



News from The National Association of Farmer Elected Committees

Craig Turner, President

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From the President's Desk

May 2016

Spring has arrived, and so have the many challenges that go with spring planting and the weather. For most commodities, our market prices are a big concern by almost everyone. In recent visits with FSA leaders in WDC, NAFEC leaders voiced those concerns. We were even able to get a last minute visit with James Radintz, FSA's Deputy Administrator of Farm Loan Programs just so we could pass along some of NAFEC's concerns and give a perspective from thoughts around the country with regard to ag financing and credit. We appreciate Jim for taking the time to visit on short notice, and letting us know about some of the challenges FSA faces as well.

I am excited about our upcoming meeting in Cedar Rapids, Iowa in August. If you have not made a decision to attend, I encourage you to come join NAFEC so we can get input from your perspective as a County Committee Member or Advisor. During our meetings, we will be meeting with Washington, DC officials to discuss issues of importance to COC members. Further down in this newsletter, you'll see more registration information. We also understand that Iowa COC members may receive an invitation and travel authorization to Cedar Rapids sometime that week, so I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible and hope you will make plans to join us for the NASCOE tours and NAFEC meetings. One of the other items to decide on will be the additional membership options of lifetime and multi-year memberships. Information about this was posted in the October newsletter which is posted at NAFEC's website; <http://181.224.137.65/~jminsure/fsacountycommittees.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/October-2015-NAFEC-Newsletter.pdf>

As National President, it is very encouraging to continue to see growth with so many new members of NAFEC and I encourage everyone to share this newsletter far and wide.

In order to accomplish our efforts, you certainly know others that would be interested in joining NAFEC to support and protect the County Committee system. So please, direct them to www.fsacountycommittees.org to join and see the many benefits of NAFEC membership or simply mail the *membership form* to:

NAFEC

PO Box 10190

Kansas City, MO 64171

<http://fsacountycommittees.org/>

Thanks you for your continued support of NAFEC,
Craig Turner, President

NAFEC Leadership Visits with FSA Management and USDA Leadership in WDC



NAFEC & FSA Administrators Visit:
Seated L to R;
2nd VP - Dennis Kuhlengel, IL
FSA Administrator – Val Dolcini
Administrator’s Chief Assistant – Lesly McNitt
Standing L to R;
Chris Beyerhelm – Assoc. Administrator
Craig Turner, NAFEC President, TX
Tom Montgomery, 1st VP NAFEC, MT
Tony DeGiusti, NAFEC SWA Director, OK

NAFEC leaders had face to face meetings with FSA Management on Monday morning, March 28, 2016. Below are topics, issues, and responses. The first meeting took place with the FSA’s Deputy Administrator for Field Operations – Greg Diephouse, and some of his staff members. The meeting lasted one hour.

- 1) 2016 Budget & State Allocations. States have now received their 2016 allocations.
- 2) The Arkansas SED/STC removing the COC's authority & supervisory responsibilities in approving travel and credit time earned for all CED's in the state. Then the state issued a follow-up memo informing COC's they could request to be given back the authority with justification. NAFEC expressed great concern because never before has a State Committee acted to remove COC authority from every COC in a state, without cause. NAFEC informed Mr. Diephouse that NAFEC would be watching this very closely and that if a COC was denied the authority, NAFEC would immediately be involved and that it is NAFEC's position that the COC's should not be in a position of asking or requesting authority be returned for a matter that is expressly theirs by law and where COC's did not vote to Delegate the authority to DD's. The State Committee should rescind their Delegation action for all COC's in Arkansas.
- 3) Face to face meetings were again being held to one meeting per quarter due to budget allocations still pending. DAFO indicated this should be resolved now that allocations have been released. DAFO did not caution states on any reduced budget concerns prior releasing state allocations, but that this was an individual states budgetary decision.
- 4) COC Orientation Training – NAFEC and DAFO have visited about this several times in the past year. It appears that states are still doing about what they were doing in the past. A few are using allocated funds received to hold either overnight training or district-wide training, but most states leave it up to the DD and CED to make sure the training is completed with little to no follow-up on what was actually covered or the number of modules reviewed. NAFEC is requesting nationwide consistency. DAFO should provide nationwide expectations. If DAFO is allocating funds to states for the purpose of COC training, but the state chooses not to use it for that purpose, then most of those COC's in that state miss some very critical and important training – meaning some states have had very little, if any, COC Orientation Training in the past 6 years. FSA has many new CED's on board in the past few years and many of them do not know some of the most important basics of the COC system and/or fail to see the need to pass along the

training to their own COC members, especially when the state does not prioritize this training and treats it as "optional".

