



IASCOE Newsletter





2018/2019 IASCOE OFFICERS

President
Jesse Wegner
 CED - Fayette County



Vice-President
Angie Christian
 CED - Kossuth County



Secretary
Wendi Denham
 CED - Mahaska County



Treasurer
Judy Dameron
 PT - Louisa County



IASCOE DISTRICTS



2018/2019 IASCOE DIRECTORS



District	P.T. Director	C.E.D Director
1	Brittney Mitchell - Dickinson Alt - Teresa Van Sloten - Sioux	Paul Berte - Pocahontas Alt- Samantha Erie - O'Brien
2	Amie Johansen - Floyd Alt - Michelle Uthe - Mitchell	Angie Christian - Kossuth Alt - Rosalie Carlson - Worth
3	Candace Fette- Clayton Alt - BreAnn Hemesath - Winneshiek	Jesse Wegner - Fayette Alt - Andrea Carroll - Winneshiek
4	Cathleen "Skip" Simons - Carroll Alt - Donita Kenkel - Shelby	Steve Luke - Shelby Alt - Pat Warmbier - Harrison
5	Gabriela Thompson - Jasper Alt - Jane McCulley - Poweshiek	Brandon Jazz - Dallas/Polk Alt - Savannah Jungman - Poweshiek
6	Angie Reynolds - Muscatine Alt - Jessica Yuska - Scott	Matt Berg - Johnson Alt - Jennifer Ness - Iowa
7	Jennifer Comer - Page Alt - Nancy Gress - E Pottawattamie	Todd Perdew – Adams/Union Alt - Max Dirks - Cass
8	Ronda Harrison - Lucas Alt - Vacant	Kathy Henely - Wayne Alt - Jayne Ruble - Warren
9	Judy Dameron - Louisa Alt - Vacant	Wendi Denham - Mahaska Alt - Elizabeth Benjamin – Davis
Directors At Large	District 1- Dustin Miller- Cherokee District 3- Krystal Schatz- Howard	District 4- Mary Roberts- Calhoun District 8- Jayne Ruble - Warren

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

BENEFITS & LEGISLATIVE

STEVE LUKE

District	Member	County
1	VACANT	
2	David Stromer	Hancock
3	Ron Pethoud	Chickasaw
4	Pat Warmbier	Harrison
5	Teresa Simonton	Poweshiek
6	Jessica Yuska	Scott
7	Chris Irvin	Page
8	Kelly Cain	Madison
9	VACANT	

**AWARDS CHAIR – JENNIFER COMER
SCHOLARSHIP CHAIR – KATHY HENELY**

District	Member	County
1	Kristin Pedley	Osceola
2	Tammy Pruin	Wright
3	Candace Fette	Clayton
4	Donita Kenkel	Shelby
5	Kathy Baker	Marshall
6	Kari Barker	Muscatine
7	Lynette Gruchow	East/West Pottawattamie
8	Dorothy Allen	Warren
9	Lanie Benjamin	Davis/Wapello

PUBLICITY CHAIR – Tammy Eibey

District	Member	County
1	Jeff Davis	Plymouth/Sioux
2	Megan Ruby-Friedow	Kossuth
3	Heidi Nickol	Delaware
4	Heather Muenchrath	Shelby
5	VACANT	
6	Cassy Portz	Jackson
7	VACANT	
8	Jayne Ruble	Warren
9	Deb Rurup	Mahaska

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

MEMBERSHIP – Michelle Uthe/Susan Lange

District	Member	County
1	Lisa Forburger	Palo Alto
2	Rosalie Carlson	Worth
3	Breann Hemesath	Winneshiek
4	Cathleen "Skip" Simons	Carroll
5	Katie Kramer	Jasper
6	Joni Birkhofer	Cedar
7	Jennifer Comer	Page
8	Merilee Hamilton	Lucas
9	Lisa White	Washington



CONVENTION COMMITTEE- Angie Christian, Kossuth

CONVENTION REGISTRATION – Mary Roberts, Calhoun

CONVENTION DOOR PRIZES/SILENT AUCTION – Krystal Schatz / Amie Johansen

LIVE AUCTION ORGANIZATION- Wendi Denham / Mary Roberts

OTHER Duties

EMBLEMS CO-CHAIR's –Kathy Baker, Marshall / Andrea Carroll, Winneshiek

PROGRAMS CHAIR – Angie Christian, Kossuth

NAFEC CHAIR – Mary Roberts, Calhoun

IASCOE WEB MANAGER – Brian Beach, Sac

PAST IASCOE PRESIDENTS

1959-61 Kenneth Hatcher

1961-62 Raymond D Vanderhorst

1962-63 Luther Stock

1963-64 William H Holiday

1964-65 Charles Bacon

1965-66 Gaylor A Thayer

1966-67 V. Deane Thornton

1967-68 Marguerite Liddle

1969-70 Warner C Walrath

1970-71 Janet Hemm

1971-72 Carl Lantz

1972-74 James A Riekens

1974-76 Cecil F Zollars

1977-79 Garnita Ewart

1979-80 John Ace Parker/Gary Brewer

1980-82 Gary Brewer

1982-84 Larry Niles

1984-86 Joe McLaughlin

1986-87 Pat Drew / Ronald Parker

1987-88 Mike Houston

1988-90 Ronald Reuvers

1990-92 Steve Abbas

1992-94 Kevin Fitzpatrick

1994-95 Jerry Frank

1995-97 Kevin McClure

1997-99 Jolene Fechter

1999-01 Trice Smith

2001-03 John Landgraf

2003-05 Tom Lane/Alan Donaldson

2005-07 Dee Lehn

2007-09 Steve Kennedy

2009-11 Cindy Mensen

2011-13 Jeff Davis

2013-15 Curt Houk

2015 Curt Goettsch

2015-17 Jennifer Comer

2018 Jesse Wegner



SED's Letter to IASCOE Membership



Dear IASCOE members,

It's hard to believe that we are rapidly approaching the end of the calendar year and with that the colder weather. This time of the year is always a good time for me to personally reflect on the things I am thankful for.

First and foremost, I am thankful for all of YOU. I now have a full year under my belt and the Iowa FSA family continues to impress me with your generosity and kindness. We've had volunteers from around the state be willing to travel away from your homes, and work nights and weekends, all to help our FSA family recover from the devastating hurricanes in Puerto Rico, North Carolina, Florida and Georgia. We've also had staff willing to pitch in and help our own counties out with workload and situations of illness, pregnancies and other family issues. The spirit of pitching in to get the job done is what makes me most proud to be part of the Iowa FSA team.

I am also thankful for great cooperation. As the new Farm Production and Mission area takes shape, I know that Iowa is a leader in great working relationships with our NRCS counterparts. Both State Conservationist Kurt Simon and myself are committed to finding ways for our agencies to work better together, to ultimately serve our Service Centers and ultimately our producer customers. If you have ideas on ways we can improve our joint processes or communications, please continue to send those ideas in!

