UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Farm Service Agency
Washington, DC 20250

Notice AO-1334

For: State and County Offices

2005 County Committee (COC) Election Targeted Counties

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Field Operations

1 Overview

A Background

The Secretary was authorized by the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (the Act) to promulgate and publish in the Federal Register "Uniform Guidelines for Conducting Farm Service Agency County Committee Elections", if determined necessary after analyzing data in reports required by the Act. The statutory and procedural intent of the guidelines is to ensure fair representation of socially disadvantaged (SDA) groups, such groups being defined in section 355(e) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act (7 U.S.C. 2003(e)). The Secretary published proposed uniform guidelines on August 17, 2004, and after a 60-day public comment period, published the final uniform guidelines in the Federal Register on January 18, 2005.

For the 2004 COC election, the Secretary's office determined that 300 targeted counties were to be designated for special efforts to encourage participation and to attempt to increase SDA representation on COC's. The counties were identified using Census of Agriculture data based on SDA operator statistics for each county in the nation. For 2005, the process was refined and identifies those counties where special efforts shall be expended to increase SDA representation on COC's. For the 2005 election, 440 counties were identified for added outreach emphasis.

B Purpose

This notice provides:

- guidance to those 440 targeted County Offices in entering nominee and ballot information on COC elections web site
- procedures for actions in the targeted counties by State and County Offices.

Disposal Date	Distribution
February 1, 2006	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

1 Overview (Continued)

C Contacts

If there are questions about this notice:

- County Offices shall contact the State Office
- State Offices shall contact 1 of the following DAFO staff members:

  - Ken Nagel at 202-720-7890 or Ken.Nagel@wdc.usda.gov
  - Zina Riley at 202-720-0258 or Zina.Riley@wdc.usda.gov
  - Deborah Johnson at 202-720-0067 or Deborah.Johnson@wdc.usda.gov.

2 County Office Actions

A Targeted County Office Action

Targeted County Offices shall conduct emphasized outreach and publicity efforts in Local Administrative Areas (LAA's) conducting an election this year to ensure that at least 1 name on the ballot is a member of a group within the definition of SDA producer. The due date for nominations remains as August 1, 2005, for targeted counties.

Note: Follow Notice AO-1330 for outreach and publicity action.

B FSA-73-4, Letters of Congratulations

FSA-73-4's shall be sent to eligible nominees.

Note: CED's and COC should make every effort to inform candidates of the option to sequester ballots.

2 County Office Actions (Continued)

C Entering Nominee and Ballot Information

On August 24, 2005, targeted counties, as well as other counties, shall begin entering nominee and ballot (FSA-669 and FSA-669B) information into the web site.

Follow 15-AO, paragraph 110, with the following exceptions.

- A candidate in any county, targeted or not, has the option to request that all voted ballots for an individual COC election be returned to the respective State Office instead of being returned to the County Office. This request must be in writing and submitted to the local CED before the announced end of the nomination period.

- If a candidate requests to have the ballots returned to the State Office, the County Office should follow instructions in subparagraph B, step 5, Office Mail Delivery Address. Enter "Farm Service Agency State Office", followed by the address of the State Office.

Note: When ballots are returned to the State Office, the County Office shall allow 1 additional week for counting votes. The final date for counting ballots in those County Offices is December 19, 2005.

D FSA-669B's for Walk-in Requests

County Offices shall maintain an adequate and equal supply of the following for walk-in voters:

- FSA-669B's with necessary 2005 election information filled in
- FSA-73's with the Voter Certification on the Reverse (used with FSA-73E)
- FSA-73E's.

Note: If ballots are being returned to the State Office, maintain a supply of pre-printed FSA-73's with the State Office return address to provide to the voter. Ensure that customers who request FSA-669B are informed of the need to sign FSA-73 in the designated area.

E Ballots Mailed or Hand Delivered to County Offices

Ballots shall be placed in a securely sealed ballot box in the County Office. The ballot box shall **not** be opened until the designated date and time for counting.

Note: There are **no** exceptions to this policy. CED's and COC's will be held accountable for any violation of this directive.

Follow 15-AO, paragraph 124 to ensure appropriate handling of ballots.

2 County Office Actions (Continued)

F Record of Ballots

County Offices shall maintain a count of all ballots received from the State Office.

G Reports by Target Counties

Target counties must report the following nominee information in Excel format by e-mail to the State Office **no** later than COB August 2, 2005, by:

- county
- LAA
- name
- race
- ethnicity
- gender.

Note: Negative reports are required.

3 State Office Action

A Obtaining Nominees

State Offices shall monitor progress to obtain SDA nominees in all targeted counties. State Offices shall provide all assistance necessary to County Offices to obtain SDA nominees with emphasis on targeted counties. Ensure that County Offices follow outreach and publicity procedure in Notice AO-1330.