5) The Orientation Training Manual went through a much needed update 6 years ago, but there is still some concerns on accuracy. Please consider creating a Task Force that includes a NAFEC member to look at editing/correcting any discrepancies in the COC Orientation Training manual. Mr. Diephouse agreed.

NAFEC met for another hour with several staff members from the Deputy Administrator of Farm Programs division, including Assistant DAFP Bradley Karmen.

1) ACRSI – NAFEC wanted to know where FSA is at on this project, the progress, and how they see this will ultimately play out. NAFEC also requested adding NAFEC members to future ACRSI task forces and forums.

2) CRP – NAFEC wanted to know about some of the procedural changes coming and how might the County Committee's role change. In the CRP handbook amendment process, NAFEC recommends that this amendment would be an excellent opportunity to also return the language that was removed in amendment 1 of the current revision pertaining to CRP-1 contract approvals by the CED without need for redelegation authority from the COC. Management stated that the delegation authority was removed due to the need by the Secretary to have a quick report of all approved contracts, and where there are some COC's who will not redelegate CRP-1 approval to the CED, and also, at the time the language was changed, there was budgetary issues that reduced COC meetings, they needed to have quick action on all contracts. Now that COC's are able to meet regularly again, they will consider putting the language back in procedure for CRP-1 contracts to be approved by COC and/or delegated to the CED.

NAFEC Leaders standing outside the Secretary of Agriculture's Office before meeting with USDA's Acting Deputy Secretary - Michael Scuse

L to R ; Dennis Kuhlengel, Tony DeGiusti, Craig Turner, and Tom Montgomery



NAFEC leaders were then able to meet for 30 minutes with FSA Administrator Val Dolcini, Associate Administrator Chris Beyerhelm, and Mr. Dolcini's Chief Assistant - Lesly Weber-McNitt

1) "Welcome to the County Committee" video - Thank you for accepting the suggestion of NAFEC and the work that went into producing the video. We have heard many compliments. NAFEC also recognized and thanked Lesly McNitt, Chief of Staff to Mr Dolcini who was very helpful in the making of the video.

2) County Committee members e-mail addresses - suggestion to create a separate e-mail address (for those that have one) in the HR database for every COC member and advisor that could be used by FSA management at the national and state levels to improve communications. There are a number of COC specific issues that come up, such

as nominations and elections or training. There could be certain program announcements that FSA Management may want to make sure every COC member and advisor receives. Something from your level going directly to a COC

member every now and then would have a positive impact, just as the occasional messages you or the Secretary send directly to all COF staff - after all, the COC members are an integral and important member of the FSA family and team, and sending a message or significant announcement occasionally, we believe, would foster their understanding of the important role they have. Mr. Dolcini agreed.

On Monday afternoon, NAFEC met briefly with Larry Mitchell, Administrator for USDA's GIPSA (Grain Inspection, Packers, & Stockyards Administration). Mr. Mitchell has a wealth of agricultural policy knowledge and information.

Also on Monday afternoon, NAFEC had a courtesy visit with USDA's Acting Deputy Secretary Michael Scuse in a meeting room a few feet away from the Secretary of Agriculture's office. Mr. Scuse is from Delaware, and was first elected to his ASCS Community Committee in 1977, and then he was elected to the County Committee in 1979. Later, he was appointed to the Delaware State Committee. Mr. Scuse is keenly aware and highly complementary of FSA's County Committee system. NAFEC wanted to thank him and the rest of USDA leadership for the smooth roll out of the Farm Bill. Mr. Scuse pointed out that most of the procedural issues and deadlines were made in the very room we were meeting in. Mr. Scuse was also able to address the All FSA Associations Joint Meeting and Town Hall on Wednesday and made it very clear that the County Committee system is the model system in all of government – that it doesn't get any more grassroots than the County Committees system, and that he appreciated all that NAFEC has done to play a part in helping address minority representation concerns on county committees across the nation.



