

## *News Release*

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### KANSAS FSA RELEASES COUNTY OFFICE RESTRUCTURING PLAN

Manhattan, Kansas, February 15, 2007 --- Today, Bill R. Fuller, State Executive Director of the Kansas USDA Farm Service Agency, released the proposal to consolidate eleven FSA County Offices in order to effectively and efficiently manage a declining budget and shrinking staff.

"The initial goal of reviewing Kansas counties was to identify an optimum network of FSA facilities, staffing, training, and technology within existing budgetary resources and staffing ceilings," emphasized Fuller. "This process started in March 2006 when three FSA Stakeholder Meetings were held across Kansas to allow stakeholders to outline their expectations and present recommendations, while receiving information on Kansas FSA programs, structures, and challenges."

A 15-member Review Committee, consisting of managers, program technicians, district directors and farmers, considered input, selected criteria and developed recommendations.

When the review began, there were 103 Kansas FSA County Offices with 32 of those being shared management offices. This restructuring plan will eliminate shared-management resulting in reduced travel expenses, increased efficiencies and offices that are more fully staffed.

Fuller submitted the proposed restructuring plan to the FSA national office in December 2006. After approval, Fuller traveled to Washington D.C. to inform the members of the Kansas Congressional Delegation whose districts will be impacted by the proposed office consolidations.

Kansas FSA Offices submitted for closure and consolidation are as follows:

- Chase County (Cottonwood Falls) will be consolidated with Lyon County.
- Comanche County (Coldwater) will be consolidated with Clark County.
- Johnson County (Olathe) will be consolidated with Miami County.
- Geary County (Junction City) will be consolidated with Riley County.
- Elk County (Howard) will be consolidated with Greenwood County.
- Woodson County (Yates Center) will be consolidated with Wilson County.
- Barber County (Medicine Lodge) will be consolidated with Pratt County.
- Morton County (Elkhart) will be consolidated with Stevens County.
- Wabaunsee County (Alma) will be consolidated with Pottawatomie County.
- Leavenworth County (Leavenworth) will be consolidated with Atchison County.
- Gove County (Gove) will be consolidated with Logan County.

Public meetings will be scheduled in counties where consolidations are proposed. Announcement of these meetings will be provided to the media and advertised in the affected counties. The restructuring plan can be revised if new information or considerations are heard at the public meetings. Fuller will meet with FSA employees and FSA County Committees in affected counties prior to the public meetings.

"Many criteria were considered including staffing ceilings, budget, workload, dollars delivered to producers and borrowers, office efficiency, population, land use, trade centers, distances between offices, building conditions and costs, agency partners, transportation, and demographics," Fuller emphasized.

"As a convenience to producers in affected offices, they will be given the option to choose their administrative headquarters in any contiguous county office." Fuller added. "The current county committees will determine whether the new combined county committee will have 3 or 5 members, and establish new local administrative area boundaries for the new multi-county area."

The Kansas FSA County Office Restructuring Plan can be obtained at [www.fsa.usda.gov/ks](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ks).

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