



KASCOE e-News

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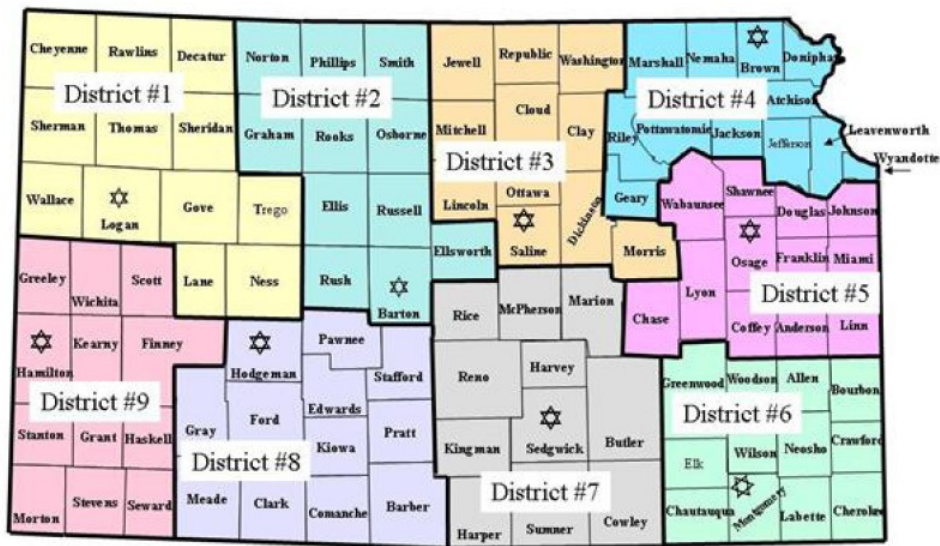
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KASCOE e-News

September 2011

KASCOE Director Elections to be Held in September

This year the **EVEN** numbered KASCOE Districts will hold District Director elections. According to KASCOE bylaws, the elections must take place before September 30th. Positions up for election include: District 2: Marsha Gerstner, District 4: Autumn Simmons (Interim Director), District 6: Karen Holloway & District 8: Lisa Crockett. Instructions will be forthcoming from your local KASCOE Director on how elections in your district will be held. Persons interested in running for director are encouraged to place their names on the candidate listing before the applicable closing deadline. At this point Marsha Gerstner and Karen Holloway have determined that they will not be seeking re-election.

**Current Directors:**

- District 1: Dusty Zerr, Gove County
- District 2: Marsha Gerstner, Barton County
- District 3: David Sweany, Saline County
- District 4: Autumn Simmons (Interim), Doniphan County
- District 5: Johnathon Alley (Alternate), Douglas County
- District 6: Karen Holloway, Montgomery County
- District 7: Joan Sanders, Butler County
- District 8: Lisa Crockett, Edwards County
- District 9: Ernie Battin, Hamilton County

KASCOE is on the Web at
<http://kascoe.org/default.aspx>

First Timers Report— by Vicky Fry, Coffey County

Editor's Note: Vicky Traveled with KASCOE President Brandon Wilson to Hot Springs, Arkansas in August of 2010. This article was supposed to be ran in the spring KASCOE Chronicle and wasn't. We are sorry Vicky. If anyone wants to know about speeding tickets, and bad habits that the KASCOE President has, please see Vicky for details. Special thanks to Vicky for being a good Sport and travel companion. –BJW



Vicky Fry, PT in Coffey County

Who could resist the call from Brandon (Wilson)? ‘We need your help, Myron (Stroup) suggested I call you, but don’t be afraid to say no, so far three people have said no, you have a room all ready and waiting, don’t have to do much, we really would like to have two people from Kansas.’ Actually, I just could not believe that no one else was going to the convention this year. I also cannot believe that it took me 19 years to make it there myself. Besides, don’t tell Myron, but I really can’t tell him no. He does so much for KASCOE and NASCOE. If he asks for help, who am I to say no?

