USDA Farm Service Agency county committee election nominations began June 15.

Farmers, ranchers and landowners are encouraged to nominate farmer and rancher candidates to serve on their local FSA county committee by the Aug. 1.

Elected county committee members serve a three-year term and are responsible for making decisions on FSA disaster, conservation, commodity, and price support programs, as well as other important federal farm program issues.

“County Committees are unique to FSA and are a valuable resource that gives locally elected farmers and ranchers who participate in FSA programs the opportunity to impact farm programs at the local level,” said Custer County FSA executive director Ryan Coleman. “I hope to see a high level of participation during the nomination and election process.”

Producers may nominate themselves or others as candidates. Organizations that represent minority and women farmers and ranchers may also nominate candidates.

Nominees must participate in a program administered by FSA, be eligible to vote in a county committee election and reside in the local administrative area in which the person is a candidate.

To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign form FSA-669A. The form and more information about county committee elections are available online at: www.fsa.usda.gov/elections.

“In order to have fair representation of the demographics and agricultural interests in the community, I encourage all producers, including women, minority and beginning farmers and ranchers to participate in the nomination and election process,” Coleman said.

County committees are comprised of three to five members elected by local producers. All newly elected county committee members and alternates will take office Jan. 1, 2013.

Nomination forms must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on Aug. 1.