NAFEC's Meeting with USDA's Acting Deputy Secretary Scuse

From L to R; Greg Diephouse - FSA's DAFO, Tony DeGiusti, Dennis Kuhlengel, Tom Montgomery, Michael Scuse, Craig Turner, and Lanon Baccam - Deputy Under Secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services

NAFEC is very appreciative of FSA Management's invitation to join with the other FSA Associations to discuss important issues which helps foster open communication so that NAFEC can help fulfill its mission and goals.

NAFEC is also very thankful for NASCOE's support and close partnership in addressing NAFEC membership growth, and for the opportunities to work together to voice our concerns and ideas to FSA management teams at the national and state levels.

David Senter of KSC Strategies serves as NAFEC's Washington DC's consultant. NAFEC is fortunate to have David's experience, guidance, and knowledge with numerous issues and contacts. We appreciate his counsel and insight as we made the visits. Thank you David!



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FARMER ELECTED COMMITTEES

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May 4, 2016

Mr. Theodore Eldridge, Arkansas FSA State Committee Chairman

The National Association of Farmer Elected Committees is an organization that represents COC members nationwide. NAFEC believes that local control through our elected committees is a very important part of the success of our FSA offices and the timely and efficient delivery of our programs.

NAFEC appreciates the hard work and dedication of your Arkansas State Committee as well as State Committees across the country. NAFEC is aware of the action taken by the Arkansas STC February 8, 2016 which delegated the review/approval/disapproval of County Executive Director's work schedules, leave, credit hours, travel authorizations to the District Directors.

NAFEC has never found a situation in any state where such action was taken for all COC's in a state. In addition, there was no cause listed for the action taken. Since none of the COC's involved voted to delegate the authority to their DD's, COC's are asking why they have to act to ask for the authority back when the State Committee was the committee that acted. NAFEC asks that the Arkansas State Committee consider rescinding the letter dated February 8, 2016 and restoring the authority back to local county committees.

If you have any questions, I would be happy to discuss them with you.

Sincerely,

Craig Turner, NAFEC National President
806-269-0610

Cc: Greg Diephouse, DAFO

Serving Agriculture Since 1965

NAFEC and JM Marketing to Award \$1,000 Scholarship

NAFEC and JM Marketing are pleased to announce they are teaming up in 2016 to co-sponsor a \$1,000 scholarship award. Many times, we hear of our youth being referred to as “our future” or “leaders of tomorrow” when in reality, thousands of them in communities and towns all across our nation have been leaders, in their own right, for quite some time. We think they should be recognized.

If you are a current or past COC member and paying full dues as a regular member of NAFEC and have a child, grandchild, or great grandchild that has graduated from high school and is enrolled, or in the process of enrolling into an accredited college, university, or trade school this fall, then they are an eligible applicant and you are encouraged to tell them about this opportunity.

The application will consist of a single cover page and a one page essay. Both pages are to be designed, created, and edited entirely by the applicant. The cover page must have the following details:

- Full name, mailing address, e-mail address, home phone number, and birth date of the applicant
- NAFEC Member name, the State & County they serve(d) as a COC member, and relationship to the applicant
- Name of college, university, or trade school attending or enrolled to attend
- The field of study or degree plan applicant plans to pursue
- A listing of the applicant’s involvement in service commitments to their community, civic, church, and youth leadership development organizations such as 4-H, FFA, Scouts, etc.

The last item on the cover page is a signature and date to a certification that states; “I have personally prepared this cover page and the essay, and I certify that it is accurate.”

Because this is a competitive scholarship award, the essay will help the judges understand how the applicant views their experiences, personal growth, outcomes, and achievements associated with the various community, civic, church, and youth organizations. The essay must be limited to one page, single or double spaced, and typed in 12 pitch.

The NAFEC & JM Marketing Scholarship application deadline is July 9, 2016. Applications received after this date will not be considered. Mail applications (cover page and one page essay) to:

Billy Denison
1117 Ridgeview Trail
Livingston, MT 59047

All eligible applications will then be forwarded to three judges that will consist of a NAFEC Officer, a NASCOE/NAFEC Committee Member, and a JM Marketing Representative. Each judge will rank all the applications with one (1) being the highest ranked, two (2) the second highest ranked, and so forth through all applications. The application that receives the lowest cumulative ranking from the three judges will be awarded the \$1,000 scholarship. If the ranking and tabulation results in two or more applications with the same lowest cumulative ranking, the NAFEC President or VP will break the tie. Because the deadline of July 9th is quickly approaching, you are encouraged to pass this information on to an eligible applicant today so that they can get started putting their information and thoughts down.