The long and short of the urgency boils down to the fact that each state is allotted two votes for NASCOE convention matters such as election of officers and convention site bids. So if little ole Kansas was to have its full say, someone needed to go to Hot Springs, Arkansas. Why not me? Harvest had not yet started so my farmer husband could get along without me. As for work, everyone knows that any CRP contracts enrolled the first week would have to be done over like always. So why not just go?

Participating in a convention the first time, with the added responsibility of being a delegate was pretty daunting. The NASCOE executive meeting of officers, area execs, and national committee chairs was conducted Wednesday morning through mid-afternoon. All delegates then met Wednesday evening to give a final listing of delegate names for each state. A short report of issues presented at the executive meeting was presented. The officers need to get members input regarding items to be addressed with WDC over the coming year.

Thursday morning roll call made the trip worthwhile. We had a full house and were treated to many interesting, cute, and down right hilarious songs, poems, and speeches from various states promoting their teams, commodities, and home town spirit. After a short break, there were some speeches from the Deputy Administrator of Field Operations, Deputy Administrator of Farm Programs, and Chief Financial Officer. None of whom had been in their positions a full year!

Myron allowed a minimum time for the breaks in order to try and stay on schedule. Now I have been in meetings with Myron before, and never have I known him to be such a stickler for staying on schedule! (Don’t tell Bob Meyer!)

After lunch were the committee meetings. Brandon suggested I attend the legislative meeting. The legislative committee had compiled a list of questions and issues they wanted discussed at the area meetings that were held next. The area meetings are for the NASCOE areas to gather and discuss the issues, return answers to the national committees, and the results of those sessions are brought before the entire convention on Saturday. Mid-afternoon Thursday was a listening session between convention-goers and the MIDAS representatives. I dropped in for the last few minutes of that, and gathered they were generally receiving “hell” regarding the failure of our current national web environment.

Many states got into the swing of Gangster night on Thursday evening by dressing in their favorite 20's style. Why Gangster night? It seems that Hot Springs became the place for gangsters to gather and relax during the prohibition days. It was far away from the cities, and south of the Mason/Dixon line.

Friday morning the candidates for offices announced their intention to run. (More speeches.) Then the states presented their bids for the 2012 NASCOE convention; that race got hot and heavy. Every time we turned around there was a bright yellow North Carolina T-shirt! Idaho became the successful bidder on Saturday, pretty much due to the statement that there had only been 4 national conventions west of the Rockies. (Apparently Idaho doesn't consider Denver to be west of the Rockies. Arkansas was kind enough to list past convention sites and when I ignored the two in Denver, they were absolutely correct.) NASCOE is all about tradition and family, so to be fair to family, it had to be Idaho.

Aside from roll-call, the question and answer panel on Friday was worth the price of admission and the most interesting part of the whole convention. Jonathan Coppess' answers were some of the greatest 'nonanswers' I have ever witnessed, and very eloquent. Much heat was felt by Ricky Valentine, Chief Financial Officer, because he accepted responsibility for ARS. As a result of that admission, he received the bulk of the questions!

After lunch it was back to the area meetings to finish discussions and prepare responses for the national committee meetings. Then off to the committee meetings to finalize the issues. Friday night was Arkansas night "A little on the Trashy Side" with smoked meats and Barbeque for more people than I had seen all week.

Saturday morning brought the whole convention to its conclusion. We experienced the formality of official nominations for the offices. I was very thankful we were allowed to utilize 'secret' ballots. The area committee chairs presented responses to the program committees' questions based on opinions gleaned at the area meetings. These responses provide our officers and representatives' guidance for the coming year so they are aware of how members feel about issues.

Saturday evening brought our stay in Arkansas to a close with a 'Diamonds and Pearls' Banquet. Everyone dressed in their best, awards were presented and goodbyes were said.