Finally, I am thankful for our great customers. They are the reason I come to work each and every day with a positive outlook. Farmers (especially our youngest customers) are entering a new era of financial stress that some of them have not seen before. They will need our help and resources to weather the months and years ahead. I am often stopped by producers who want to tell me a story of a great service center employee or experience they have had with one of our offices. Our swift execution of MFP for example, HAS been noticed. Ultimately, we are all here in service to them. If its help with a program, or even just lending an ear to hear their story, thank you for keeping them as our #1 priority.

As always, myself and the state office team are here in support of you. Please let us know if there are things we can do to make your jobs easier.

I want to wish you all a very Happy Thanksgiving and blessed holiday season. I hope everyone has the ability to use some of that hard-earned time off with their friends and family.

Again, THANK YOU for everything you do for our Agency!

Sincerely,

Amanda De Jong

SED



Happy Holidays Iowa!



This is the time of year when I reflect on what I am most thankful for. Naturally I wanted to put a list together and share with you why I am thankful for IASCOE and let you know what we have been up to this past year!

- Hiring! A big thank you is in order to the Iowa Administrative STO staff. Since March of 2018, Iowa has hired on 102 permanent and temporary County Office positions! These include: (35) PT's, (30) TO's across the state in situations of critically understaffed offices during critical workload times, and (30) others are in the process of being advertised, interviewed, and/or selected and waiting to start, including (2) COT classes. We are not done yet; the foot remains on the gas continuing into FY19. NASCOE has been leading the charge and consulting with management about holes needing to be filled in the county office ranks and accelerating the hiring process. I am happy to say that management is listening and NASCOE will be monitoring the situation. Most do not realize, but funding for salaries and expenses is set annually and require the association to justify spending levels and sometimes compete against other stakeholder groups for limited funds. That's right, this process goes on every single year.
- IASCOE implemented a Free Membership incentive that is available to all first-time members. I am pleased to say that 26 members across the state took advantage of this incentive. This is a great way to get involved with IASCOE and to let your voice be heard. Contact your district representative for more details.
- Benefits, do you want access to discounts on items such as: Theme Parks, Movie Tickets, Hotels, Travel & Car Rentals, Sporting Events and Online shopping? Check out WorkingAdvantage.com , contact your district membership chair for the NASCOE company code. Also, take advantage of the Sam's Club Membership Discount.
- Scholarships! Every year IASCOE/NASCOE has several scholarships available for members and their children and/or grandchildren. These scholarships are made available due to the generous giving at our annual scholarship auction during the state convention. Take a look at the scholarship options available online at www.nascoe.org . IASCOE/NASCOE has a January 15, 2019 deadline!
- If the need ever arises, NASCOE has an Employee Relations Service (ERS) with up to 1 hour of free Legal Counsel available to members on work related issues, contact the state president.
- Help our agency become even better! Every year dozens of issues are submitted from membership to the NASCOE negotiation team. FSA leadership has authorized NASCOE to work directly with WDC program specialists about improvements to software, policy concerns, forms, handbook changes, and more. The constructive ideas from NASCOE members have given us the reputation as the "Can Do Agency". Take advantage of this opportunity to let your voice be heard on the NASCOE website- Programs Tab.
- IASCOE is working hard at keeping you informed with direct communications from NASCOE leadership to your personal email inbox on everything NASCOE. Or, check out on-going updates about NASCOE through Facebook- (NASCOE News).

- New employee orientation training is on the horizon. Thank you to Amanda De Jong and all department chiefs at the STO for the bedrock foundation that this training will provide to our recent hires. This is a great example of working together and coming up with solutions to help all employees across the state.

Thank you to the directors and committee members throughout the state that are committed at help the FSA's cause for all employees in Iowa. Thank you for your membership to IASCOE and all the new membership's in this past year. It is our strong membership in Iowa and across the country that gives us a loud unified voice. Lastly, we are all truly blessed to work for an agency that can make such a positive impact and a meaningful difference in our local rural communities. Thank you for all that you do serving our farmers. Happy holidays!

-Jesse

IASCOE President



Vice President Report and the 2019 IASCOE Convention!



As harvest is nearing completion for 2018 I ask you to think back on the things you might be Thankful for as Thanksgiving approaches. I am certainly Thankful for all the new, existing, and associate members we have at IASCOE/NASCOE. Our Directors have been focused on listening to membership and planning for the 2019 IASCOE Convention.

Convention will be at the Downtown Marriott in Des Moines, March 22 & 23, 2019. In recent weeks your directors have been working with the State Office Administrative staff to provide Benefits Training to attendees!! We are excited to announce this as one of our attractions for Convention. The Administrative department is working to put this training together for us. There will be something in it for everyone. No matter if you are new in your career, have experience in your position or looking to reflect on your time working, our Administrative Department is coming to provide us with Benefits training! This training will begin mid-morning so register early to reserve your seat and learn more about benefits available to you!

Mixing up the agenda just a bit for some variety this year, we will be having a plated meal over lunch. Yum! Registrations will be important to be sure you have a "seat at the table." As we are wrapping up our meal we are planning to honor our award recipients. Please be sure you are getting names of members who will be receiving a sick leave award from each office to your Awards District committee member by January 7, 2019. Reminder for Sick Leave award recipients it is the leave balance as of December 31, 2018. Providing these names early will ensure recognition at convention to our dedicated members. We would also like to recognize those offices that have had 100% membership to IASCOE/NASCOE. Membership committee members will be reaching out to offices within their respective districts to make sure no office is forgotten for their dedicated support to our employee association. Please help them to ensure our offices are recognized for their 25, 30, 35, 40 etc. years of support.

The afternoon will consist of wrapping up Benefits training; then having our traditional Q & A panel from Amanda De Jong, SED and the Department Chiefs. This is your opportunity to meet with STO staff and ask those questions that you have been wanting to in person.

Friday Evening the Marriott will be hosting time for meeting new members, reconnecting with existing members and connecting with IACS/IASE membership. This time is important for networking! In addition, IASCOE will be finalizing the silent auction and holding our Annual Live Auction. Proceeds from these auctions are used for scholarships and hosting conventions for you our members. More to come on the Auctions as Conventions nears.

Saturday we will reconvene for General Session beginning at 8:30 am. We will be hearing our Committee reports, vendor reports and wrap up what we hope to be one of the most highly attended conventions. Please keep checking with committee members and your IASCOE District Directors as Conventions nears. We are working to provide you, our membership, the information most important to you at Convention.

Angie Christian-

CED Director-District #2
IASCOE-Vice President

Secretary Report



Gear Up for the Holidays. Gear Up for IASCOE Elections.