B Collecting Ballots

If ballots are returned to the State Office, be guided by the following.

- Ballots mailed or delivered to the State Office will be accumulated in the State Office for each county within the State, with each county and LAA kept separate. LAA and county numbers are printed on the outside of the return envelope for sorting.

- Ballots shall be delivered to County Offices by an overnight delivery service (if available) or hand carried by a State Office employee to arrive the morning of the ballot counting.

  Note: State and County Offices shall work together to determine the date and time of day to count ballots based on the delivery schedule. Counting shall **not** be scheduled for anytime earlier than when ballots can arrive in the County Office.

3 State Office Actions (Continued)

B Collecting Ballots (Continued)

- State Offices shall maintain a count of all ballots received for each LAA holding an election in the county.

  Note: State Offices are **not** to determine eligibility of voters or tally votes. COC's and County Offices will make all eligibility and validity determinations. Ballots shall not be opened at the State Office.

C Reporting

Target counties must report the nominee information by e-mail to the State Office **no** later than COB August 2, 2005.

State Offices must report the county information to DAFO, by e-mail to Zina.Riley@wdc.usda.gov, no later than COB August 8, 2005.

SDA Targeted Counties

The following are targeted counties for the 2005 election.

State	Targeted County
Alabama	Autauga
Alabama	Butler
Alabama	Conecuh
Alabama	Dallas/Lowndes
Alabama	Elmore/Montgomery
Alabama	Greene/Sumter
Alabama	Hale
Alabama	Lawrence
Alabama	Macon
Alabama	Marengo/Choctaw
Alabama	Monroe
Alabama	Perry/Bibb
Alabama	Pike/Bullock
Alabama	Russell
Alabama	Wilcox
Arkansas	Chicot
Arkansas	Crittendon
Arkansas	Dallas
Arkansas	Desha
Arkansas	Drew
Arkansas	Hempstead
Arkansas	Jefferson
Arkansas	Lee
Arkansas	Lincoln
Arkansas	Little River
Arkansas	Monroe
Arkansas	Phillips
Arkansas	Pulaski
Arkansas	St. Francis
Arizona	Apache
Arizona	Cochise
Arizona	Coconino/Mohave
Arizona	Graham/Greenlee
Arizona	Navajo/Gila
Arizona	Pima/Santa Cruz
Arizona	Pinal
Arizona	Yuma/La Paz

SDA Targeted Counties (Continued)

State	Targeted County
California	Butte
California	Colusa
California	Contra Costa/Alameda
California	Fresno
California	Glenn
California	Imperial
California	Kern
California	Kings
California	Los Angeles/Orange/San Bernardino
California	Madera
California	Merced/Mariposa
California	Monterey/San Mateo/Santa Cruz
California	Placer
California	Riverside/San Diego
California	Sacramento
California	San Benito/Santa Clara
California	San Joaquin/Calaveras
California	San Luis Obispo
California	Santa Barbara/Ventura
California	Shasta/Trinity
California	Solano
California	Stanislaus
California	Sutter/Yuba
California	Tehama
California	Tulare
California	Yolo
Colorado	Alamosa
Colorado	Conejos/Costallia
Colorado	Fremont/Lake/Pueblo
Colorado	Archuleta/La Plata
Colorado	Las Animas/Huerfano
Colorado	Otero/Crowley
Colorado	Rio Grand/Hinsdale/Mineral
Colorado	Saguache
Florida	Alachua
Florida	Columbia/Duval
Florida	Miami/Dade
Florida	Escambia
Florida	Gadsden
Florida	Hardee/Sarasota
Florida	Hendrey/Collier/Glades
Florida	Hillsborough
Florida	Jackson

SDA Targeted Counties (Continued)

State	Targeted County
Florida	Jefferson/Leon/Wakulla
Florida	Lake/Orange
Florida	Madison
Florida	Marion
Florida	Broward/Palm Beach
Florida	Pasco
Florida	Sumter
Georgia	Baker
Georgia	Ben Hill
Georgia	Bleckley/Twiggs
Georgia	Brooks
Georgia	Burke
Georgia	Calhoun
Georgia	Decautur
Georgia	Dooly
Georgia	Dougherty
Georgia	Early
Georgia	Effingham/Camden/Chatham
Georgia	Greene/Hancock/Taliaferro
Georgia	Houston
Georgia	Jefferson
Georgia	Laurens
Georgia	Lee
Georgia	Lowndes
Georgia	Macon
Georgia	Marion/Muscogee
Georgia	McDuffie/Richmond/Warren
Georgia	Mitchell
Georgia	Montgomery/Treutlen
Georgia	Oconee/Clarke
Georgia	Peach/Crawford
Georgia	Pulaski
Georgia	Putnam
Georgia	Seminole
Georgia	Sumter
Georgia	Walton/De Kalb
Georgia	Wayne/Glynn/Liberty
Georgia	Webster/Steward
Hawaii	Hawaii
Hawaii	Honolulu
Hawaii	Kauai
Hawaii	Maui

