

FSA urges voters to participate in county committee elections

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

Trudy Kareus, Colorado State Executive Director of USDA's Farm Service Agency, urges Colorado farmers and other agricultural producers to vote in FSA county committee elections by Dec. 6, the deadline for casting ballots.

"I strongly recommend that producers vote because the county committee members play a huge role in the Agency, especially at the county level," said Kareus. "County committee members make decisions on how federal farm programs will be administered locally," she said.

County committee members are elected to office by their peers and serve as the representative voice for agriculture producers in the county, and they are responsible for communicating with USDA to ensure that national programs are adapted to fit local needs. County committees are responsible for making decisions on issues including commodity loans and payments, conservation programs, disaster assistance programs and emergency programs.

Kareus encourages minority and female producers to serve as county committee members in the future. It is important that the county committee is comprised of members who reflect the demographics of the local agriculture community.

Farmers and ranchers who participate in FSA programs are eligible to vote. If eligible voters do not receive a ballot by mail, one will be provided by the local USDA Service Center. Ballots returned by mail must be postmarked no later than Dec. 6. New county committee members will assume their role and related responsibilities on Jan. 1, 2011.

For more information on county committees, view the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov/elections or visit a local USDA Service Center.