

FSA county committee nomination period begins Monday, June 17

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

State Executive Director Leland Swenson announced recently that the nomination period for local Farm Service Agency FSA county committees begins Monday, June 17.

“I encourage all eligible farmers and ranchers to participate in this year’s county committee elections by nominating candidates by the Aug. 1 deadline,” said Swenson.

“County committees are a vital link between the farm community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture and provide an opportunity to farmers and ranchers for their opinions and ideas to be heard. We have been seeing an increase in the number of nominations of women and minority candidates, and I hope that trend continues,” he said.

To be eligible to serve on an FSA county committee, a person must participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA, be eligible to vote in a county committee election and reside in the local administrative area in which the person is a candidate.

Farmers and ranchers may nominate themselves or others, and organizations representing minorities and women also may nominate candidates. To become a candidate, an eligible individual must sign the nomination form, FSA-669A.

The form and other information about FSA county committee elections are available online at www.fsa.usda.gov/elections

. Nomination forms for the 2013 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on Aug. 1. Elections will take place this fall.

While FSA county committees do not approve or deny farm ownership or operating loans, they make decisions on disaster and conservation programs, emergency programs, commodity price support loan programs and other agricultural issues. Members serve three-year terms. Nationwide, there are about 7,800 farmers and ranchers serving on FSA county committees. Committees consist of three to 11 members that are elected by eligible producers.

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FSA will mail ballots to eligible voters beginning Nov. 4. The voted ballots are due back to the local county office either via mail or in person by Dec. 2. Newly elected committee members and alternates take office on Jan. 1.

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