SDA Targeted Counties (Continued)

State	Targeted County
Idaho	Gooding
Idaho	Minidoka
Kentucky	Johnson/Martin
Louisiana	Allen
Louisiana	Bossier
Louisiana	Caddo
Louisiana	DeSoto
Louisiana	East Carroll
Louisiana	East Feliciana/West Feliciana
Louisiana	Franklin
Louisiana	Grant/Winn
Louisiana	Iberia
Louisiana	Livingston/East Baton Rouge
Louisiana	Natchitoches
Louisiana	Red River
Louisiana	St John/Orleans/Plaquemines/St Bernard
Louisiana	St Landry
Louisiana	St Martin
Louisiana	Tangipahoa/St Helena
Louisiana	Tensas
Louisiana	Washington
Louisiana	West Baton Rouge
Maryland	Prince George's
Michigan	Ogemaw-Oscoda
Michigan	Washtenaw/Wayne
Mississippi	Adams
Mississippi	Amite/Wilkinson
Mississippi	Attala
Mississippi	Benton
Mississippi	Bolivar
Mississippi	Carroll
Mississippi	Chickasaw
Mississippi	Choctaw
Mississippi	Claiborne/Jefferson
Mississippi	Clarke
Mississippi	Clay
Mississippi	Coahoma
Mississippi	Copiah
Mississippi	Covington
Mississippi	Grenada
Mississippi	Hinds
Mississippi	Holmes
Mississippi	Humphreys

SDA Targeted Counties (Continued)

State	Targeted County
Mississippi	Jasper
Mississippi	Jefferson Davis
Mississippi	Kemper
Mississippi	Lafayette
Mississippi	Lauderdale
Mississippi	Lawrence
Mississippi	LeFlore
Mississippi	Lincoln/Franklin
Mississippi	Lowndes
Mississippi	Madison
Mississippi	Marion
Mississippi	Marshall
Mississippi	Monroe
Mississippi	Montgomery
Mississippi	Noxubee
Mississippi	Oktibbeha
Mississippi	Panola
Mississippi	Pike
Mississippi	Quitman
Mississippi	Rankin
Mississippi	Sharkey/Issaquena
Mississippi	Simpson
Mississippi	Sunflower
Mississippi	Tate
Mississippi	Tunica
Mississippi	Walthall
Mississippi	Warren
Mississippi	Washington
Mississippi	Wayne/Green
Mississippi	Winston
Mississippi	Yalobusha
Mississippi	Yazoo
Montana	Big Horn
Montana	Blaine
Montana	Glacier
Montana	Lake
Montana	Roosevelt
Montana	Rosebud

SDA Targeted Counties (Continued)

State	Targeted County
North Carolina	Beaufort/Hyde
North Carolina	Bertie
North Carolina	Bladen
North Carolina	Brunswick
North Carolina	Caswell
North Carolina	Chowan
North Carolina	Columbus
North Carolina	Duplin
North Carolina	Durham
North Carolina	Edgecombe
North Carolina	Granville
North Carolina	Halifax
North Carolina	Hertford
North Carolina	Hoke
North Carolina	Jones
North Carolina	Martin
North Carolina	Northampton
North Carolina	Pamlico
North Carolina	Pasquotank
North Carolina	Person
North Carolina	Robeson/Scotland
North Carolina	Samson
North Carolina	Swain
North Carolina	Vance
North Carolina	Warren
North Dakota	Rolette
North Dakota	Sioux
Nebraska	Thurston
New Mexico	Bernalillo/Sandoval
New Mexico	Chaves
New Mexico	Colfax
New Mexico	De Baca
New Mexico	Dona Ana
New Mexico	Eddy
New Mexico	Guadalupe
New Mexico	Harding
New Mexico	Hidalgo
New Mexico	Luna/Grant
New Mexico	McKinley
New Mexico	Otero/Lincoln
New Mexico	Quay
New Mexico	Rio Arriba
New Mexico	San Juan
New Mexico	San Miguel/Mora

SDA Targeted Counties (Continued)

