National Association of FSA County Office Employees

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**Dear XXXXX**

Americans spend less of their household income on food than any other nation in the world. According to Washington State University, less than 7% in 2008 to be exact; compared to Russia for example, which spent an average of 29.1% during the same year. In 2015, American agriculture exports totaled $133.1 billion coming from just under 2.2 million farms dotted across our nations landscape. While production agriculture contributes about 1% to GDP, the agriculture sector as a whole contributes a 5.7% share of GDP employing 17.3 million full and part time jobs – 9.3% of total U.S. Employment. These numbers can vary greatly depending on economic and market conditions. However, the one factor that remains constant is that we provide the world with the safest and most abundant supply of food and fiber compared to any nation.

While 75% of USDA outlays go to nutrition programs to ensure our urban and youth citizens are not food insecure on the demand side, roughly $6 billion or 3% is used on the supply side through commodity, conservation and disaster programs to ensure there is enough safe and affordable food for nutrition programs to be available.

Congress has many tools at its disposal to ensure production agriculture in America remains strong and vibrant, including a network of 2,100 Farm Service Agency (FSA) county offices that allow a local footprint to administer farm programs and be the face of the government in many rural and economically-challenged areas where high speed internet is not yet accessible or affordable. Depending on a strong foundation of grassroots direction and input from locally-elected county committees, FSA employees have efficiently and dependably administered commodity, disaster and land conservation programs enacted by congress since 1933.

The National Association of FSA County Office Employees (NASCOE) was formed in 1954 as a trade association with voluntary membership focusing on the mission of ensuring our service, effort and loyalty of is matched to the farmers and ranchers we serve. Today, NASCOE’s membership is strong and active, with 5,700 members representing every state in the nation. Our goal is to ensure our agency and her employees, at all levels, serve as the best possible stewards of tax dollars and to provide benefits that exceedingly justify our jobs. As FSA county employees, we are “where the rubber meets the road”. We stand across the counter from, and walk across the fields of, farmers and ranchers who feed our country and our world. We are the connection between Washington, D.C. legislation and implementation of programs designed to work for Rural America. While we face daily challenges, we have the honor and opportunity to work for your constituents and assure them that America takes pride in and appreciates their awesome efficiency and dedication.

I have enclosed an information sheet along with my contact information. Please contact me anytime for local information on rural economic development, farm program administration, or any agricultural or food-related issues. NASCOE wants to be a dependable and reliable partner at your disposal.

Respectfully,

(insert your name and signature)