Greetings from Southeast Iowa! It's hard to believe that the holidays are just around the corner. Soon, it will be time to start thinking about buying that big turkey or ham and all the trimmings to go with. It will also soon be time to put up and decorate a tree, as well as start buying presents for our loved ones and carefully wrap them to be placed underneath it. Indeed, it is about time to start gearing up for the holidays! But, the holiday time also brings another important season for IASCOE--elections. Soon, ballots will be going out for IASCOE Districts 4, 6, 8 and 9. Please be on the lookout for the ballots and participate in this opportunity to vote for those in your district whom you believe will best voice your suggestions and concerns. Undoubtedly, the holidays are an exciting time each year. However, don't let the fun and stress at this time of the year keep you from voting; remember, IASCOE works for you all year round!



Wendi Muir Denham
IASCOE Secretary



IASCOE Elections!



NASCOE Benefits Included with Your Membership

- ✔ **DILLARD FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS (DFS)** is the Official Benefits Provider for NASCOE and they offer many products including retirement, insurance and investments. Free retirement and benefits analysis. For all their products visit their website at <http://dillardfinancialsolutionsinc.com/nascoe/benefits/>. DFS can also be found on the NASCOE website under benefits.
- ✔ **WORKING ADVANTAGE EMPLOYEE DISCOUNT PROGRAM** offers employee discounts to NASCOE members for hotels, theme parks & attractions, movie tickets, water parks, shows, rental cars, gift cards and shopping deals. <https://workingadvantage.com/>. The NASCOE Company Code can be obtained from your National, Area or State Benefits Chair.
- ✔ **NASCOE EMPLOYEE RELATIONS SERVICES (ERS) - 1 HOUR OF FREE LEGAL COUNSEL** with the NASCOE Attorney. Designed to confidentially assist and guide members that need advice, education, or legal services regarding employment and human relation issues. For more in-depth information, please visit the NASCOE web page and look under Benefits | NASCOE Employee Relations Services. Be sure to follow the proper channels that are listed.
- ✔ **AIR MED CARE GROUP DISCOUNT.** The application can be found on the NASCOE website at Benefits | Air Med Care | AirMedCare Contract. The current cost is \$65 per year. They have several different policies to choose from and can save you and your family from additional burdens in accident situations.
- ✔ **SAM'S CLUB \$10 GIFT CARD.** By joining or renewing your Sam's Club membership, you can receive a \$10 gift card. Visit the NASCOE website at <https://nascoe.org/benefits/>.
- ✔ **JM MARKETING** is another source for long term care, vision and cancer policies. You can find their information on the NASCOE website under Who Is NASCOE? | NASCOE Affiliates | JM Marketing.





2018 IASCOE

IASCOE/NASCOE Scholarship Deadline January 15, 2019

Scholarships through IASCOE/NASCOE include:

- **Traditional Scholarship** (member's child) graduating high school senior or first year college freshman, full time student with a minimum of 12 hours
- **Open Continuing Education Scholarship** (member, spouse, child, or grandchild) 2nd, 3rd, or 4th year, or graduate student, with 6 or more credit hours per semester
- **Member Continuing Education** (NASCOE member) continuing their education
- **Continuing Education for Adult Children of Members** (member's adult child, or grandchild) 5 or less credit hours a semester
- **Grandchildren Scholarship** (member's grandchild) 12 or more credit hours per semester
- **Associate Member Scholarship** (associate member, spouse, child, or grandchild) minimum of 6 hours of enrollment

Deadline to apply is January 15, 2019. All applications must be submitted online at www.NASCOE.org (Forms and Downloads). Iowa is in the Midwest Area. A complete list of eligibility requirements are also available under forms and downloads. The NASCOE member's dues must be paid and membership kept current for the past 5 years or if less than 5 years, continuous membership since becoming a NASCOE member within the first 12 months of becoming a permanent employee.

Very Important to Note******Applications must be completed and submitted in ONE session.** Please review the following questions and have your responses saved in a word document so that they can be copied and pasted into the online application form. You will also be required to submit a Letter of Recommendation and Copy of your Official Grade Transcript. Supporting documentation must be emailed to mwascholarships@gmail.com All supporting documents should be sent in one file named as follows: first initial, last name, state abbreviation (ex: J Farmer IA). If you need to submit more than one file due to size, please number them sequentially (ex: J Farmer IA 1)

1. Tell us about yourself. What are your hobbies and interests? What is the one thing we really need to know about you?
2. Tell us about school. Where do you currently attend school? What are your grades? What are your extracurricular activities? What honors and awards have you received through school?
3. Are you involved in your community and church? If so, tell us about your involvement. What groups are you in? What things have you done to improve your community, church, and yourself? What honors and awards have you received through community or church involvement?
4. What are your plans for college? Where do you want to go to school? What do you intend for your major to be? What is your ideal job?
5. From production agriculture to agricultural law to commodity trading, the industry of Agriculture is incredibly varied. What impact will agriculture have on your future?

Questions may be addressed to Iowa Scholarship Chairperson, Kathy Henely at: henelydk@yahoo.com or by calling 641.217.8096.



AWARDS, A GREAT FORM OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT!

2019 NASCOE Awards

It is time to start thinking about NASCOE Awards. I wanted to give you some important dates to get on your calendars, so we don't miss any opportunities for our awesome members!

Sick Leave Awards

- Sick leave certificates are awarded for members with accumulated sick leave of **1000, 1500, and 2000** hours.
- Plaques are awarded to permanent employees who are NASCOE members in good standing that with accumulated sick leave of **2500, 3000, and 3500** + hours.

Hours should be based on total accumulated hours as of **December 31, 2018**

Deadline to submit hours to Jennifer Comer, IASCOE State Awards Chair is January 7th, 2019. Please submit nominees to: Jennifercomer71@gmail.com

Distinguished Service Awards

We all know and work with outstanding individuals within our Agency that go above and beyond every day and consider it "part of the job". It is time to recognize these folks for the work they do. The DSA program encourages recognition of NASCOE members who make outstanding contributions in the Areas of **Service to NASCOE; Service to FSA-Agriculture; or Service to Community.**

The nomination process is easy! Nominees must be full members of IASCOE/NASCOE in good standing. Nomination forms are available at www.NASCOE.org under Forms and Downloads. You need to include the name, address, email and telephone numbers of the nominee and nominator, the award being recommended and a brief description of why the nominee is deserving of the award. The nomination information should be brief, factual and specific.

Nomination Deadline is **JANUARY 15, 2019** and must be completed on the official nomination format provided on www.NASCOE.org

Invitation to IASCOE/NASCOE



STAY INFORMED!! We have new leaders at USDA and with that comes new ideas on how to make our agency more efficient! Your IASCOE/NASCOE leadership team is committed at staying on top of all the happenings and announcements and passing that information along to you, the member, via email or newsletters. This is the most effective way to **STAY INFORMED AND REDUCE YOUR STRESS LEVEL!!!** Attached is a NASCOE brochure explaining what they are doing on your behalf. Important goals are to PROTECT & IMPROVE employee benefits, PT & CED upgrades, stress importance of the COC system, the need for training and proper staffing...just to name a few! **JOIN IASCOE AND BE INVOLVED!!!**

This year we have added a FREE 1-year membership to any first time members (CO employee) who complete an FSA-444 (payroll deduction)! IASCOE will compensate you for your membership dues, no earlier than one full year after transmittals are due on July 1st!