Those are the 'nuts and bolts' of a NASCOE convention from the eyes of a 'newbie'. If you still believe your year is complete without attending a NASCOE convention, try the following:

- Do you know which senators and representatives walk the talk when they claim to be on our side? Your NASCOE representatives know how the people in WDC really vote on legislation.
- Would you like to have a face to face with the person responsible for ARS? Or do you just like to talk about giving them your opinion?
- Would you like to win money just for meeting new people? NASCOE has a contest for 'first timers' that actually pays money for the 3 who get the most signatures.
- Would you like an excuse to travel to another state and see what it has to offer?
- Does anyone really know how many NASCOE 'hats' Brandon Wilson wears? He is our KASCOE district president, KASCOE state president, SW area membership committee, NAFEC liaison...
- What is NASCOE doing to communicate with the new generation of employees? NASCOE and KASCOE are now on Face book.
- Do you know how many times NASCOE has testified before congress in the past year? Two, considering they have not been invited twice in the past 10 years that is a major achievement. By the way, the transcripts of those testimonies are linked on Face book, in case you don't have the time to search the official NASCOE site!
- Do you believe the NASCOE PAC dollars had anything to do with receiving the congressional invitations to visit with NASCOE? If you don't, I have some swamp-land for sale in Florida, call me.

How Will Your Producers Report Their Acreage?

Editors Note: Special thanks to Ernie Battin in Hamilton County for pointing out this article. Kansas has four counties participating in a wheat reporting pilot this fall (McPherson, Marion, Dickinson & Saline). The pilot will integrate acreage and production reporting into "one stop" for all agencies. NASCOE is paying special attention to this pilot since it will be the first of it's kind that allows producers to choose who they report acreage to: FSA or their Crop insurance agent or at home. Acreage reporting dates and the acreage reporting database will be common in all states and counties for both RMA and FSA next summer. More information can be found on the Federal Register at the following website: <http://www.rma.usda.gov/regs/2011/acrsi.pdf>. More information will be forthcoming. -BJW

USDA is Hoping to Cut Red Tape

By: AgriNews Online
8/9/2011 2:41:05 PM

An initiative is under development to simplify reporting processes, dates and data definitions across all U.S. Department of Agriculture agencies.

The Acreage Crop Reporting and Streamlining Initiative is an effort to reduce the red tape and duplicate reporting required of farmers and ranchers.

Agencies participating in the ACRSI include Risk Management Agency, Farm Services Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service and National Agricultural Statistics Service.

In addition, ACRSI is developing collaborative relationships between agencies and the private sector in the use of innovative technologies to encourage producers to utilize Farm Information Management Systems to assist in meeting USDA program participation requirements.

"Producers submit almost five million FSA and crop insurance acreage reports a year. Those that participate in both crop insurance and FSA programs are required to provide redundant information," said Michael Scuse, USDA acting under secretary for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services.

Scuse was the opening keynote speaker at the recent InfoAg Conference and said the FSA information technology modernization project known as the Modernize and Innovate the Deliver of Agricultural Systems "can change how USDA conducts its business."

"This initiative has a very high priority for USDA and is going to take a tremendous effort by USDA to keep this initiative moving forward at a significant pace," he said. "I've told staff that I personally feel that this initiative will be the most important thing that we have done at USDA, and I also told them the train's left the station and we're not going back. "The initiative is a much needed improvement to how we have done business in the past. It is one of the tools that will allow us to do our jobs more effectively and more efficiently in the future."

The goal of the ACRSI is to establish common data elements and automated processes for producers to report common information to USDA programs, simplify and reduce the reporting burden on producers and reduce USDA administrative and operating costs by sharing similar data across participating agencies.

The initial phase of this project is focusing on recommending a standards set of USDA business definitions and reporting requirements for business entity types, location, crops, acreage, program dates and production history information. The approved standards will be made available to the public and private sector providers. In the last year, the team has been developing recommendations to meet the needs of USDA agencies, eliminate repetitive information collecting and simply producer reporting.

Red Tape Continued...

These include a single list of common business entity types to be used by RMA, FSA, NRSC and NASS in order to identify customers beginning in 2012.

The plan also includes the consolidation of RMA and FSA acreage reporting dates to a single crop reporting date in each state beginning in the spring of 2012.

