

20

Spring/Summer

25

NAFEC NEWSLETTER

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FARMER ELECTED COMMITTEES





NAFEC President Statement

With winter now behind us and spring in the air, farmers and ranchers across the nation look forward to another season, where the fruits of our labor are evident in a successful harvest. However, with crop prices very low and drought areas impacting livestock forage, the need for FSA assistance is at a level we have not seen in many years. Having dedicated county office staff all across the nation working with our local committees has been a great strength to the agency and we expect when all of the uncertainty clears, FSA will retain a strong presence in rural America.

To all of our employees, I say thank you on behalf of NAFEC for the work you do for us daily. Please rest assured NAFEC has your back and will do all we can within our power to retain as many of our dedicated CO employees as possible. To all of our committee members, I would encourage you all to keep meeting regularly, (having regular meetings is an essential part of our mission) and keep encouraging your staff during these uncertain times.

Finally, NAFEC will be meeting in early June with Administrator Beam and his staff in Washington DC and in late June for our annual meeting in Whitefish, Montana. If you have issues, concerns or suggestions, please let one of the NAFEC officers or area directors know, so that these can be discussed. Within this newsletter you will find the following:

1. Summary update of our semi-annual meeting in Lubbock
2. New Farm Bill position paper mailed to the House and Senate Ag Committees in early February.
3. NAFEC Press Release issued (4/28/25) in Support of our Local Delivery System
4. Legislative update report from David Senter, NAFEC Legislative Consultant
5. News from the NASCOE COAC chair Brian Gould
6. COC/NAFEC board member spotlight
7. Introduction to our new Administrator Bill Beam
8. Benefit update from Dillard Financial Solutions, Inc.

Sincerely,

Jim Zumbrink
NAFEC President



The NAFEC Leadership met in Lubbock, Texas in conjunction with the American Agriculture Movement annual meeting in January. The executives held their organizational meeting to review the activities of 2024 and plan on how to proceed with issues that may arise in 2025. The full minutes of the meeting can be found on the NAFEC website at www.nafecfsa.com

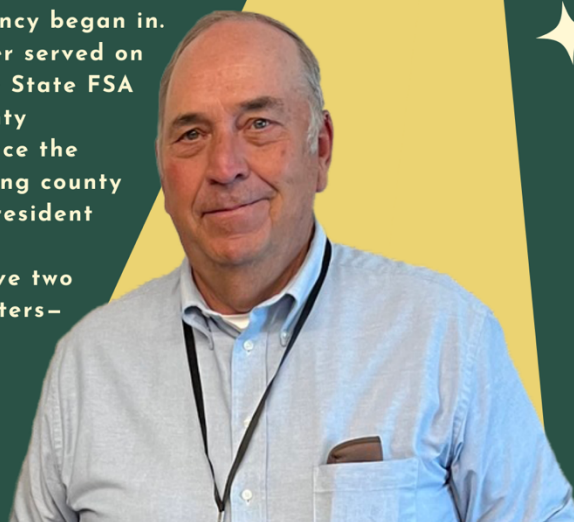


National Association of Farmer Elected Committees

The primary purpose of the National Association of Farmer Elected Committees is—and will always be—to promote and improve the farmer elected committee system for the local administration of farm programs. The coordinated effort will give us strength, and much more influence in Congress for the kind of farm programs America's farmers, ranchers and rural communities need in order to thrive.

Leadership Spotlight

Jim Zumbrink is a full-time farmer near North Star, Ohio, raising corn, wheat, soybeans, and contract turkeys for Cooper Farms. He has served on the Darke County Agricultural Society board since 1988, holding roles as president, vice president, and treasurer. Jim has also been a York Township Trustee since 1981. He is a lifetime member of the North Star American Legion and the Darke County Farmers Union, and belongs to St. Louis Catholic Church and the Knights of Columbus 4th Degree. Jim's involvement with the Farm Service Agency began in 1977 as a Community Committeeman. He later served on the County Committee, was appointed to the State FSA Committee in 2009, and re-elected as a county committeeman in 2021. A NAFEC member since the early 2000s, Jim values its role in representing county committees. He has served as NAFEC vice president and currently serves as president. Jim is supported by his wife, Diana. They have two children, Dawn and Scott, three granddaughters—Kennedy, Brooke, and Kelsey—and two great-granddaughters, Charlee and Stevee.



Dear Farmers and Ranchers,

We are proud to support NAFEC as the organization's benefit provider. Farmers and Ranchers are the backbone of America and here at Dillard Financial Solutions, we proudly support those individuals by supplying the most current information on your benefits.