Easy payroll deduction is available with an (FSA-444) form. If you are already on payroll deduction and you received a grade increase, please don't forget to update your payroll deduction amount. For those not already utilizing payroll deduction, an authorization form (FSA-444) is attached which can be duplicated, filled out, and returned to:

TAMMY ZANONI @ Iowa FSA STO, via email & JUDY DAMERON either by email: jldameron@hotmail.com or by mail: Judy Dameron, 718 Mill St., Wapello, IA 52653. Checks would also be sent to Judy! Payroll deductions or check amount:

CO-6 & below: \$2.70 per pay period - \$70 per year
CO-7-9: \$3.47 per pay period - \$90 per year
CO-10 & above: \$5.39 per pay period - \$140 per year



Website tip: Negotiations

Do you have an item that you would like to submit for consideration for negotiation with management? Submissions can be made at any time using NASCOE's simple to use online submission tool.

Visit <http://nascoe.org/forms-downloads/negotiations-submission/>

2018 National Convention Photos



Midwest Area



Iowa



NASCOE National Officers



Mary Roberts, MWA Alternate



Curt Houk, Treasurer



Chris Hare, MWA Exec



Bill Northey, USDA Under Secretary



Richard Fordyce, FSA Administrator

Showing Kindness

It is a Monday. Correction, it is a RAINY Monday. Penelope knows the day is going to be crazy. Two other PTs are on compressed today, she knows she is coming back to a pile of work that she left from last Friday and life at home was a crazy race this morning. She peeks out the window and sees there is a parking lot full of farmers waiting for the doors to open at 8am, yet when she looks at the calendar, there are no appointments listed. She inserts her linc-pass into her computer and is greeted with a message saying there are no valid certificates found. She tries multiple times until she is finally granted access and relaxes to the hum of her computer revving up for the day. The markers for the price support rates are squeaking and drying as she tries to post the rates. As she is waiting for a print job to occur, she is greeted with an extensive paper jam. Rather than giving up and telling her CED that she is sick and needing to hit the 're-do' button from home, she proceeds to the door to welcome the farmers for the day. As the key sticks in the lock, she plants a smile on her face and winks at the farmer with his face nearly pressed against the glass eager to get in. He does not smile back, he looks gruff and annoyed as he grips his walker. Penelope knows this farmer. He is the farmer the rest of the staff sink in their cubicles and play the game of 'not it' to.

The door opens and the day of service begins. The farmer grumbles something about lazy government workers as Penelope proceeds to use a chipper voice to say, "How are you on this lovely Monday morning, Joe? What can we do for you today?" Producers continue to file by as Joe slowly makes his way to the counter. Penelope helps Joe to the chair at the counter and assists him in getting comfortable. Although Joe continues to be gruff throughout her encounter with him, she chooses happiness and tact in her delivery of the programs. She chooses compassion regardless of her bad start to the day or his attitude. She chooses KINDNESS in all her actions, including assisting him to his vehicle. Before he leaves, she is gifted with a rare thank you and a glistening in his eyes.

Penelope's ability to choose to spread kindness regardless of her struggles for the day have a greater effect on her producer than she ever knew. She is unaware that the grumpy producer she just assisted had a frustrating night/morning with his wife who is in advanced stages of Alzheimer's. She is unaware he is her sole care giver and that some days he just wants to see a glimpse of the love of his life. She is unaware that he was recently diagnosed with terminal pancreatic cancer. She is unaware of his struggles. She is unaware that her kindness shown early on this rainy Monday morning in the FSA office, was just what Joe needed and it brought tears to his eyes.

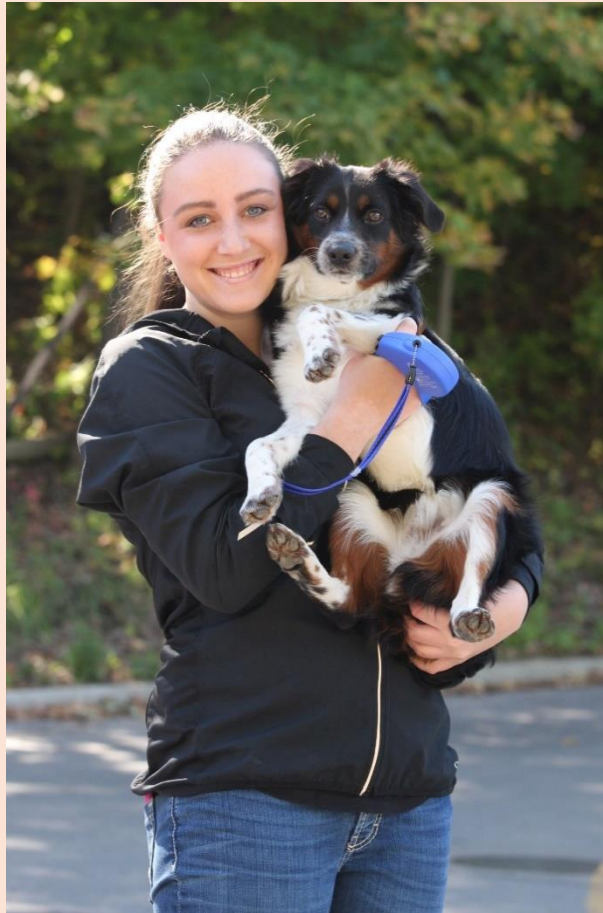
It is so important to choose kindness in all our actions. We never know what others are experiencing or what struggles they bare. I find choosing kindness to be deeply gratifying, even in the toughest situations. Iowa FSA is so blessed to have many Penelopes throughout the state. They always greet with a smile, try to sneak a smile out of the toughest producers and have a deep compassion for our family of customers. I continually strive to be like the Penelopes in our state. The kindness they exude has a lasting, ripple effect and is an admirable quality. Kindness costs us nothing but is worth its weight in gold.

Heidi Nickol
CED, Delaware County



New to FSA!

Hi, I'm Shelly Stewart! I am from Columbus Junction and work at the Louisa County office. I will be working with producers on CRP. My other programs are: Farm records, MIDAS and GIS. I recently graduated from Iowa State with a degree in Agricultural Studies. I am very passionate about helping producers. Before I graduated I knew working with producers was the right career path for me, so I am glad to be on the FSA team. When I am not working at the FSA office, I am helping on my family farm. We farm row crops and have hogs and cattle. I vaccinate pigs, help work and feed cattle, check cows during calving season, drive tractors and many other daily tasks on the farm. I am a proud dog momma to my 2-year-old mini Aussie, Charlie. He loves hanging out on the farm and where ever I am he isn't far behind. I enjoy spending time with my friends and family; we go tailgating, shopping, to the movies, and have drinks on the weekends.



