

For: FSA Offices

Revised FSA-669, FSA County Committee Election Ballot

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Field Operations



1 Overview

A Background

FSA-669's:

- require a voter's signature to validate the ballot and help ensure integrity in the election process
- use a removable label that has proven to be efficient in maintaining an organized and effective ballot tally.

Note: This label is required to be signed by the voter so COC can verify that the signature is indeed that of the person casting the ballot.

The expanded emphasis now placed on the prevention of identity theft combined with the required voter signature for the COC election process has created concern from voters during the past few COC election cycles.

FSA takes identity theft very seriously and makes every reasonable attempt to protect FSA customers' personally identifiable information (PII). In an effort to prevent identity theft through FSA-669's, the ballot was redesigned to provide a more secure method to protect voters' PII.

B Purpose

This notice provides:

- State and County Offices with information about the redesigned FSA-669

Disposal Date	Distribution
June 1, 2009	All FSA Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

Notice AO-1429

1 Overview (Continued)

B Purpose (Continued)

- instructions for removing labels when tallying votes to maintain both of the following:
 - secret ballot by the voter
 - integrity of the election.

Note: See Exhibit 1 for the revised FSA-669.

2 Action

A Handling Returned Ballots

15-AO, Part 5, Section 2 provides procedure for handling FSA-669's and counting votes. Opening the newly designed ballot envelope entails 1 more step than in the past. The signature label is now covered by a flap that must be slit open to remove the label before tallying votes. COC's must carefully open the outer sealed flap with a letter opener at the top of the returned ballot envelope with the statement, "Open Here with Letter Opener to Remove Label". When the label is removed correctly, the flap will remain on the ballot envelope and the envelope will remain sealed. See Exhibit 2.

After the labels are removed from the ballot envelopes and the labels are placed on the register, all ballot envelopes must be placed together and shuffled. The protective flap will remain on the ballot envelope. COC's are to follow procedure in 15-AO, paragraph 126.

Extreme care must be exercised to prevent opening the ballot envelope before the label is removed. If the ballot envelope is opened exposing the voted ballot before the label is removed, the election for the respective local administrative area will be invalidated. All labels must be removed from valid returned envelopes before any envelopes are opened.

B Ballot Envelope Sealing

Voters are to seal the ballot envelope in 2 locations on the envelope. The first seals the envelope containing their voted FSA-669. The second seals the flap to the outer side of the ballot envelope to protect the signed label.

C Contacts

If there are questions about this notice, State Offices shall contact either of the following:

- Ken Nagel by either of the following:
 - e-mail at **kenneth.nagel@wdc.usda.gov**
 - telephone at 202-720-7890
- Deborah Johnson by either of the following:
 - e-mail at **deborah.johnson@wdc.usda.gov**
 - telephone at 202-720-0067.

Example of FSA-669, FSA County Committee Election Ballot

↑ TO OPEN SLIDE FINGER UNDER TOP EDGE ↑

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Farm Service Agency
 County Office Name
 Address
 City, State, Zip

OFFICIAL MAIL

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



ELECTION DATE: XX-XX-XXXX

IMPORTANT: Official Ballot for FSA Committee Election

Producer Name
 Address
 City, State, Zip

PRESORTED
 FIRST CLASS MAIL
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID
 USDA/FSA
 PERMIT NO. G-96

FSA-669 (8-21-08)

FSA COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTION BALLOT
VOTE FOR THE CANDIDATE OF YOUR CHOICE!!





FARM SERVICE AGENCY

POSTAGE

Return Envelope for FSA
Committee Election Ballot

County Office Name
 Address
 City, State, Zip

↓ Open Here with Letter Opener to Remove Label ↓

Example of FSA-669, FSA County Committee Election Ballot (Continued)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION - READ CAREFULLY

This is your official ballot for voting in the County (COC) FSA Committee election. Vote for a farmer of your choice to represent you on the County FSA Committee. The ballot lists the names of the candidates, and has space where you can write in another if you desire. If you know of eligible voters who did not receive a ballot, please inform them that they should request a ballot from this office. If you have questions on eligibility to vote or to hold office, please contact this office. The COC answers questions on election procedures, and on eligibility to vote or hold office.

Voting in Person:
If you are voting in person instead of mailing this ballot, go to the following voting location:

Counting the Ballots:
Ballots will be counted in public at the following time, date, and location:

Completing your Ballot Correctly: You must comply with the following requirements in order for your ballot to be counted:

Step 1. Vote for only 1 candidate.

Step 2. Sign in the voter signature area provided on the address label on the front of the Ballot Return Envelope. Voting by proxy is prohibited. This includes powers of attorney.