State	Targeted County
New Mexico	Santa Fe
New Mexico	Sierra
New Mexico	Catron/Socorro
New Mexico	Taos
New Mexico	Torrance
New Mexico	Valencia/Cibola
Nevada	Churchill/Nye
California	Douglas/Inyo
Nevada	Elko
Nevada	Lyon/Mineral
Nevada	Pershing
New York	Dutchess/Weschester
Oklahoma	Atoka/Coal
Oklahoma	Bryan
Oklahoma	Cherokee/Adair/Sequoyah
Oklahoma	Choctaw
Oklahoma	Craig
Oklahoma	Delaware
Oklahoma	Garvin/Murray
Oklahoma	Haskell
Oklahoma	Hughes
Oklahoma	Johnson
Oklahoma	LeFlore
Oklahoma	Logan/Oklahoma
Oklahoma	Love/Carter
Oklahoma	Mayes
Oklahoma	McCurtain
Oklahoma	Muskogee
Oklahoma	Nowata/Washington
Oklahoma	Okfuskee
Oklahoma	Okmulgee
Oklahoma	Osage
Oklahoma	Ottawa
Oklahoma	Pittsburg/Latimer/McIntosh
Oklahoma	Pushmataha
Oklahoma	Rogers/Tulsa
Oklahoma	Wagoner
Oregon	Malheur
Oregon	Wasco/Hood River

SDA Targeted Counties (Continued)

State	Targeted County
South Carolina	Abbeville/McCormick
South Carolina	Aiken
South Carolina	Allendale
South Carolina	Bamberg
South Carolina	Barnwell
South Carolina	Calhoun/Richland
South Carolina	Charleston/Berkeley
South Carolina	Chester/Fairfield
South Carolina	Clarendon
South Carolina	Colleton
South Carolina	Darlington
South Carolina	Dorchester
South Carolina	Edgefield
South Carolina	Florence
South Carolina	Georgetown
South Carolina	Hampton
South Carolina	Jasper/Beaufort
South Carolina	Lee
South Carolina	Marion
South Carolina	Marlboro
South Carolina	Orangeburg
South Carolina	Sumter
South Carolina	Williamsburg
South Dakota	Bennett/Shannon
South Dakota	Brule/Buffalo
South Dakota	Dewey
South Dakota	Jackson
South Dakota	Mellette/Todd
South Dakota	Ziebach
Tennessee	Fayette
Tennessee	Haywood
Texas	Anderson
Texas	Atascosa
Texas	Bee
Texas	Bexar
Texas	Brazoria/Galveston
Texas	Brazos
Texas	Brooks
Texas	Brooks/Jim Hogg
Texas	Burleson

SDA Targeted Counties (Continued)

State	Targeted County
Texas	Caldwell
Texas	Cameron
Texas	Cass/Marion
Texas	Chambers
Texas	Crockett
Texas	Dimmit
Texas	Duval
Texas	El Paso/Culberson/Hudspeth
Texas	Fort Bend
Texas	Freestone
Texas	Frio
Texas	Goliad
Texas	Guadalupe
Texas	Harris
Texas	Harrison
Texas	Hidalgo
Texas	Houston
Texas	Jasper/Newton
Texas	Jefferson
Texas	Jim Wells
Texas	Karnes
Texas	Kaufman/Dallas
Texas	Kleberg/Kenedy
Texas	LaSalle
Texas	Leon
Texas	Liberty
Texas	Limestone
Texas	Live Oak/McMullen
Texas	Matagorda
Texas	Medina
Texas	Midland
Texas	Mitchell
Texas	Nueces
Texas	Pecos
Texas	Polk/San Jacinto
Texas	Presidio
Texas	Reeves
Texas	Robertson
Texas	Rusk
Texas	San Patricio
Texas	Smith
Texas	Starr
Texas	Sutton

SDA Targeted Counties (Continued)

State	Targeted County
Texas	Titus/Camp/Morris
Texas	Travis
Texas	Upshur/Gregg
Texas	Uvalde Maverick
Texas	Val Verde
Texas	Victoria
Texas	Walker
Texas	Waller
Texas	Webb
Texas	Wharton
Texas	Willacy
Texas	Wilson
Texas	Zapata
Virginia	Accomack/Northampton
Virginia	Brunswick
Virginia	Charlotte
Virginia	Chesapeake/Virginia Beach
Virginia	Dinwiddie
Virginia	Essex/King & Queen
Virginia	Gloucester/Mathews/Middlesex
Virginia	Greensville
Virginia	Halifax
Virginia	Isle of Wight/Surry
Virginia	Louisa/Fluvanna
Virginia	Lunenburg
Virginia	Mecklenberg
Virginia	New Kent/Charles City
Virginia	Prince Edward/Nottoway
Virginia	Richmond/Lancaster/Westmoreland
Virginia	Southampton
Washington	Ferry
Washington	Yakima
Wisconsin	Shawano/Menominee
Wyoming	Fremont
Wyoming	Uinta