First Timer View on IASCOE Convention:

IASCOE Convention: The Honest Truth

We all have a lot going on outside of our offices; fields to tend, kids to chauffeur, animals to ready for fair. Not to mention, we are all going at top speed trying to complete everything in our offices—the last thing we need is to waste a day in Des Moines. At least, that was my opinion when I first heard about the IASCOE convention. I'm a fairly outgoing person, but I was having a difficult time justifying taking off of work to go “hang out” with people I didn't know.

Well, I did it. I bit the bullet and talked myself into going. It wasn't an easy decision. I had two small kids, one wasn't even sleeping consistently through the night. Certainly, my husband is an intelligent, capable man, but, as a mom it's not always easy to let go. I tried out every excuse under the sun, but in the end I knew deep down it would be a good experience.

What I expected was for everyone to be so excited to catch up with their long-established FSA friends they wouldn't have time to notice the awkward newbie. I expected to sit in on seminars that didn't really pertain to me. Luckily, I was way wrong.

It turns out, everyone was excited to catch up with those they knew, but they were also really happy to see a new face showing an interest in IASCOE. After about 10 or 15 minutes, I was no longer in a room of strangers. Names had been exchanged, connections made, and relationships were being built.

When it came time to sit in on the seminars, I sat next to new friends each of us with our notepad and pens ready to take in whatever they might say. The state panel introduced themselves and each took an opportunity to brief us on their various program specialties. As someone who was new to the FSA, it was refreshing being able to put a face to the voices we hear in conference calls and e-mails we read. The state panel gave the room an opportunity to ask questions or give suggestions based on our county office experiences. It was a relief to hear people of other offices sharing similar situations and asking the same questions.

I felt energized after the IASCOE convention. I had made new friends, tapped into more resources and had an even greater appreciation for what we do for our hardworking producers in this beautiful state. Attending the IASCOE convention is a time commitment. There is also gas and parking to take into consideration, but it is well worth the time and expense. Coming from someone who had major doubts and reservations about attending, I now can't say enough good things about my experience. If you can't quite convince yourself to go alone, ask someone you know to carpool. Not only will travel expenses be split, but you will have someone else there to help break the ice.

The IASCOE convention will be at the end of March next year. You have plenty of time to try on a variety of excuses not to go and then begin the process of talking yourself into going—I really hope you do decide to go. It is something I believe all IASCOE members should make an effort to do at least once. You will have an opportunity to hear firsthand from our state office the latest changes and developments as well as see how IASCOE works for you.

Amie Johansen
Floyd County—PT



Puerto Rico WHIP detail, August 2018 by Lisa Forburger

Working at Farm Service Agency has been interesting but in August of 2018 I volunteered to be on a jump team that helped with the WHIP Program in Puerto Rico. This is something that I had on my bucket list, to work with a disaster, and I had a wonderful experience, with the country and the group that I worked with.

When the opportunity came, and FSA reached out to us for this task, I signed up in November thinking this would really break the winter blues in NW Iowa. I signed for late January. When notified, they required 30 days stay and I knew that I would not be able to stay away from work that long. So, I dismissed until it came up again and signed up for 2 weeks. I was notified late in July that I was to get my flight scheduled leaving August 5 and returning on August 18th.

And I did leave early on August 5 and arrived in San Juan and then taken to Mayaguez, which is a city on the west side of the island. The island of Puerto Rico is 100 miles in length wide and 40 miles in length, so not very big. There are also mountains that cover a lot of it, I would say hills. We all met at the State Office in San Juan and then we were split up into teams.

The team that I was on included, Cody Jones, PT from Van Buren County, Jackie Brandenburg and Beth Strein, PTs from Missouri and then Kahler Mitchell, CED also from Missouri. We all stayed in the same hotel, which was very nice in Mayaguez. I loved the huge pool right outside our door and that mornings were 75 degrees for air temp. Needless to say, I was swimming at 5 every morning.

We had a government vehicle that we used for transportation to and from work. That was handy. Remember that Puerto Rico is a U.S. territory, so money was American Dollars. I did not know what I was buying but I knew what it cost!!! It was boring playing the license plate game trying to find multiple states! And there were no deer to jump out along very narrow roads lined with tall grass. They must not know what shoulders are or even center lines. There were very few pickups and SUVs, mainly little cars and lots of traffic but doable, nothing like Minneapolis.

The food was good but too many carbohydrates for me. Lots of rice and beans. I had some very good fish, plantains, and roots for potatoes. We shopped at food markets but buying fresh fruits and vegetables were expensive and I did not think tasted very good. Especially like my garden full of them back home, since it was August. Food was very expensive, but nuts, coffee, peanut butter, and street vendors.

For the WHIP signup they came out of the hills since most do not grow program crops but instead, coffee, plantains, bananas, lemons, and avocados. Many of the producers did not even have a farm so that is where we began, creating a farm.

Days went by fast and nights were fun. We planned activities for many of the nights and the weekend that we stayed. We saw a lot of the island and enjoyed the sun, the ocean, the humidity and kind people. Our last night was spent in San Juan with 2 other groups that were in other areas. Then we got to see the tourist view of Puerto Rico. The sand beach was beautiful, and not always did we see that.

The temperature of the Caribbean Ocean is 85 degrees and we swam in it every time we accessed a beach.

There is so much to say and things I could tell but maybe I will write a sequel!!! Maybe I could be lucky enough to go again. I have attached a few pictures for you to enjoy thanks to Cody. Stayed tuned!!!





News from

The National Association of Farmer Elected Committees

Contact: Craig Turner: 806-269-0610

Hello NAFEC Members -

SOUTH DAKOTA MEETING

The County Office Committee (COC) system within the USDA-Farm Service Agency has a unique grassroots level of governing. Our farmers, ranchers and landowners work hand in hand with the local Farm Service Agency and the relationship with the County Committee is crucial for the delivery of USDA Farm Programs within our communities. One of the key components to a successful COC is the fact that it is very dynamic. The COC members must continually grow in their knowledge base to keep up with the ever-changing programs they are faced with and the decision-making process that goes along with it. The COC understand that the decisions they make are not just an approval or disapproval on a piece of paper, but it is a farmer, rancher or landowner they are addressing. The COC understand that the decision that is made will have a direct impact on that individual farming operation's livelihood.

During the NASCOE convention in Sioux Falls, SD on August 2, 2018, approximately 70 COC members from South Dakota, Iowa, and Minnesota attended a day long Orientation, training and information session at Hefty Seeds in Kimball, SD. As part of the training sessions, the COC members were able to hear from State Specialists concerning their role as a County Committee member. The training received at Hefty Seed Company was outstanding and the COC members that attended were able to gain or refresh knowledge to better aide them in their positions. In addition to the State Specialist, the COC members were able to hear from USDA Under Secretary Bill Northey, FSA Administrator Richard Fordyce, and others. The National USDA leaders reinforced the importance of the County Committee members' roles within the USDA Farm Service Agency. While addressing the members in attendance, the leadership expressed gratitude to the COC members for their willingness to continue to serve in their positions. The leadership spoke with understanding as they themselves have served in the same or similar roles as the COC. The day's events also included lunch and ended with an afternoon tour of the Hefty Seeds facility.

