

Logo: USDA

Farm Service Agency
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

National Farmers Union and USDA Announce Agreement to Strengthen Farm Service Agency County-Level Operations

News Release | September 10, 2024

[View PDF](#)

1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20250
FPAC.BC.Press@usda.gov

WASHINGTON, Sept. 9, 2024 – National Farmers Union (NFU) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to address staffing levels and improve customer service at USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) county-level offices.

Under this MOU, NFU and USDA will work together to gather feedback on the experiences of family farmers and ranchers when interacting with FSA staff and the programs they deliver. By hosting listening sessions in local communities, NFU will provide a platform for farmers to share their concerns and ideas for improvement. USDA will use this feedback to inform ongoing investments in customer service and program delivery.

FSA county offices are a critical resource for family farmers and ranchers participating in farm safety net, disaster recovery assistance and conservation programs and seeking direct and guaranteed financing for their operations. Demand for FSA program assistance remains high and continues to grow making it more difficult for existing staff to manage the increasing workload and related customer service needs of American agriculture.

“In 3 ½ years of traveling the country, I’ve not heard a single producer say that fewer county staff are part of any solution. As an agency, our employees are our greatest resource and the agricultural producers we serve are our top priority; they deserve the best work or customer experience we can provide,” said FSA Administrator Zach Ducheneaux. “I’m extremely pleased to enter into this MOU with NFU. Our hope is that the information gathered through this MOU can be used to guide better investment in the capacity of our local offices. Leveraging this partnership and the outcomes derived from NFU’s access to local input will greatly benefit FSA employees and the farmers and ranchers we serve — it’s a win-win.”

NFU has long advocated for policies that enhance the quality of life for farm families and their communities.

“Family farmers and ranchers need access to reliable, efficient services at the county level,” said Rob Larew, NFU President. “This MOU solidifies our commitment to work closely with USDA to gather input from those who depend on FSA’s farm and loan programs to help improve the systems that support them. We appreciate Administrator Ducheneaux’s leadership on this important issue.”

Through NFU’s annual grassroots policy process, Farmers Union members passed a [resolution](#) highlighting a critical need to partner with USDA in addressing gaps in staffing and service delivery. This MOU represents NFU and USDA’s commitment to collaborate on practical solutions to these challenges, ensuring that FSA offices deliver efficient and effective programs for family farmers and ranchers.

The signed MOU may be read [here](#).

More Information

FSA helps America’s farmers, ranchers and forest landowners invest in, improve, protect and expand their agricultural operations through the delivery of agricultural programs for all Americans. FSA implements agricultural policy, administers credit and loan programs, and manages conservation, commodity, disaster recovery and marketing programs through a national network of state and county offices and locally elected county committees. For more information, visit fsa.usda.gov.

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the Biden-Harris administration, USDA is transforming America’s food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit usda.gov.

Farm Service Agency:

1400 Independence Ave.

SW Washington, DC 20250

Contact:

FPAC Press Desk

FPAC.BC.Press@usda.gov