

Aloha!

As the USDA Farm Service Agency Executive Director, I am asking for your assistance in disseminating information regarding the Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committee election process to the agricultural producers of Hawaii, Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands.

The County Committee system gives farmers and ranchers a much needed say in how federal actions affect their communities and individual operations. County Committees have been around since the 1930's when Congress set up a system by which federal farm programs would be administered locally. The County Committee members are nominated and elected by local producers who are eligible to participate in FSA programs. Once elected, they will make important decisions about how FSA programs will be carried out in their respective counties. They serve as a direct link between their farming community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

The nomination process has begun and will end on August 1, 2011. It is important to our agency that all producers, particularly minority, female and other under-represented groups, have an equal opportunity to be candidates for the County Committees.

Please find the following links to documents that will answer many questions about the nominations and elections process in the event that you or a member of your organization may be eligible and willing to run for a county committee position:

- USDA Fact Sheet regarding County Committee Elections http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/fsa_ccelections_2011.pdf
- USDA Fact Sheet regarding eligibility requirements to vote and/or hold office http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/coc_eligibility_2011.pdf
- Election Brochure http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/pa_1774_en.pdf
- Each county is divided into three Local Administrative Areas (LAAs) in order to assure that producers get fair representation throughout the county. Each committee member serves a staggered term, thus each year, committee elections are held in only one of the three LAAs. For a description of the LAA holding elections this year (2011) in each county go to: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/laa_identification.pdf .
- Nomination Form http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/efcommon/eFileServices/eFormsAdmin/FSA0669A_110331V01.pdf

If you have any questions about County Committees or the County Committee election process, please call one of our County Offices at: Honolulu 483-8600 ext. 2; Maui 871-5500, ext. 2; Kauai 245-9014, ext. 2; Hawaii 933-8381, ext. 8340; Guam 472-7568 or the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands 236-0896.

I thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Diane

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Diane Ley

State Executive Director

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