Steve and Teresa Dillard founded Dillard Financial Solutions, Inc. in 1992, on the principle to assist a variety of individuals in understanding their benefits. For over 30 years, DFS has helped individuals, and their families make smarter retirement and insurance decisions. Our complimentary individual appointments and workshops focus on benefit education and shed light on how individuals can apply proven methods to achieve worry-free income growth and guaranteed retirement income for life.

Providing one-on-one, in-person, and Zoom/Teams meetings, for both individuals and groups alike, we would love to share our knowledge with you. If you would like to make an appointment, please contact us!

Thank you,

Steve & Teresa Dillard
Dillard Financial Solutions, Inc.



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Jim Zumbrink,
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Ohio



Jim Densberger,
Vice President
Nebraska



Craig Turner,
Executive VP
Texas



Bob Braden,
Secretary/Treasurer
Iowa

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Kevin Dale
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Tammy Eibey
NAFEC Assistant National
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National Association of Farmer Elected Committees

Representing Farm Service Agency County Committee Members since 1965

January 30, 2025

Dear Senate and House Agriculture Committee Members,

As the new Congress/Senate begins to consider our next Farm Bill, the National Association of Farmer Elected Committees (NAFEC), are excited to reach out to you regarding the new Farm Bill. We are excited because we represent the County FSA Committees, the only elected (by the people) local grassroots committees with oversight of the Federal government. As such, we believe this system has a great amount of potential for the future, not only within USDA and the Farm Service Agency, but also as a template for other government departments and agencies that could greatly benefit from having locally elected men and women, with some form of Federal oversight.

Since the 1930's, locally elected committees have had oversight of Federal Farm Programs. However, during the past few years there has been a steady push from within Washington DC to reduce the oversight and authority of local committees. We believe this pushes in the wrong direction. And as a group that has members from every facet of agriculture, representing every agriculture group or organization in the nation, we know that farmers and ranchers throughout the nation support this system. We also believe the taxpayers who fund farm programs are also highly favorable to a system that provides both Federal support, and local oversight of Federal dollars.

Over the past few years, the Administration of the Farm Service Agency (FSA) has bypassed the will of Congress by creating programs that allow FSA executives to review and approve applications, without County Committee oversight. As you consider the next Farm Bill, we urge you to include in Farm Bill language, provisions that require local County FSA Committees oversight responsibilities of every new and existing program of any type. We know that this will not occur without specific Farm Bill language that directs the bureaucrats within USDA to ensure these type regulations reflect the will of congress. In addition, the recent language in the previous House farm bill draft indicates a transfer of the administering agency for the Conservation Reserve program from FSA to the NRCS. This draft language if approved would amend current law Section 228 7 U.S.C.6936 section B 2 & 5 by striking subchapter B of chapter 1 of subtitle D of such title (16 U.S.C. 3831) et seq. If the NRCS is given authority to administer the CRP, funds to administer will come directly from the program funds allocated to producers. In contrast funds to administer CRP are currently an FSA budgetary line item that do not come from program funds. This would result in less program funds in the hands of CRP contract holders. As such, NAFEC believes that FSA should remain as the administering agency for the CRP program, while NRCS continue to be the technical agency when processing CRP applications and contracts.

Secondly, County Committee members currently have supervisory oversight of local FSA County Executive Directors. However, over the past few years this authority (that is in permanent law) has been slowly eroded by the FSA authorities who are allowing District Directors to take this authority from our local elected committee members. We know that this will continue, unless specific language in the Farm Bill is developed to ensure permanent law is followed.

Finally, over the past four years the Biden Administrations Equity Commission have made many unfounded accusations against local elected committees. The commission also has used these accusations to try and eliminate elected committees, in favor of appointed committees. As we previously indicated, we believe elected committees are the best system within government.



In addition, the administration has placed a low level of priority upon training elected committee members. To ensure committees are annually trained and funds are provided so that committees have regular monthly meetings, the FSA budget should contain a line item which requires annual face to face training of all newly elected committee members and provides funding for every committee in the nation to meet on a monthly basis. This is critical especially considering criticisms of the County Committee system in recent years.

Specifically, to accomplish these objectives we propose that farm bill language include the following:

1. All programs (both new and current) administered by the Farm Service Agency will require that every application submitted by an agriculture producer be reviewed and approved or disapproved (with appeal rights) by the locally elected County/Area FSA Committee. Delegations of authority to a County Executive Director be allowed only when routine decisions are needed to ensure timely program delivery.
2. The Farm Service Agency should continue as the administrative agency of the Conservation Reserve Program.
3. County FSA Committee Committees shall remain the sole supervisors of the FSA County Executive Directors to ensure accountability to local farmers and ranchers and taxpayers. This authority cannot be delegated to District Directors or other Federal employees.
4. A Farm Bill line item be established within the FSA budget to require annual face-to-face training be provided to all newly elected County Committee members. Furthermore, every committee in the nation shall be funded for up to one meeting per month, to ensure program integrity and oversight by local committees.