The streamline initiative will allow for common data to be collected once from a producer and used by the other agency programs in which the producer chooses to participate. This will decrease the amount of duplicate or similar information that is collected and required to be entered a second time for additional programs. "We've been working collaboratively with members of the commercial agriculture industry on developing procedures, processes and standards to allow producers to use information from the Farm Management Information System and precision agricultural systems for determining acreage, production and other key information needed to participate in USDA's programs," Scuse said.

By establishing USDA standards, private industry will be able to choose, develop and include services to help producers meet USDA's participation requirements.

The initiative is considering providing producers access to a USDA website to enter their information by a secured USDA website at their convenience, reducing the amount of time required to fully report their annual crop acreage information. "We know this will not be for everyone, and producers that are not interested in this option will continue to be able to report their information to their county Farm Services Agency office or to their crop insurance agent as they do today," Scuse said.

He said if a report is filed with the county officer rather than electronically, that report will be shared by the RMA agent. "We're not going to attempt to cut our county offices or county offices staff. We realize that our county offices are in fact the backbone of the Farm Services Agency, and we're going to continue to need those," he said. "There are some who don't have the technology and don't feel comfortable using that will always want to go to our county offices." Another reporting option for those producers who have a Farm Management Information System that incorporates precision farming or has a farm management service will be able to submit an electronic file containing their common information to USDA.

"This process will not be collected for obtaining new or more information from the producer farmers and rancher than what is collected under current methods," Scuse said. "Both of these processes are being considered and need to be further refined and approved.

"If the producer chooses to use a website or submit an electronic file to the FSA, RMA approved insurance providers and crop insurance agents will continue to have the same responsibilities for administrating your programs under the current legislative authority when using that common information."

The aim of this initiative is to help the agencies under USDA "do a better job conducting a better business and reduce duplication and the burden on our producers and our USDA staff," he said.

"Too many times USDA, RMA, FSA and all the staff, sometimes, I think we forget about why we're there, about why we do the jobs, and our job is to provide service to farmers and ranchers across the United States.

"This initiative is going to help us do that - provide a better service to those that need it. It will be a service that's going to be more timely, a service that will be more accurate and a service that's going to reduce a lot of the work in our field offices across the United States.



Undersecretary Michael



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File in PM-14

Questions/Comments?
Contact Brandon Wilson

Free \$1,000 Death Benefit for NASCOE Members

All NASCOE members are automatically covered by \$1000 worth of Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance provided by JM Marketing. Coverage is 100% Association paid. To secure this coverage free of charge NASCOE Members must fill out the [NASCOE Group Accident Death & Dismemberment Insurance Beneficiary Designation Form](#). The form requires you to include some basic information about yourself plus designation information for a primary and contingent beneficiary. As NASCOE members, you are eligible to purchase additional coverage up to \$500,000 without evidence of insurability. The enrollment form and a fact sheet on the free policy can be found by clicking on *Committees* and *Benefits* at the KASCOE Website: <http://kascoe.org/default.aspx>.

USDA Describes it's use of Farm Service Agency Crop Acreage Numbers

Taken from Online Magazine Growing Georgia. The public can now access USDA crop reporting acreage online.

The USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service describes in a new document how it uses USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) crop data in its crop acreage estimating process.

The agency uses the FSA data to supplement the vast array of detailed survey data it collects from producers to make reliable crop acreage estimates. The FSA data are incorporated into the estimating process along with other variables.

In doing so, NASS takes account of variations between the two USDA agencies in definitions, categories of data collected, and the time of reporting.

The full description of how NASS uses the FSA acreage data is available at: www.nass.usda.gov/Education_and_Outreach/Understanding_Statistics/FSA_Acreage.pdf

The following is a link to FSA crop acreage information posted on line on August 15, 2011: www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=newsroom&subject=landing&topic=foi-er-fri-cad

Mark Your Calendar

- **District Elections:** Must be completed by September 30th (See related article)
- **November 10th and 11th:** 2011 Kansas Employee Organization Convention at Hays, Kansas.
- **Award Nominations:** Ongoing. See the KASCOE Website for more details. <http://kascoe.org/default.aspx>