

Shavano District

SERVING MONTROSE, GUNNISON, AND OURAY COUNTIES



SPRING
2020
VOLUME 23
ISSUE 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

SCD Annual Meeting and BBQ Banquet	2
Farmer of the Year	2
District Election Results	2
Wildlife Conservationists of the Year	3
Conservation Educator of the Year	3
CSFS Temporary Office Closure	4
WRWC Staff Available By Phone, Email, and Zoom	4
“Zoom” into the WRWC Meeting	4
New Soil Conservation Technician in Gunnison	5
What is Conservation Client Gateway	5
SNOTEL Report	6

USDA Service Centers Taking Precautionary Measures to Help Prevent the Spread of Coronavirus

USDA Service Centers Are Open for Business by Phone Appointment Only.

U.S. Department of Agriculture Service Centers are encouraging visitors to take proactive protective measures to help prevent the spread of coronavirus.

USDA Service Centers in Colorado will continue to be open for business by phone appointment only and field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. While our program delivery staff will continue to come into the office, they will be working with our producers by phone, and using online tools whenever possible. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, or any other Service Center agency are required to call their Service Center to schedule a phone appointment. In the event a Service Center is closed, producers can receive assistance from the closest alternate Service Center by phone.

The following Service Centers in Colorado are closed. Please contact an alternate Service Center for immediate assistance: Gunnison Service Center.

Producers can find Service Center phone numbers

at farmers.gov/service-center-locator.

FPAC agencies continue to look at the flexibilities to deliver programs on behalf of producers, just as they have in past situations, such as natural disasters. Farmers and ranchers are resilient and FPAC agencies will continue to deliver the farm safety net programs and resource conservation programs that keep American agriculture in business today and long into the future.

Online services are available to customers with an eAuth account, which provides access to the farmers.gov portal where producers can view USDA farm loan information and payments and view and track certain USDA program applications and payments. Online NRCS services are available to customers through the Conservation Client Gateway. Customers can track payments, report completed practices, request conservation assistance, and electronically sign documents. Customers who do not already have an eAuth account can enroll at farmers.gov/sign-in.

For the most current updates on available services and Service Center status visit farmers.gov/coronavirus. Cont. on pg. 5, “What is Conservation Client Gateway”

SCD Office Temporarily Closed

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic and following the CDC recommendations, the Shavano Conservation District has closed their doors to producers. However, we are still available by phone or email, and continuing to work on projects. If you are unable to get ahold of any of the SCD Staff, Ken Lipton, SCD Board President, is also available if you have questions about the office closing, or information on any of the District’s Services. Ken can be reached at 970-318-1329. We would also encourage all our constituents to follow CDC recommendations for personal safety during the COVID-19 pandemic.

April Board Meeting Cancelled

The Shavano Conservation District Board Meeting scheduled for April 7, 2020 had been cancelled. The next scheduled Shavano Conservation District Board meeting will be on May 12, 2020.



Top 3 Priority/Concerns Identified at Local Work Group Meeting:

1. Water Quality/Quantity
2. Water Demand
3. Weed Management

SCD Annual Meeting & BBQ Banquet

We had a tremendous turnout at the Shavano Conservation District Annual Meeting and BBQ Banquet on March 14, 2020 at the Ute Indian Museum. Jordan Frigetto accepted the Farmer of the Year award, Elizabeth Nava and Linda Daniels accepted the Wildlife Conservationists of the Year award, and Jan Congour, 2nd grade teacher at Northside Elementary, accepted the Conservation Educator of the Year award. The evening also included a presentation from guest speaker Steve Aquafresca, Colorado River Water Conservation District, and a brief Local Work Group Meeting, led by Alyssa Clarida, Conservation Specialist for the Colorado State Conservation Board. During the Local Work Group Meeting, producers were asked to identify their conservation concerns within our District. The identified concerns will be used by the NRCS when developing the Farm Bill Conservation Programs in fiscal year 2020-2021.

Farmer of the Year Award

The 2019 Farmer of the Year is Jordan Frigetto. Jordan received the award in recognition of his endeavors to incorporate new methods in his farming operation to improve, preserve and protect his soil and irrigation water, while maintaining and improving irrigation efficiency and reducing salt load.



Back Row (L to R): Ken Lipton, Jerry Allen, Jordan Frigetto and Jesyka Frigetto
Front Row: Hayden and Allie Frigetto

Jordan has conserved soil and water through the replacement of old ditches with new underground and gated pipe on his own land, as well as helping his landlords change theirs' on land he leases. He practices efficient irrigation by using wider set rows, which results in less furrow erosion than most farmers in the valley. He is also increasing the health of his soil through frequent crop rotations and crop diversity. Jordan is an innovator and is one of the first producers in the Uncompahgre Valley to machine pick his sweet corn and harvest both ears! Jordan also grows other vegetables such as green beans and onions, cattle feed such as alfalfa, grass hay, silage corn and grain corn, and small grains, like spelt, triticale, and barley. Congratulations Jordan!

District Election Results

2020 is an election year for the Shavano Conservation District's Board of Directors. Ron Germann's term will end after the official election, which is May 5th. He has been a board member since 2012 and his last board meeting will be May 12. During the meeting on May 12, the Board will also swear in Shelly Malish, as the new member stepping into Ron's position. Shelly will serve a 3 year term.



(L to R): Bruce Leben, Bert Earle, and Ron Germann

Bert Earle's position as Board Treasurer (she completed Bruce Leben's term after he stepped down in March 2019) expires on May 12 also. Bert has decided not to run for another term, leaving a vacant seat on the Shavano Board of Directors to fill after May.



