



USDA Farm Service Agency County Committee Election

Eligibility to Vote and Hold Office as a County Committee Member

USDA encourages all eligible farmers to vote or hold office as a county committee member, including beginning producers, longtime producers, small operations, large operations, women, African-Americans, American Indians or Alaska Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders.

PROSPECTIVE VOTER REQUIREMENTS

A person who meets the requirements in No. 1 or No. 2 below, as well as No. 3, is eligible to vote.

1. Be of legal voting age and have an interest ¹ in a farm or ranch as either:
 - An individual who meets one or more of the following:
 - o Is eligible to vote in one's own right.
 - o Is a partner of a general partnership.
 - o Is a member of a joint venture.
 - A non-individual who is the authorized representative of a legal entity, such as:
 - o A corporation, estate, trust, limited partnership or other business enterprise, excluding general partnerships and joint ventures.
 - o A state, political subdivision of a state or any state agency.

Only the designated representative may cast a vote for the entity.

OR

2. Not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm.

AND

3. Participates or cooperates in any U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) program that is provided for by law.

DISCRIMINATION PROHIBITED

USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

INTERPRETATION OF VOTING ELIGIBILITY FOR SPOUSES IN COMMUNITY PROPERTY STATES

In community property states, the spouse of an eligible voter is eligible to vote.

AMERICAN INDIAN TRIBAL LANDS

Members of American Indian tribes holding agricultural land are eligible to vote in an FSA county committee election if the tribal member meets the voting requirements. 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 United States for the tribe, even if the individual does not personally produce a crop on that land.

VOTING ELIGIBILITY

Local Administrative Areas

A county or multi-county jurisdiction served by an FSA county committee is divided into 3 to 11 local administrative areas (LAA). Each LAA is represented by one member on the FSA county committee. A person may only vote in one LAA (the LAA in which he or she participates or cooperates in FSA programs or programs administered by FSA).

¹ i.e. have legal documentation of ownership or tenancy of a farm or ranch, with the farm or ranch in FSA records.

FSA COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTION

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May 2015

Multiple Farm Interests in Same County or Area

Eligible voters who participate or cooperate in FSA programs on separate farms in more than one LAA in the same county or multi-county jurisdiction may only cast one ballot. Such voters must choose only one LAA in which they wish to cast their ballots.

Multi-County Jurisdictions

Eligible voters with separate farming interests in more than one county or in more than one FSA county committee jurisdiction (which may include more than one county) are eligible to vote in each election conducted for each jurisdiction's committee. Voting is limited to one LAA in which farming interests are located per each FSA county committee jurisdiction. Only one vote may be cast in each county or multi-county jurisdiction.

ELIGIBILITY TO HOLD OFFICE

To hold office as an FSA county committee member, a person must meet each of the basic eligibility requirements described below:

1. Participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA.
2. Be eligible to vote in an FSA county committee election.
3. Reside in the LAA in which the person is a candidate.²
4. A person must not have been:
 - Removed or disqualified from
 - o FSA county committee membership or alternate membership, or
 - o FSA employment.
 - Removed for cause from any public office or have been convicted of fraud, larceny, embezzlement or any other felony.
 - Dishonorably discharged from any branch of the armed services.

People uncertain about their eligibility to vote in the FSA county committee election should contact their local FSA office. Affirmation of eligibility to vote must be determined in order for a vote to count in an election.

Any candidate may request that all voted ballots for an individual FSA county committee election be returned to the respective FSA state office in lieu of being returned to the FSA county office. This request must be in writing and submitted to the local FSA county executive director prior to the announced end of the nomination period.

During the election period, individuals not receiving a ballot in the mail may obtain a ballot directly from their FSA county office. The ballot must be cast on or before the election deadline.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about FSA county committees, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/elections or visit a local FSA office. To find your local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.