NAFEC appreciates the efforts you and your staff are putting forth to ensure we have a new Farm Bill. We stand ready and willing to assist or answer any questions you may.

Sincerely,

The Executive Committee of the
National Association of Farmer Elected Committees

Jim Zumbrink, President, Ohio
Craig Turner, Executive Vice President, Texas
Jim Densberger, Vice President, Nebraska
Bob Braden, Secretary/Treasurer, Iowa
Cole Sims, At Large Area Director, Louisiana
Coy Poitier, Southwest Area Director, Texas
Stuart Fitzgerald, Southeast Area Director, Florida
Dan Pillsbury, Northeast Area Director, Vermont
Dennis Kuhlengel, Midwest Area Director, Illinois
Dan Noteboom, Northwest Area Director, Washington

The County Committee System of FSA:
True Democracy at the grassroots level in the People's Department



The National Association of Farmer Elected Committees

Contact:

Jim Zumbrink, President
Jimzumbrink@gmail.com
937-423-8507

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: A Case for the Continued Local Delivery System of Farm Programs From the National Association of Farmer Elected Committees (NAFEC)

As many cuts are being proposed in various places across government, the National Farmer Elected Committee Association, (NAFEC) announces their support for the local elected committee system that oversees our nation's farm programs administered by the USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the employees working in local offices that directly administer those programs to the farmers and ranchers in rural America. With agriculture commodity prices at extremely low levels and input costs at record high levels and natural disasters affecting farm areas, the ability to provide local delivery of farm program funding is critically important. This system is made up of offices in rural communities, with locally elected farmers and ranchers serving on county committees with program oversight, rather than the Washington DC or state bureaucracy overseeing these programs, has been the key to quick and efficient delivery of farm programs for over 80 years. Providing taxpayer accountability for farm program funding is the hallmark of this locally elected system of on the ground, face to face, service. Rural communities all across America, including: local banks, local schools, local cooperatives and business, as well as farmers and ranchers themselves and their families, continue to benefit from this system that has helped make American Agriculture #1 in the world. We urge farmers and ranchers, rural businesses, and agriculture partners all across the nation to join us in ensuring our local offices and staff in rural communities all across the nation are maintained, and critical federal funds to support our food supply continue to be delivered through the USDA/FSA County Elected Committee system and its county office employees!

The National Association of Farmer Elected Committees is a non-profit organization composed of and led by farmers, nominated and elected by farmers, and serving all farmers in each of their county USDA Farm Service Agency offices. To learn more about NAFEC or to join please go to <http://www.nafecfsa.com>

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NAFEC Legislative Consultant – David Senter

First item-Secretary Rollins has made many of the appointments for FSA State Executive Directors and many for Rural Development. This is great news so now FSA State Committees will begin to be appointed because they are the direct supervisor of local Elected County Committees and the State Offices can function again. The reduction in staffing at all levels of FSA is a big concern because another round of downsizing is on the way. Secretary Rollins says the plan should be ready this month and NAFEC will be watching to see how it impacts FSA local offices.

With a hiring freeze in place, it is impossible to fill vacancies. NAFEC is working hard to protect FSA local county offices so producers can get the assistance they need to sign up and receive benefits of our farm programs. County Elected Committees are the backbone of FSA so you can keep local control.



On the Farm Bill front, Chairman Thompson of the House Agriculture Committee has said that Republicans are working to add as many titles of the Farm Bill they passed last year into the new Reconciliation Bill. They believe that the Commodity Title and Crop Insurance can be added and possibly a few other programs. Chairman Thompson also says he wants to pass the rest of the Farm Bill and merge both bills for a new Farm Bill before the end of the year. That's going to be a heavy lift because the House Agriculture Committee has to come up with \$230 Billion in cuts over 10 years and the only place to get the cuts are from nutrition programs. If those cuts are made, it would end the food/farm coalition that has provided the votes to pass recent Farm Bill's. That's not even addressing the differences between the House and Senate which have to be worked out to get a new Farm Bill.

There's no word yet on when the \$21 Billion in disaster funding will be released, which is desperately needed by the producers that have suffered from natural disaster losses and Secretary Rollins said it will be closer to harvest before a decision is made on additional payments needed to off-set the impacts of the Tariff's.