As part of National Association of Farmer Elected Committees (NAFEC), it is always nice to see and hear what these training programs can do. During the afternoon tour you could hear the COC members sharing experiences that they have had with one another, some similar and some completely different. The conversations between members ranged from the Livestock Forage Program and how it has helped so many producers stay in business to

making a hard decision on a CRP disapproval. It is those conversations where the members can share their experiences that continue to strengthen the COC system, therefore becoming a stronger advocate for their producers and their counties.

A huge thanks to the South Dakota Delegation; Larry Olsen, Bill Chase, Joel Foster, Jim Anderson and all the other SDASCOE members for their planning this event and making it so successful for the attendees and the NAFEC Officers.

LET'S MEET OUR NEW 'NASCOE NAFEC CHAIR', CARLA SPENCER, FSA FROM ALPINE TEXAS

Since 2012 I've been to 6 state conventions, 2 area rallies and 2 national conventions. I've spent hours in front of my computer at home working on publications, websites, and event promotions for our employee association. Occasionally, I've had to defend this behavior to the people I live with. It takes me away from family time, house chores, and cow works. I tell them it is worth it - I believe in it - FSA is special and unique.

"What is so special about FSA?" the 15-year-old asked. "What do you mean there is no other agency like this one? What is it that you believe in?"

There is no other agency in all of the United States of America's federal government where employees report and answer directly to an elected committee made up of the very same people they provide service and program assistance to. There is no other agency in all of the United States of America's federal government where employees are interviewed, hired, evaluated, promoted, and fired by the tax payer. There is no other agency in all of the United States of America's federal government where elected employees determine payment eligibility, approve federal contracts, and hear appeals on adverse decisions. The County Committee system that provides oversight for the Farm Service Agency is just about the most unique form of government that I can think of and I am proud to be part of it.

I am a PT in a single person office serving 3 counties in the high desert of the Texas Big Bend. It takes 100 acres to run a momma cow here, water is scarce and the land is hard. My office covers 5 million acres of rangeland. My headquarters office covers two more counties and has been without a CED twice in the last 3 years. I have leaned on both of my COCs - used them hard, believe in the purpose they serve, and have learned more from them than through any other training program FSA has to offer.

I have worked for FSA since 2006 and have been a NASCOE member from day one. I met Craig Turner in 2012 and have been an associate member of NAFEC since that day. I served as the Texas association publicity chair for 3 years and as the publicity chair for the Southwest Area for two years. I have two teenagers - one of which is a senior this year - who are active in all things extra-curricular. My husband and I have 200 head of momma cows on almost 30,000 acres of lease country and do everything horseback. My dad has another 8,000 acres here doing the same thing. I serve as a board member for a private property rights association, volunteer for football concession stand duty, grow some flowers in front of the house and try to keep the horses from eating them, and am desperately trying to figure out how to grow a tree with no water or dirt to speak of. I have served on ranch rodeo committees, been a treasurer for softball associations and president of band boosters. I am currently Acting CED in a shared management situation with 60 miles between my two offices and two COCs. I have gone from NAP on NAG-GZ and CCRP on riparian buffers, to seed cotton base reallocation and yield updates, NAP on FAVs, CRP with mid-contract management and routine grazing, and LDPs. I like my job best when I am busy and learning.

In September of 2018 I was asked to be the National NAFEC Committee Chair for NASCOE by sitting President, Dennis Ray. NAFEC Chair. Wow. Somehow, that felt like an opportunity to give back to my COC. It felt like an opportunity to help NASCOE keep the COC system strong, viable, and powerful. The best way for us to do that is to educate our incoming staff and remind our COCs that they are The Boss. Sometimes, that is hard. We are scattered, we are busy, sometimes we forget to include the boss in our day-to-day goings and comings. We need to do better. The goal of the 2018-2019 NASCOE NAFEC Committee is to grow NAFEC membership, increase awareness and keep our COC system strong. This year's team includes Teresa Vonn from the Northwest Area, Marla Hammer from the Southwest, Mary Roberts from the Midwest, Pam Rhoades from the Southeast and Dan Shockey from the Northeast. Together with all of our state chairs, we hope to reach each and every county office this year and pick up new COC members for NAFEC as well as associate members in our CEDs and PTs. Our COCs not only stand behind the county office employee, but sometimes have to stand in front and take the lead. Our COCs need our support as much as we need theirs - and NAFEC is a great way to show our county committee men and women that they are important to us.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

I want to update both the effort to pass a new Farm Bill and the status of the Agriculture Appropriations for 2019. There were signs that House and Senate negotiators were on the road to finding common ground during August, but it's now clear that there are still wide differences between House and the Senate positions. To this point, the House has refused to compromise on the welfare changes included in the SNAP Program work rules but there are also major differences in other Titles. As time passes, chances for a possible extension of the current expired Farm Bill increases, however there is increasing concern that no agreement will be reached, and work will have to start over in the New Congress. Hopefully common sense will prevail and following the election during the Lame Duck session a new Farm Bill will be passed. Each day without a Farm Bill becomes more difficult because many programs have expired and cannot be operated.

Not having a Farm Bill will also make it more difficult for producers that are already dealing with low prices, plus having to work out financing for their 2019 crop year with their bankers. The uncertainty will leave many unable to cashflow and unable to continue farming. To further complicate the Lame Duck session, much of government is currently operating on a Continuing Resolution which funds agencies at last year's level. This CR runs out in early December which means there could be a Government shutdown unless an extension is passed, or a deal is made to fund Government for the next year. December could be filled with deadlock and partisan upheaval and a time when we will look in our rearview mirrors next year and say thank goodness it's over.

David Senter
Legislative Consultant

Items from NASCOE!

I would like to start out by wishing all a Happy Thanksgiving. As we approach the holiday season, we have much for which to be thankful. I am thankful for the opportunity to work with such a tremendous group of selfless people. A former SED always said the greatest calling we can have is to make a positive difference in someone else's life. I believe we do that for the producers we serve and for the members we represent.

One of the things I am thankful for in NASCOE is the negotiation process. The first deadline for submitting items is December 1st so please submit items that you find important. One of the results of past negotiation sessions was the recent change of the November 15th reporting date for perennial forages. This has been submitted as a negotiation item in recent years as well as asked during the question and answer session at the national convention. Keep in mind that it takes two to negotiate. NASCOE would like to thank Administrator Fordyce and his management team for making this change happen.

