

ASCS COUNTY COMMITTEE SYSTEM
(Functions and Elections)

I. FUNCTIONS OF THE ASCS COUNTY COMMITTEES

A. Acreage allotments and marketing quotas

1. Determine size of individual farm acreage allotments each year
2. Establish farm normal yields
3. consider complaints of producers relating to farm acreage allotments
4. Arrange for and supervise marketing quota referendums and certifying the results to the State ASC office
5. Appear before marketing quota review committees when producers have appealed determinations on marketing quotas
6. Through designated employees, provide for accurate and timely checking of performance
7. Determine penalties and adjustment
8. When quotas are in effect, cause marketing cards and certificates to be issued to producers who have been determined to be eligible to receive such cards and certificates
9. Arrange for investigation of irregularities and consider violations

B. The Agricultural Conservation Program (ACP)

1. Develop the county ACP in cooperation with designated agencies and organizations
2. See that farmers are informed of program provisions and that they have an opportunity to request cost-sharing (The Extension Service and other agencies assist in the educational and informational phases of the program)
3. Review farmers' requests for cost-sharing and approve those which will achieve the most and best-quality conservation work
4. Budget program (ACP) funds, keeping approvals for cost-sharing within available funds, and budget funds for technical services
5. Hear and make decisions on program appeals; make findings on violations of program provisions
6. Determine policy in the local adaptation and administration of the program

C. The Soil Bank Program

1. Give overall supervision to program administration in the county
2. Establish basic annual rates per acre for land on which requested
3. Establish a farm Soil Bank base for the farms to which the base is applicable
4. Inform and instruct community committeemen and farmers generally about necessary details and requirements of the program
5. Make recommendations to the State ASC committee for approved conservation practices to be carried out on Conservation Reserve land
6. Recommend rates of cost-sharing for conservation practices to be carried out on Conservation Reserve land
7. Review, approve, adjust, and recommend the cancelation of Conservation Reserve contracts on behalf of the Secretary
8. Through designated employees, provide for accurate and timely checking of performance and inspections
9. Arrange for the investigation and consideration of contract violations

D. Price Support and Incentive Programs

1. Counsel and advise the county office manager with respect to special or unusual cases not covered in official instructions
2. Supervise the determination of producers' eligibility for price support
3. In the case of cotton appoint loan clerks and witnesses for equity transfers
4. Make sure that all cases involving theft, fraud, conversion, or other irregularities are reported promptly to the State ASC Committee
5. Make the determinations required by regulations and instructions covering price supports

E. Storage Activities

I. Farm Storage Facility Loans

- a. Determine that the facility is needed and that the bushel-capacity proposed is in keeping with program objectives
- b. Approve loans up to \$2,500. (Loans above that amount must be referred to the State ASC Committee with the recommendation of the county committee prior to the issuance of a commitment)
- c. Determine that the amount of the loan does not exceed the percentage of the total cost established as a maximum for the State by the State ASC committee
- d. Consider requests for extension or deferment of current installments
- e. Call loan when required
- f. Consider requests for subleasing of facility
- g. Consider requests for use of facility for other than approved commodities

2. Mobile Drying Equipment Loans

- a. Determine that the drying equipment is needed
- b. Approve loans up to \$3,000. (Applications for loans over \$3,000. must be submitted to the State ASC committee prior to the issuance of a commitment)
- c. Determine that the amount of the loan does not exceed the percentage of the cost established as a maximum for the State by the State ASC committee
- d. Consider requests for extension or deferment of current installments
- e. Call loans when required

3. CCC Storage

- a. See that leasing of bin sites is properly carried out
- b. Supervise and maintain site, bins and equipment
- c. Supervise receipt and withdrawal of CCC-owned grain at bin sites
- d. Supervise, inspect, and maintain grain stored at bin sites or in leased emergency facilities
- e. Report monthly to the State Committee on the quantity & condition of grain stored
- f. Rent bins to farmers or grain warehousemen, and check rented bins to be sure that they are being used in accordance with rental agreement

F. Sugar Act Programs (Beet & Cane)

1. Conduct hearings and make decisions on wage claims of laborers
2. Determine
 - a. Abandonment and deficiency areas
 - b. Farms qualifying for abandonment and deficiency payments
 - c. Areas qualifying for prevented acreage credit
 - d. Farms qualifying for such credit
3. Determine from available records compliance with all applicable requirements such as proportionate share (acreage), prohibition against use of child labor, wage rates paid to workers
4. Approve reports to State ASC Offices on child labor violation, wage claims, and wage rates
5. Certify producers applications for payments
6. Make determinations as to sugar payments and production

III. ELECTION OF THE ASCS COUNTY COMMITTEEMEN

A. COMMUNITY COMMITTEES

1. Each county is divided into one or more communities (in Louisiana counties are called "Parishes.")
2. Each community annually elects a community committee by direct farmer vote.
 - a. Date of election
 - 1) varies from state to state, county to county
 - 2) in Louisiana, elections take place in August
 - 3) in Mississippi, elections take place in December
 - b. Members of Community Committee
 - 1) Chairman
 - 2) Vice-Chairman
 - 3) Regular member
 - 4) First Alternate (in case a regular member is incapacitated)
 - 5) Second Alternate (in case a regular member is incapacitated)
 - c. Requirements to hold office as a committeeman
 - 1) legal voting age (not required if conducting the operation of an entire farm)
 - 2) interest in farm as owner, tneant, or share-cropper or part-owner
 - 3) must not have been dishonorably discharged from the army
 - 4) must not have been convicted of fraud, larceny, embezzlement, or felony (this can be waived by the state committee or deputy administrator)
 - 5) must meet certain other requirements designed primarily to prevent partisan political activity in committee decisions or operations
 - d. Requirements to vote in committee election
 - 1) Legal voting age (not required if conducting the operation of an entire farm)
 - 2) Interest in farm as owner, partOowner, tenant or sharecropper
 - e. How candidates names get on ballot
 - 1) They are put there by existing community committee
 - 2) They can be put there by petition signed by 6 or more farmers in the community (farmers should be notified when nominations are open)
 - f. Voting procedure
 - 1) Ballots are usually sent by mail to all farmers in the community who are on the mailing list at the County ASC Office (all farmers should be on list)
 - 2) Ballots may be cast at polling place in some communities, in which case place should be announced well in advance
 - 3) In case of mail ballot, ballots are cast by return mail and opened in public by county ASC office manager, who announces result
 - 4) In case of polling place, a member of the community committee and an assistant he selects, monitor the election
 - 5) Each farmer may vote for up to 5 candidates
 - 6) The candidate who received the highest number of votes becomes the committee chairman, the candidate receiving the next highest becomes the vice-chairman, next the regular member, then the 1st and 2nd alternates
 - 7) The newly elected chairman of the Community Committee goes to the County Convention to elect the county committee

B. County Convention

1. After all the community committees have been elected, a county convention is held to elect the County ASCS Committee
2. The chairman of each community committee attends the county convention (in counties with only one community the community committee automatically becomes the county committee)
3. The representatives at the county convention elect the county ASCS Committee (If any community committeemen are elected to the county committee, they may no longer be members of the community committee)
 - a. Members of the County ASCS Committee
 - 1) Chairman
 - 2) Vice-chairman
 - 3) Regular Member
 - 4) 1st alternate
 - 5) 2nd alternate
 - b. Requirements to hold office as county committeeman
(Same as community committeemen)