NAFEC is the Association that represents you as County Elected Committees. If your COC has a problem or wants to ask advice on an issue, please feel free to contact us. One important item for COC's, get everything in writing so you can enter it into your minutes of the next meeting. Being told to take action over the phone, you don't have a paper trail. COC's hire the CED's and supervise them and COC's do the annual evaluation of the CED's work in consultation with your District Director. The Chairman should sign the evaluation and keep a copy in the office. If the District Director disagrees, they can discuss it with the COC, but they cannot change what is signed by the Chair of the COC.

David Senter
NAFEC Consultant

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Accokeek MD 20607

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Farm Service Agency

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Bill Beam Appointed as Administrator for the Farm Service Agency



William "Bill" Beam was sworn in as the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator on March 24, 2025. In this role, Beam provides leadership for USDA, the Farm Production and Conservation Mission area, FSA and the collective mission to support agricultural production across America through a nationwide network of county and state offices.

Through Beam's guidance and oversight, FSA administers policies and procedures that ensure the efficient and effective delivery of federal farm programs outlined in the farm bill including programs that help America's farmers, ranchers and private lands foresters manage market risks, recover from natural disasters, protect natural resources, and access credit and capital.

Beam previously served as the USDA FSA Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs from 2018 to 2021. He has also been active in the agriculture industry as an appointed member of the United Soybean Board; a role for which Beam traveled internationally promoting U.S. soybeans and export markets. He also served on the United States Soybean Export Council and held leadership positions with the Pennsylvania Soybean Board.

Prior to his appointment as FSA Administrator, Beam was the president and owner/operator of Beam Farms, Inc., a fourth-generation row crop, specialty crop and hay operation in Elverson, Pennsylvania. Beam's son Matt now operates Beam Farms, Inc. where he raises corn, soybeans, wheat, hay, and cattle and oversees the sawdust/wood shavings business. Beam's sons, Shawn and Dylan also work in the agriculture industry.



[William "Bill" Beam | Farm Service Agency \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/fsa)

Top 5 Reasons To Join NAFEC

- 1. AN ADVOCATE FOR AMERICAN AGRICULTURE**
A voice in Washington, D.C. working with commodity groups, associations, and cooperatives in providing a united voice to promote American Agriculture & Ranching.
- 2. FIGHTING FOR THE COC SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT**
The only voice for Farmers & Ranchers fighting to keep the Farmer/Rancher Elected Committee System in place.
- 3. EMPLOYING A LEGISLATIVE CONSULTANT**
The only group representing FSA Committee's employing a Legislative Consultant, working in Washington D.C. for the benefit of all Committees across the country.
- 4. A DOOR TO WASHINGTON DC & STATE OFFICES**
The only group who has the ability to speak on behalf of local committee regarding special issues and concerns. NAFEC officers have regular discussion with FSA officials in Washington D.C. and at the state FSA level.
- 5. A PARTNER WITH NASCOE**
The only group consistently standing beside NASCOE, advocating for additional COF staffing and COF employee benefits.

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County Office Advocacy Committee



MISSION:

To protect, enhance, and provide continual education for the farmer-elected committee and county office system for the betterment of NASCOE's membership, county office FSA employees, and the agricultural communities we serve while working independently, but cooperatively, with the National Association of Farmer-Elected Committees (NAFEC).

County Committees provide local input on the administration of FSA farm programs, including commodity price support loans and payments, conservation programs, disaster payments, and emergency programs. Committee members are a critical component of the day-to-day operations of FSA, upholding integrity, and accountability to FSA Farm Programs.

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NAFEC
Today!



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NAFEC for only
\$50/year!

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2024/2025

NAFEC MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(For New or Renewing Members)

Member Information

Name _____

Spouse Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____

City _____

Mobile Phone _____

State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Employer _____

FSA County Office _____

Member Signature _____

Date MM / DD / YYYYSelect Your Membership Type: ☒ New Membership OR ☒ Renewal MembershipCounty Committee Member ☒

CIRCLE ONE PAYMENT OPTION ONLY

Pay in Full Now

\$50

ANNUALLY

OR

Deduct from Payroll

\$6

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\$250.00**LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP**Associate Member ☒

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Pay in Full Now

\$20

ANNUALLY

OR

Deduct from Payroll

\$1

PER PAY PERIOD

FOR PAYMENTS IN FULL OR 444 FORMSMail your check and completed
NAFEC Membership

Application to:

NAFEC**c/o Tammy Eibey****1597 220 Street****Manchester, IA 52057**

Membership begins after completed application and dues are recieved and processed.