We would like to also encourage members to look at the scholarships NASCOE offers and the deadlines associated with them. That information can be found on the NASCOE webpage. There are several different scholarships offered for members, member's children or member's grandchildren. Please pay close attention to the instructions and the process to make sure you or your child is applying for the correct scholarship.

In addition to the scholarships, now is the time to be submitting your nominations for NASCOE's Distinguished Service Awards. Many of our members deserve recognition but have never been nominated, if you are aware of someone deserving, I encourage you to take the time to nominate them. It is not difficult to do and the person receiving the recognition will be duly acknowledged.

I hope everyone has a happy and safe holiday season.

Dennis Ray
NASCOE President



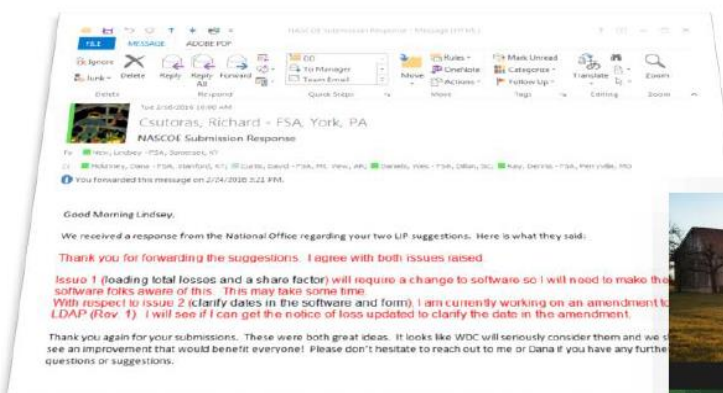
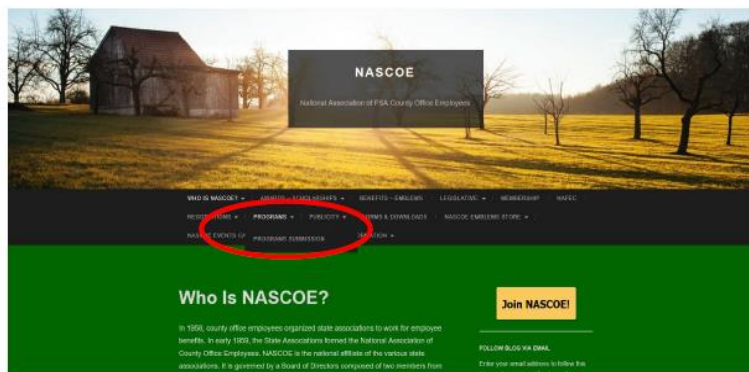


NASCOE can take your PROGRAM EFFICIENCY SUGGESTIONS directly to the National Specialists!

Have a solution to a program or software problem or inefficiency?

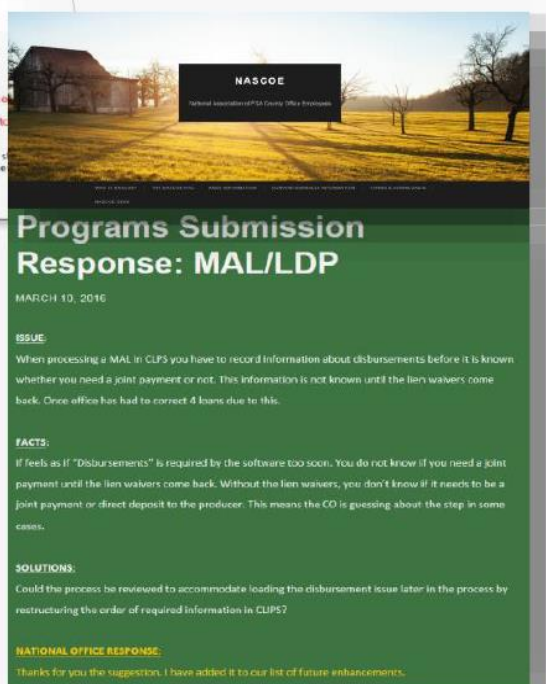
1 Visit nascoe.org and submit your idea through the Program Efficiency Submission Form.

2 A state, area, or national programs chairperson may contact you for further clarification of the problem/solution, and will keep you informed of their communication with WDC!



3 Once the National Programs chair has consulted with the National Office, the response will be shared on the NASCOE website.

Programs suggestions can be submitted on work time and NASCOE has the ability to work on these ideas year-round, not just at negotiation time. Send in your ideas as soon as you think of them. NASCOE wants to see prompt results when it comes to your ideas for how we can improve the way we do business!



CRIME SCENE DO NOT CROSS

2019 MWA Rally

March 14-16, 2019

Champaign, Illinois



Please join us for the Midwest Area Rally,
home of the fighting ILLINI!

Champaign was founded in 1855 and is home of the famous *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*. Champaign is known for its historical downtown area and the unique nightlife it has to offer! Shuttles from the hotel to downtown will run for just \$5. You can experience the town for yourself!



We will be hosting a themed *Murder Mystery Dinner* Thursday night!

Don't miss out on the fun! The group cut-off date for reservations is February 14, 2019.

HOTEL
and conference center

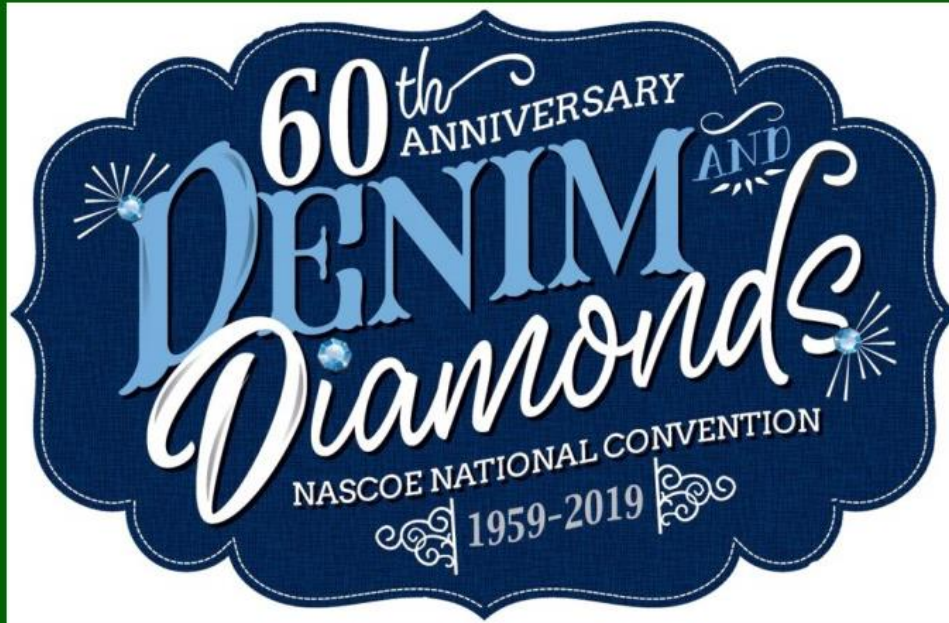
iHotel and Conference Center, 1900 South First Street, Champaign, IL 61820

For reservations: visit www.stayathei.com or call 217-819-5000.