NAFEC and JM Marketing looks forward to announcing the winner in Cedar Rapids, IA at NAFEC’s 2016 Annual Meeting to be held at the DoubleTree by Hilton, August 2-6th.

Join NAFEC for their Annual Meeting in Cedar Rapids, Iowa

In conjunction with NASCOE's 57th Annual Convention, NAFEC will be meeting in Cedar Rapids, IA August 3 - 6, 2016 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Cedar Rapids Convention Complex, 350 First Avenue NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52401. FSA Administrator Val Dolcini and several other agency leaders will be attending. This year, the Iowa Association of FSA County Office Employees is the hosting state.

A block of rooms has been reserved with an online code; NSC - When calling for a reservation (319)731-4444 or (855)610-8733, state that you want the block under the "National Association of FSA County Office Employees". Room Rates are \$119/night.

The DoubleTree by Hilton is a beautiful, modern hotel and convention center in downtown Cedar Rapids. It is within easy walking distance of dozens of shops, restaurants, and pubs. The room rates are set at \$89 per night plus taxes, and there is a parking lot, for a daily fee, directly across the street from the hotel. For those flying in, IASCOE members will be running shuttles – please read the instructions printed at the bottom of the Convention Registration form.

AG TOURS - There are three great agriculture related tours planned for Wednesday, August 3, 2016.

- 1 - The Dyersville Area Tour: National Farm Toy Museum, Field of Dreams Movie Site, Basilica of St. Francis Xavier, FarmTek Campus Greenhouse Tour, Lunch at Country Junction
- 2 - John Deere, Engine Works and Museum Tour (must be at least 13 years old) – we understand that a portion of the JD Factory Tour will not be available for the tour due to a scheduled plant re-organization.
- 3 - Amana Farms Tour/Kinze Manufacturing

Each tour will have noon meals included. The Iowa delegation has planned and coordinated these 3 great tours. What a perfect day to learn more about Iowa agriculture/industry, and to visit with old friends and make new ones.

PLEASE CALL AND MAKE YOUR HOTEL RESERVATIONS TODAY!!! Then click on this link for the convention registration form;

<https://nascoe.org/convention-information/>

A copy of this registration form is also available on the next 2 pages of this newsletter.

More details and agenda's will be posted and sent as convention time gets closer. NAFEC looks forward to our annual meeting and encourages your attendance and participation!



Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture

Secretary Vilsack is also the former Governor of Iowa

Photo at left was taken in the Jefferson Auditorium in USDA's South Building in Washington DC as he addressed the leaders of FSA's Joint Association meetings on Wednesday morning, March 30, 2016



57th NASCOE CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM

August 3-6, 2016

Double Tree Hilton, Cedar Rapids, IA Telephone: 319-731-4444

<http://doubletree3.hilton.com/en/hotels/iowa/doubletree-by-hilton-hotel-cedar-rapids-convention-complex-CIDCCDT/index.html>

Name: _____ Guest _____

Circle One: Delegate Member RASCOE NAFEC Honorary Member District Director

Address: _____

e-mail: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Please choose ALL EVENTS that you plan to attend—even if it is FREE!

Honorary Life Members and guest under 13 years of age may attend the Convention free as our guest. Your registration is essential so that we can be prepared for the correct number of attendees to each event.