For questions concerning this application, email Tammy Eibey.

tammyeibey@gmail.com

This form is available electronically.

FSA-444

(06-21-12)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency

**REQUEST FOR OR TERMINATION OF VOLUNTARY ALLOTMENT OF PAY
FOR USDA FSA RECOGNIZED ASSOCIATIONS**

NOTE: The following statement is made in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a - as amended). The authority for requesting the information identified on this form is 5 USC § 5525 - Allotment and Assignment of Pay. The information will be used to process an employee request to begin or terminate a voluntary allotment of pay. The information collected on this form may be disclosed to other Federal, State, Local government agencies, Tribal agencies, and nongovernmental entities that have been authorized access to the information by statute or regulation and/or as described in applicable Routine Uses identified in the System of Records Notice for GOVT-1, General Personnel Records, USDA/FSA-6, County Personnel Records, and USDA/FSA-7, Employee Resources Master File. Providing the requested information is voluntary. However, failure to furnish the requested information will result in an inability to process an employee request to begin or terminate a voluntary allotment of pay.

The collection of information is completed by current Federal employees and is therefore excluded from the Paperwork Reduction Act Requirement as specified in the 5 CFR 1320.3, and OMB approval is not required for this collection of information.

The provisions of appropriate criminal and civil fraud, privacy, and other statutes may be applicable to the information provided.

1. Name of Employee (Last, First, Middle)	2. Last 4 Digits of SSN
3. Home Address of Employee (Including Zip Code)	4. Name of USDA Agency (Including Division/Branch) USDA/FSA
	5. State/County of Employment

6. Association (Check One):

☐ NASCOE ☒ NAFEC ☐ NASE ☐ NACS ☐ Other: _____

7. **Type of Allotment (Check one)** **Note:** A separate FSA-444 **must** be filled out for each type of allotment:

☒

ASSOCIATION DUES

I hereby authorize the Farm Service Agency (FSA) all of the following:

- to deduct from my pay on a biweekly basis the amount certified as the regular dues of the Association or state affiliate beginning PP ____ of CY _____. Associate Membership____\$1.00/PP COC Membership____\$6.00/PP
- to make **any changes** in the amount which is certified by the Association or the state affiliate as an uniform change in its dues structure.
- to remit the dues withheld to the Association in accordance with its arrangements with FSA.

☐

SUPPLEMENTAL INSURANCE COVERAGE

State: _____ Association: _____

I hereby authorize the Farm Service Agency (FSA) all of the following:

- to deduct from my pay on a biweekly basis the amount certified by me as the premium for insurance elected by me through the NASCOE authorized carrier beginning PP ____ of CY ____.
- premiums withheld will be remitted to the NASCOE carrier in accordance with the agreement between NASCOE and FSA. I understand that if my pay is insufficient to withhold the premium due, I am responsible for paying such premiums directly to the NASCOE carrier if I want to continue my insurance coverage.

*I understand this authorization must be filed with the State FSA Office at least **3 days** before the end of the pay period in which the first deduction will be made. I further understand this authorization will be terminated at any time I give written notice or in case of my separation for any reason. In either case, such termination will be effective only to prohibit further withholdings.*

8. Signature of Employee Requesting Allotment	9. Date (MM-DD-YYYY)
---	----------------------

10. **Termination of Allotment (Check One):**

State: _____ Association: _____

I request payroll deduction for the following allotment be terminated on the first day of Pay Period ____ of CY ____.

☐ NASCOE Dues ☐ Supplemental Insurance Coverage ☐ NAFEC Dues
☐ NASE Dues ☐ NACS Dues ☐ Other: _____

11. Signature of Employee Terminating Allotment	12. Date (MM-DD-YYYY)
---	-----------------------

13. **State Office Action (Check NFC tables to determine current PP dues, or supplemental amount):**

A. Date Received (MM-DD-YYYY)	B. Effective Date (MM-DD-YYYY)	C. Date Updated (MM-DD-YYYY)
D. Name of Employee Updating Request		E. Signature of Employee Updating Request

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NAFEC Mission Statement

The primary purpose of the National Association of Farmer Elected Committees is—and will always be—to promote and improve the farmer elected committee system for the local administration of farm programs. The coordinated effort will give us strength, and much more influence in Congress for the kind of farm programs America's farmers, ranchers and rural communities need in order to thrive.

A voice in Washington, D.C. working with commodity groups, associations, and cooperatives in providing a united voice to promote American Agriculture & Ranching.

VISIT WWW.NAFECFSA.COM FOR MORE INFORMATION

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