

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Farm Service Agency

Supporting Statement
OMB Number 0560-0229

Justification:

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

The Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act (16 U.S. C. 590h (b)(5)(B), as amended, authorizes FSA to prepare a report of election that includes, among other things, “the race, ethnicity and gender of each nominee, as provided through the voluntary self-identification of each nominee.” The best way to obtain this information is through a set of questions, which are on the FSA-669-A, “Nomination Form for County FSA Committee Election”. The instructions for completing this part of the form indicate that completion is voluntary.

2. How, by whom, and for what purpose will this information be used?

The data collected on the FSA Nomination Form is used in the county office for the upcoming County Committee Election.

- Information collected includes; “race, ethnicity and gender of each nominee, as provided through the voluntary self-identification of each nominee”
- The information is to be input into the computer and transported to Kansas City in preparation for the upcoming election
- The nominee or the nominator is allowed to bring the form into the office in person, or the form may be mailed, or submitted electronically.
- The information will be collected annually and put into a spreadsheet for the Secretary’s review.

In addition, the FSA must maintain and make readily available to the public, via website and otherwise in electronic and paper form, all data required to be collected and computed under section 2501A(c) of the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, clause (iii)(V) as amended, collected since the most recent Census of Agriculture. After each Census of Agriculture, the Secretary must report to Congress the rate of loss or gain in participation by each socially disadvantaged group, by race, ethnicity, and gender, since the previous Census.

3. Use of Information Technology.

The nominee or the nominator is allowed to bring the form into the office in person, or the form may be mailed, or submitted electronically by producers who have an electronic signature on file at <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainservlet>.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

No duplication of this information collection activities are found inside and outside of the FSA.

5. Methods to minimize burden on small businesses or other small entities.

The collecting of this information is being done only for individuals. No additional burden is placed on small businesses or an entity above that required for the normal collection of information from the individuals.

6. Consequences if information collection were less frequent.

This information is required to be collected on all nominees for COC. It is only requested when an individual agrees to run for the position. If it were not collected in any given year, the Secretary would not be able to prepare the report as required by the regulations.

7. Special Circumstances.

- a. Requiring respondents to report information more than quarterly. The Secretary has also been charged with computing annually the participation rate of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers as a percentage of the total participation of all farmers and ranchers for each program of the Department of Agriculture established for farmers or ranchers. Therefore, the respondents may be asked for this information any time they are nominated and accept the nomination.
- b. Requiring written responses in less than 30 days. There are no information requirements that require written responses in less than 30 days.
- c. Requiring more than an original and two copies. There are no information collection requirements that require more than an original document or a single copy of a document.
- d. Requiring respondents to retain records for more than 3 years. There are no such requirements
- e. Not utilizing statistical sampling. There are no such requirements.
- f. Requiring use of statistical sampling which has not been reviewed and approved by OMB. There are no such requirements.
- g. Requiring a pledge of confidentiality. There are no such requirements.
- h. Requiring submission of propriety trade secrets. There are no such requirements.

8. Federal Register notice, summarization of comments and consultation with persons outside the Agency.

A Federal Register Notice Request for public comments was published on Wednesday, March 13, 2008 at 73 CFR 13537. No comments were received.

The following three names outside of the agency are provided.

Allen Richardson, Jr.
12525 Wilderness Park Dr.
Spotsylvania, VA 22553

Paul Clark
751 Knox Way
Gilson, IL 61436

Rodney Cornelius
Grant, NE 69140
(308) 352-4129
rcornelius@pinbak.com

The Secretary computes annually the participation rate of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers as a percentage of the total participation of all farmers and ranchers for each program of the Department of Agriculture established for farmers or ranchers.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents.

The agency is not providing any payments or gifts to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for assurance in statute, regulation or agency policy.

Information collected is handled according to established FSA procedures implementing the Privacy Act, Freedom of Information Act, and OMB Circular 130, "Responsibilities for the Maintenance of Records about Individuals by Federal Agencies".

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, etc. that are commonly considered private.

From the information collected the Secretary shall compute annually the participation rate of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. In reporting the rates the Secretary shall report the participation rate of socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers according to race, ethnicity, and gender. No other questions of a sensitive nature are asked.

12. Provide estimates of burden and annualized costs to respondents.

The annualized costs are estimated for 10,000 eligible voters. An estimated 10,000 respondents complete a nomination form.

The estimated number of responses per nomination form is 1.

The estimated average travel time to and from the USDA Service Center is 1 hour. 5,000 respondent times 1 hour equals 5,000 burden hours for travel.

Note: Estimate 50% of respondents drive into the office and others will mail or complete form on-line.

The estimated average time to respond is .17 hours.

- 0.17 times 10,000 = 1,700 burden hours
- 1,700 plus 5,000 travel hours equals 6,700 total burden hours in this information collection.

An estimate of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collection of information is \$87,100

- \$15.50 average hourly wage per hour times 6,700 = \$103,850

13. Provide estimates of cost burden to respondents or record or record keepers.

There are no capital/startup costs associated with this information collection.

14. Provide estimates of annualized costs to the Federal Government and to the respondents.

The costs of form development, printing and distributing are estimated to be approximately \$2,000. This estimate is probably on the high side because the form already exists, and only needs modifications to collect the needed information.

The county employee cost is 2500 hours to process the form at the GS-7 Step 5 hourly salary of \$17.67 total cost to the Federal Government: \$44,175.

The total estimated annualized costs to the Federal Government is \$46,175.

15. Explain reasons for changes in burden, including the need for any increase.

There are no changes to the information collection since the last OMB approval.

16. Tabulation, analysis, and publication plans.

The collection process of the information begins no later than 20 days after the date on which an election is held. A county committee files an election report with the Secretary and the State Office of the Farm Service Agency that includes the race, ethnicity, and gender of each nominee within that time frame. This information is provided through the voluntary self-identification of each nominee. A National report is also completed to be shown to the Secretary regarding the results of the election. The entire process must be completed not later than 90 days after the date of the election. Beginning date is September 1 of each year and ending date of complete process is March 1 of each year. The results of the election publish on the FSA employee/public website.

17. Reasons display of expiration date of OMB approval is inappropriate.

The agency is seeking approval to not display the OMB expiration date on the form because the county committee election process is on-going and held every year.

18. Exceptions to 83-1 certification statement.

The agency is able to certify compliance withal provisions under Item 19 of OMB Form 83-I.

**19. How is the information collection related to the Customer Service Center?
(Will this information collection be part of their one stop shopping?)**

The information collection is to ensure the inclusion of socially disadvantaged customers on the Farm Service Agency County Committee. This information collection is a part of Customer Service Center. The nomination form is available at Service Centers, or online at this site, <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainservlet>.