Group code: IASCOE. Room rates are \$93 plus tax.



NASCOE's 60th National Convention will take
place in 2019!



Please join us in Manhattan, Kansas
July 31 – August 3, 2019

Learn more about Manhattan, Kansas and the preliminary plans for the convention by
visiting the KASCOE (Kansas) website at
KASCOE – 2019 NASCOE Convention Website

All-South Rally

April 10 – 13, 2018

Embassy Suites Nashville Airport
Nashville, TN

Hotel Reservation Information

Things to Do, Places to Eat in Nashville



NASCOE Emblems Store

Per the the USDA Office of Communications, the USDA logo is the official and sole identifying mark for the Department and all agency programs. Therefore, we are no longer able to offer the FSA logo on our merchandise. We have a full line of merchandise available with the USDA, NASCOE or RASCOE logos.

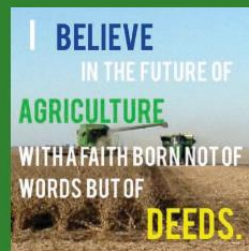
If you have any questions, please contact us.

Thanks,
Emblems by Superior

emblemsbysuperior@gmail.com



New Items



Ceramic Tiles



Electric Heather Polo's, Fleece,
1/4 Zip & Tee's

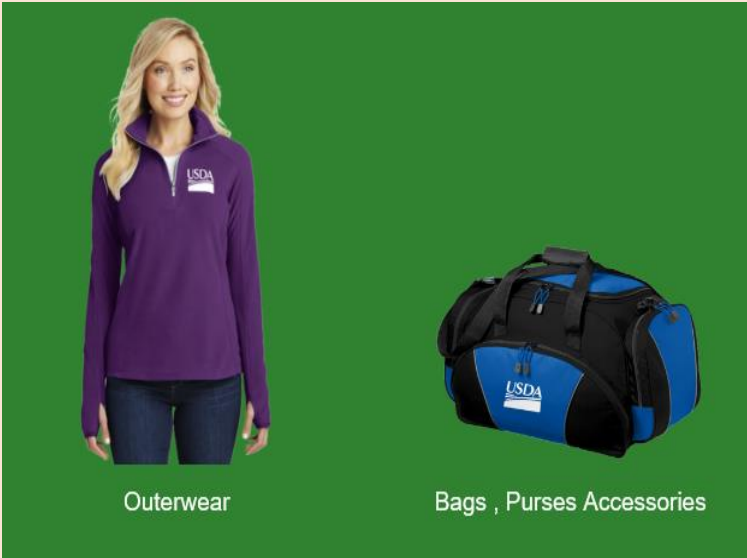


Tall Apparel



Dress Shirts & Polos

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Bags , Purses Accessories



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NASCOE Emblems Provider:

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Marion, KY 42064

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INTRODUCTION TO NASCOE

The National Association of Farm Service Agency County Office Employees (NASCOE) is an organization that represents county level employees of the Farm Service Agency (FSA). We are a professional trade association representing the interests of all county office employees of the FSA, regardless of membership. We also enjoy the strong support of many associate members who come from the ranks of general service (GS) employees who work in FSA state and county offices.

NASCOE was chartered in 1959 to provide a nationwide, nonprofit, nonpartisan, and nongovernmental association supporting County Committee supervision of employees of the Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS), now FSA, to effectively and efficiently deliver programs and excellent customer service to rural America. After USDA's reorganization in 1995, NASCOE was granted exclusive recognition to represent FSA county office employees in negotiations with FSA Management. All officers, executive committee members, and standing committee members are full time FSA employees who perform their NASCOE duties on unofficial time. Travel and business expenses are paid from membership dues.

NASCOE membership is strictly voluntary. Approximately 81% of all eligible county FSA employees are members. Each state has the ability to charter their own state association and all state associations are affiliated with the national organization (NASCOE).

NASCOE provides a national medium for the exchange of ideas and information to facilitate closer cooperation in identifying mutual concerns and solutions. NASCOE also provides leadership training and development for county level employees by seeking opportunities for high achieving FSA employees to effect change on a national level through negotiations, collaboration, and involvement on various committees and task forces. We typically are privileged to represent our members on state and national work groups, task forces, committees, and boards. NASCOE and its state affiliates work to develop and maintain labor-management agreements.

Our objectives are: (1) To assist in every way possible to assure successful operation of the Farm Service Agency in advancing the Agency's mission and objectives; (2) To cooperate and partner with common interest groups and organizations to conserve and improve our nation's natural resources; (3) To secure fair and equitable salaries, working conditions, and retirement benefits for all county office employees; and, (4) To promote professionalism in our employees.

The Farm Service Agency has proven track records for trusted, accountable, efficient, and effective federal farm program delivery and customer service. From our beginning, as Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) to our current identity as FSA, we take great pride in our unique ability to implement farm programs through locally-elected county committees. This delivery system is widely known and accepted as the most effective and efficient delivery model among all federal agencies. NASCOE strives to work with partners and stakeholders to ensure integrity, accountability, and efficiency in promoting rural economic stability, development, and prosperity.

Legislative Update: FY19 Appropriations and 2018 Farm Bill Reauthorization

SEPTEMBER 29, 2018 / NASCOEINFO

Hunter Moorhead, NASCOE's Legislative Consultant, has provide us with the below up-to-date information on the status of both the FY19 Appropriations and 2018 Farm Bill.

Thanks,
Donny Green & Neil Burnette
NASCOE Legislative Chairpersons

The current budget and legislative information is being provided to NASCOE membership and is intended to update full membership regarding both federal spending/appropriations and 2018 Farm Bill reauthorization.

Appropriations

The President is scheduled later today to sign the Defense and Labor Health and Human Services appropriations bills. This legislation will fund the government through December 7, 2018. There will be no government shutdown.

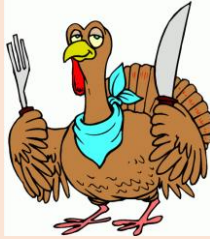
For Agriculture appropriations, the Bill has been negotiated and will likely be formally agreed to following the November mid-term elections. Once final, we will provide details about salaries and expenses funding and any relevant legislative language.

Farm Bill

The House and Senate continue to negotiate the final agreement. Unfortunately, the September 30 deadline will pass without any final resolution. The deadline will have very little impact on commodity and conservation programs. We expect negotiations will continue throughout the Fall. In a perfect world, they would wrap up negotiations before the end of 2018.

Hunter Moorhead
NASCOE Legislative Consultant

May your stuffing be tasty.
May your turkey plump.
May your potatoes and gravy
have nary a lump.



May your yams be delicious
and your pies take the prize,
and may your
Thanksgiving dinner
stay off your thighs!!