DATES/TIMES	EVENT	COST PER PERSON	# ATTENDING	TOTAL \$ DUE
POSTMARKED BY JUNE 15, 2016	REGISTRATION	\$45		
POSTMARKED FROM JUNE 16 – JULY 15	REGISTRATION	\$55		
POSTMARKED AFTER JULY 15	REGISTRATION	\$65		
WEDNESDAY, August 3 8:00 – 4:00	The Dyersville Area Tour: National Farm Toy Museum, Field of Dreams Movie Site, Basilica of St. Francis Xavier, FarmTek Campus Greenhouse Tour, Lunch at Country Junction	\$45 adults \$25 kids		
WEDNESDAY, August 3 8:00 – 4:00	John Deere, Engine Works and Museum Tour (must be at least 13 years old)	\$45		
WEDNESDAY, August 3 8:00 – 4:00	Amana Farms Tour/Kinze Manufacturing	\$45		
WEDNESDAY, August 3 8:00- 4:00	GOLF TOURNAMENT-fee includes outing, cart, lunch and a beverage	\$50		
WEDNESDAY, August 3 7:00 p.m.	Take Me Out to the Ballpark (dress in your favorite team colors) Lite Dinner/DJ	Free		
THURSDAY, August 4	Down on the Farm Night Scholarship Auction with a Magician (adults only) and DJ to follow	Free		
FRIDAY, August 5	RASCOE LUNCHEON	\$30		
FRIDAY, August 5	Bloomsbury Farm Iowa Night in the Corn, meal, games, and an acoustic set with Iowa Native and Nashville Recording Artist, Jason Brown. (family event)	2016 NASCOE Convention T-shirt (order below); OR \$20 for adults; \$10 kids under 12		
SATURDAY, August 6 6:00 pm – 7:00 PM	SOCIAL HOUR	CASH BAR		
SATURDAY, August 6 7:00 – 9:00 PM 9:00 – MIDNIGHT	NASCOE Banquet and Awards Dueling Pianos	\$45		

YOUTH ACTIVITIES: Must submit Parental Consent Form for any and all Youth Activities.
 (Form available at www.nascoe.org or at Convention Registration Desk.)

Youth Name(s): _____ **Ages:** _____

YOUTH ACTIVITY DATE/TIME	YOUTH ACTIVITY	COST PER PERSON	# ATTENDING	TOTAL \$ DUE
WEDNESDAY Aug 3 6:00 pm	Movies/Games/Swimming	FREE		
THURSDAY, AUG 4 (8:15 am – 4:30 pm)	(AM)Sky Zone Trampoline Park (PM) Old MacDonald’s Farm Petting Zoo	\$25 (lunch included)		
THURSDAY, AUG 4 (6:00 pm – 11:30 pm)	American Ninja Warrior Games (onsite, snacks included)	Free		
FRIDAY, AUG. 5 (8:15 am – 4:00 pm)	(AM) Onsite activity. (PM) Splash Pad/Water Balloon Olympics (offsite)	\$15 (lunch included)		
FRIDAY, AUG. 5 (evening)	Iowa Night – Bloomsbury Farm	See adult activities		
SATURDAY, AUG 6 (8:15 am – 12:00 pm)	Iowa Children’s Museum (ages 2 -12)	\$15 (lunch included)		
SATURDAY, AUG 6 (5:00 pm – 12:00 am)	Minute to Win It Olympics & Movie Night (onsite)	Free (dinner and snacks included)		

PURCHASE YOUR 2016 NATIONAL CONVENTION T-SHIRT (*this will get you into the Iowa Night on Friday*)

Adult \$20 Quantity _____ Size _____ Quantity _____ Size _____ \$ _____
 Kids \$10 Quantity _____ Size _____ Quantity _____ Size _____ \$ _____

PURCHASE YOUR 2016 NATIONAL CONVENTION DISC OF PICTURES @ \$20 \$ _____

Convenience fee for Pay Pal.... \$5.00 (contact Joni Birkhofer for Pay Pal information) \$ _____

2016 NASCOE NATIONAL CONVENTION REGISTRATION TOTAL
 \$ _____

**RETURN YOUR COMPLETED REGISTRATION FORM AND CHECK PAYABLE TO:
 IASCOE and send to Joni Birkhofer, 1588 River St, Moscow, IA 52760**

INFORMATION NEEDED FOR THOSE ATTENDEES ARRIVING AT THE CEDAR RAPIDS AIRPORT:

ARRIVAL DATE AND TIME: _____

AIRLINE/FLIGHT NUMBER: _____

NUMBER IN PARTY: _____

DEPARTURE DATE AND TIME: _____

QUESTIONS: Joni Birkhofer 563-506-2340

*If flight information is not available at the time of registration,
 Please contact Joni Birkhofer when that information is determine*