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A Message from the SED

Greetings Oklahoma Agriculturists!

This is a busy season for producers with harvest, cutting hay, selling cattle, and planting. This was always one of my favorite times of year despite the long hours, I loved spending my days in the field with my family as we worked together to create a product for the American consumer. Your hard work in the hay field, at the farmers market, and in the cattle pens is not unnoticed.

Providing leadership through the Oklahoma Farm Service Agency with the general consensus of “producer first,” is critical to me. I am pleased to announce that producers and agriculture advocates, Tom Abernathy and Leon Barrett have joined Carly Griffith-Hotvedt on the Oklahoma State Committee. These gentlemen are experts in their field and have extensive experiences in agriculture. The FSA state committee members play an integral role in the continuity of operations to ensure overall integrity of services to the producers of Oklahoma.

The FSA has a unique opportunity for producers to apply their judgement, experience and knowledge when making local decisions to help deliver FSA programs and services. County committees are unique to FSA and serve as a direct link between agricultural communities across the country and USDA. The nomination period for County Committee elections has

opened and will run until August 1st. For more information on how to be involved with your County Committee, contact your local FSA Office.

Happy harvest!

Steve Kouplen

Farm Service Agency Now Accepting Nominations for Farmers and Ranchers to Serve on Local County Committees

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) is now accepting nominations for county committee members. Elections will occur in certain Local Administrative Areas (LAA) for members. LAAs are elective areas for 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 2022 election must be postmarked or received in the local FSA office by Aug. 1, 2022.

Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in a USDA program and reside in the LAA that is up for election this year, may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee. 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. 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.

Nationwide, more than 7,700 dedicated members of the agricultural community serve on FSA county committees. The committees are made up of three to 11 members who serve three-year terms. Producers serving on FSA county committees play a critical role in the day-to-day operations of the agency. 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.

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.

Election ballots will be mailed to eligible voters beginning Nov. 7, 2022. Producers can find their local USDA Service Center at farmers.gov/service-locator.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. In the Biden-Harris administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on

more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.

Sign Up to be Counted in the 2022 Census of Agriculture by June 30

Sign up and be counted in the 2022 Ag Census! Agriculture producers who did not receive the 2017 Census of Agriculture and do not receive other USDA surveys or censuses have until June 30 to sign up to receive the 2022 Census of Agriculture at nass.usda.gov/AgCensus. This once-every-five-years data collection begins this November.

The Ag Census includes every American operation – large or small, urban or rural – from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products are produced and sold, or would normally be produced and sold, in the ag census year. This can include hobby farms with livestock, such as chickens or horses, or crops growing in the backyard or on a rooftop. The data inform policy and program decisions that directly impact producers, their operations, industries, and communities. A complete count, with every producer getting and taking the opportunity to be represented in these data, is vital.

On the [NASS Ag Census webpage](#), producers can also access frequently asked questions, explore past and current Ag Census data, access tools to help spread the word about the upcoming Ag Census, learn about Ag Census special studies, and more.

A Message from the Oklahoma FSA Chief of Conservation

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is a voluntary program that contracts with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive agricultural land is not farmed or ranched, but instead devoted to conservation benefits.

Farm Service Agency is now accepting voluntary termination of existing CRP contracts expiring on September 30, 2022. Exceptional circumstances are shaping the global food production in 2022 including potential global food supply challenges caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In the public's interest, USDA is waiving refunds and penalties for CRP participants who voluntarily request to terminate a CRP contract that is in its final year and is set to expire on September 30, 2022. To be eligible for the waiver of refunds and penalties, the request for voluntary termination must be effective after the end of the 2022 Primary Nesting Season for the applicable county and state.

For current CRP participants, some reminders on general responsibilities regarding the terms of your CRP contracts:

- The practice approved for your CRP contract must be established by the specified deadline and maintained during your contract term, this includes the control of undesirable vegetation. Maintenance activities may not be performed during the primary nesting season of May 1 through July 1.
- Haying, grazing, or harvesting of CRP acres is not allowed. You may request to do managed haying and/or grazing of your CRP provided written approval by FSA is received before the activity begins. Specific provisions apply.
- Recreational hunting is permitted on CRP consistent with state law and bag limits for the appropriate game species.
- Firebreaks may be installed according to NRCS technical standards when included in a revised conservation plan.
- The CRP acreage may not be used for storage of any type, such as equipment, hay, etc.
- An annual certification of CRP compliance must be completed before July 15 by filing an acreage report.

If you desire to do any of the allowable activities mentioned above, please visit with your local County FSA.

Applying for Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes loans to youth to establish and operate agricultural income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5,000.

Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

- Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien
 - Be 10 years to 20 years of age
 - Comply with FSA's general eligibility requirements
 - Be unable to get a loan from other sources
 - Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above
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· Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the youth loan applicant, along with providing adequate supervision.

For help preparing the application forms, contact your County USDA Service Center or visit fsa.usda.gov.

Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybee, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP)

ELAP provides emergency assistance to eligible livestock, honeybee, and farm-raised fish producers who have losses due to disease, adverse weather or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires, not covered by other agricultural disaster assistance programs.

Eligible losses include:

- **Livestock** - grazing losses not covered under the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), loss of purchased feed and/or mechanically harvested feed due to an eligible adverse weather event, additional cost of transporting water because of an eligible drought and additional cost associated with gathering livestock to treat for cattle tick fever.
- **Honeybee** - loss of purchased feed due to an eligible adverse weather event, cost of additional feed purchased above normal quantities due to an eligible adverse weather condition, colony losses in excess of normal mortality due to an eligible weather event or loss condition, including CCD, and hive losses due to eligible adverse weather.
- **Farm-Raised Fish** - death losses in excess of normal mortality and/or loss of purchased feed due to an eligible adverse weather event.

If you've suffered eligible livestock, honeybee, or farm-raised fish losses during calendar year 2022, you must file:

- A notice of loss within 30 calendar days after the loss is apparent (15 days for honeybee losses)
- An application for payment by Jan. 30, 2023

Disaster Assistance for 2022 Livestock Forage Losses

Producers in some Oklahoma Counties are eligible to apply for 2022 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) benefits on some cool season and warm season forage crops. This program varies within each county. Eligible crops vary in each county across Oklahoma.

LFP provides compensation if you suffer grazing losses for covered livestock due to drought on privately owned or cash leased land or fire on federally managed land.

County committees can only accept LFP applications after notification is received by the National Office of qualifying drought or if a federal agency prohibits producers from grazing normal permitted livestock on federally managed lands due to qualifying fire.

You must complete a CCC-853 and provide required supporting documentation to your county office.

For additional information about LFP, including eligible livestock and fire criteria, contact the your County USDA Service Center or visit fsa.usda.gov.

USDA, Army Corps of Engineers Renew Partnership on Infrastructure, Natural Resource Planning

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service and the United States Army Corps of Engineers announce the renewal of a critical partnership focused on infrastructure projects and natural resources planning.

The partnership renewal continues joint efforts to combat ongoing threats to our natural resources and promotes inter-agency strategic planning — coordinating mission-driven assistance that best serves local resource concerns and communities. Renewing the partnership solidifies a legacy of watershed conservation.



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CONTACT US:

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[Natural Resources Conservation Service](#)
[Risk Management Agency](#)
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