LAA is up for election this year. To be considered, a producer must be registered and sign an [FSA-669A](#) nomination form. Urban farmers should use an [FSA-669-A-3](#) for urban county committees. The form and other information about FSA county committee elections are available at fsa.usda.gov/elections.

Election ballots will be mailed to eligible voters beginning Nov. 6, 2023.



Suggested Social Media Posts

Twitter

@USDAFSA and @FarmersGov will be tweeting about FSA County Committee elections beginning June 15 through the end of the election. We would appreciate your retweets on these posts.

To join the conversation about FSA County Committee elections, use the hashtag #LeadYourFSA or tag us @USDAFSA.

USDA Farm Service Agency
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

BE THE LINK
between your agricultural community and the USDA

2023 COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

DATE	EVENT
JUN. 15, 2023	Beginning of nomination period. Forms available at fsa.usda.gov/elections .
AUG. 1, 2023	Last day to file nomination forms at the local FSA county office.
NOV. 6, 2023	Ballots mailed to eligible voters.
DEC. 4, 2023	Last day to return voted ballots to the local FSA county office.
JAN. 1, 2024	Newly elected county committee members take office.

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LEAD YOUR FSA

BE THE LINK
between your agricultural community and the USDA

Now Accepting Nominations for FSA County Committees

- #DYK each @USDAFSA county is served by a committee of elected ag producers who represent the needs of local farmers? #LeadYourFSA <http://go.usa.gov/x6bsX>
- Do you have a passion to support fellow farmers? Nominate yourself to be a @USDAFSA county committee member. #LeadYourFSA <http://go.usa.gov/x6bsX>

Facebook:

Sharing county committee-related Facebook posts from USDA and Farmers.gov Facebook accounts is a great way to spread the word within your professional and personal networks. We'd love if you'd help us promote awareness of the FSA County Committee Election by sharing this information on your page and to agricultural-related Facebook Groups where you participate.



Post 1: Suggested Timing Now through August 1.

The nomination period for USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is open now through Aug. 1. Each county office is looking for producers to serve on the local county committee.

County committees are unique to FSA and serve as a direct link between agricultural communities across the country and USDA. Producers who serve on committees work to make FSA agricultural programs serve the needs of local producers.

Are you willing to serve? Learn more and download a nomination form at fsa.usda.gov/elections, or contact your local FSA office.

Post 2: Suggested Timing Now through August 1.

Do you have a passion to serve other farmers, ranchers and foresters in your community? Then consider serving on your local USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committee. Nominations end on Aug. 1.

Learn more and download a nomination form at fsa.usda.gov/elections or contact your local FSA office to see which area in your county is up for election.



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Instagram:



Post 1: Suggested Timing Now through August 1.

The nomination period for @usdagov Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committee elections is open now through Aug. 1. Each county office is looking for producers to serve on the local county committee.

Are you willing to serve? Contact your local FSA office to see which area in your county is up for election. Nomination forms can be found at fsa.usda.gov/elections or from any FSA county office. #LeadYourFSA #USDA