Step 3. If mailing your ballot it must be postmarked by the Election Date printed in Item 1 on your ballot. If voting in person, you must vote by the Election Date.

Step 4. Apply postage on the return envelope.

Witnessing the Ballot Counting:
Any interested person may witness the vote counting. This election is conducted by secret ballot and no one will know how you voted. Votes received by any candidates are available to you on request.

Election of Candidates:
The candidate receiving the highest number of votes will serve as the COC member. Candidates receiving the next highest number of votes will serve as alternates to the COC. Contact this office if you have questions regarding positions to be filled on the COC.

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FSA-669 (8-21-08) ↑ Separate Ballot Along Dotted Line ↑

OFFICIAL BALLOT FOR FSA COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

Vote for only 1 (one) candidate. CIRCLE the candidate you are voting for or you may "Write-In" the name of any other eligible farmer or rancher.

1. ELECTION DATE:	2. DATE BALLOT MAILED TO VOTER	3. LAA NO.	4. COUNTY CODE	5. STATE CODE

↓ Separate Ballot Along Dotted Line ↓

Moisten This Strip and Fold over to Seal

THIS IS YOUR BALLOT RETURN ENVELOPE
Detach Above, Insert Ballot, Moisten & Seal in Two Places

SIGN HERE _____

Attention: Must Moisten and Seal in two places Attention: Must Moisten and Seal in two places

↑ VOTER MUST SIGN IN SIGNATURE AREA ↓
You must sign on the above label next to "SIGN HERE" or your ballot cannot be counted. If you sign with an "X" or other mark, your mark must be witnessed on the back of this envelope.

INSERT BALLOT, MOISTEN THIS STRIP

BALLOT RETURN ENVELOPE

FOR WITNESS ONLY: If the voter signed by a mark, such as "X", it must be witnessed as follows (otherwise, leave this signature block blank):

I certify that I witnessed the signature mark of the voter whose ballot is enclosed.

WITNESS SIGN HERE

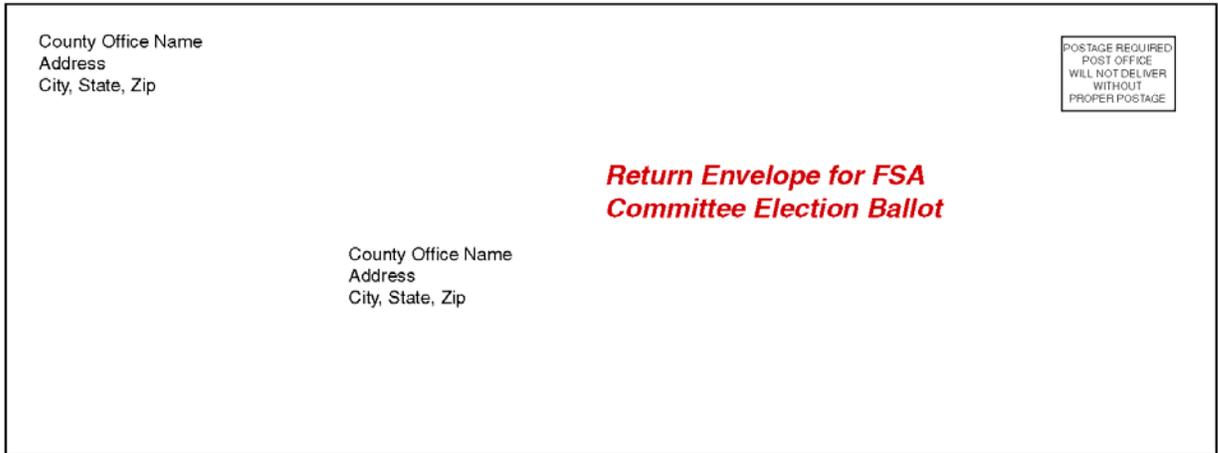
IMPORTANT REMINDERS TO VOTER IN ORDER FOR YOUR BALLOT TO BE COUNTED

1. Vote for only 1 candidate.
2. Sign in the voter signature area provided on the address label. Obtain a witness' signature if signing by an "X" or other mark.
3. If you are mailing your ballot, it must be postmarked by the election date in Item 1 of your ballot.
4. You must apply postage.
5. If you are voting in person, the election date in Item 1 of your ballot is the last day to vote.

Example of Ballot Envelope

A Front of Ballot Envelope

The following is the front of the ballot envelope.



B Back of Ballot Envelope

The following is the back of the ballot envelope.

Note: Ensure that COC opens the ballot envelope from this edge as indicated.