(L to R): Shelly Malish, Becky Malish, & Glen McLaughlin

Shavano Conservation District would like to thank Ron, Bert, and Bruce for their time and talents given to the District for many years. And we would like to welcome Shelly Malish as she joins the team!



L to R: Marcella Tarantino, Linda Daniels, Elizabeth Nava, & Ken Lipton

Wildlife Conservationists of the Year

Elizabeth Nava manages the Orme Family Partnership LLLP and Linda Daniels manages the Cerro Place LLC, which they each own with their brothers. Both brothers live far away, and Elizabeth and Linda do most of the management since they are in the area. Elizabeth and Linda are cousins, and manage the adjacent ranches jointly, which allows for greater positive impacts to wildlife over a larger scale. Their family homesteaded the ranch in the early 1900s and has used the ranch for livestock grazing and hunting ever since. Their land is on Cerro Summit, near Waterdog Peak, and is home to a wide variety of species, including mule deer, elk, dusky grouse, and is mapped habitat for Gunnison Sage-Grouse.

In 2015, both Elizabeth and Linda signed up for EQIP contracts to better manage their grazing through fencing,

water developments, and some brush treatments to open up areas for cattle to pass through. Historic family photos show that there was no oak or serviceberry a century ago, but it has slowly moved in over the years, forming thick stands that are hard for cattle to get into to forage. When they came in to NRCS, Steve Woodis worked with them to set up a plan to improve grazing, but also worked with Elizabeth and Linda to add in wildlife considerations for Gunnison Sage-Grouse. Elizabeth said that Steve was instrumental in motivating them both to include grouse in their conservation efforts, partially due to his enthusiasm about their unique property, and partially because of the availability of funding for work that benefits grouse.

In the last few years, they have completed 33,565 feet of fencing, three stock ponds, and a spring development to benefit their new rotational grazing system. The grazing system now allows time for plants to go to seed and should re-establish more diverse perennial plants across the landscape, which will benefit big game and sage-grouse nesting habitat. They are currently in the process

Continued on pg. 5...

Conservation Educator of the Year

The 2019 Educator of the Year is Jan Congour, a 2nd grade teacher at Northside Elementary.

Jan led the effort to create the Learning Garden at Northside Elementary. Many of Northside’s students are socio-economically challenged, and many families cannot afford fresh vegetables. Through the Learning Garden, students are taking the first step in learning how to grow what they eat, taking charge of their own nutrition, and also learning how to minimize their carbon footprint.

The Learning Garden has had 3 successful growing seasons and harvest celebrations and has expanded from 6 beds to 11. Each of the grade levels plant and maintain a garden bed, planting 2-3 vegetable varieties. Northside students, families, and staff volunteer to care for the garden in the summer.

In May the school holds a STEM Night. One of the activities includes parents and children working together to plant seed potatoes in soil inside a burlap bag to take home and grow in the bag.

Each spring and fall the School holds Harvest Parties, where

students and their families come to Northside to pick vegetables and get familiar with the garden program. Families are invited to pick and take home a bagful of produce. After harvest, classes prepare a recipe, using the produce they gathered from their grade level garden bed.

In late fall the second-grade students put the garden to rest for the winter, using leaves from the school grounds to work into the soil and for covering the beds to keep the soil healthy.

Jan’s goal this year is for the students to design and build compost bins as a STEM challenge so school kitchen scraps to be turned into a valuable resource to feed the soil.

Jan says, “Everything you need to know can be learned in the garden: cooperation, nurturing, problem solving, sustainability, and stewardship of the earth.”



Jan Congour (center) displays her Teacher of the Year Award while surrounded by her family.



Colorado State Forest Service

West Region Wildfire Council



“A Partnership in Conservation”



CSFS Temporary Office Closure

CSFS Staff Email:

Jodi Rist, Supervisory Forester

jodi.rist@colostate.edu

Austin Shelby, Forester

austin.shelby@colostate.edu

Tanya Banulis Forester

tanya.banulis@colostate.edu

Scott Johnson, Forester

scott.johnson2@colostate.edu

Although the Colorado State Forest Service is temporarily closed, staff are working from home and are available by phone or by email. If you call the CSFS offices (Montrose 970-249-9051; Gunnison 719-539-2579) a menu will direct you to each staff members' voicemail. CSFS Staff will be checking their messages periodically, and will respond to your voicemail message as soon as possible.

WRWC staff is available by phone, email, and Zoom.

In light of the ongoing and rapidly changing news regarding Coronavirus (COVID-19), the West Region Wildfire Council office in Montrose is currently closed to ensure the health and safety of our staff, board members, and community. We remain dedicated to carrying out our mission, and staff will be working remotely and available for assistance. You can contact our staff by phone, email, or Zoom.



Phone: If you call our office at 970-615-7300, a menu will direct you to each of our staff members' voicemail. Our staff will be checking their messages periodically, and will respond to your voicemail message soon as possible.

Email: Of course, our staff members have access to their emails and will respond in a timely manner. Our staff email list is provided here.

Zoom: Our staff members can also meet virtually. Please contact our staff to set a Zoom meeting.

Thank you for understanding as we navigate this unprecedented time of social distancing. Please check our webpage (www.cowildfire.org) for updates as they arise.

WRWC Staff Email:

Jamie Gomez, Executive Director:

jamie.gomez@COwildfire.org

Lilia Falk, Director of Finance and HR:

lilia.falk@COwildfire.org

Maggie McCaffrey, Assistant Director:

maggie.mccaffrey@COwildfire.org

Courtney Haynes, Mitigation Specialist:

courtney.haynes@COwildfire.org

“Zoom” into the WRWC Meeting, April 9, 1-3pm

The West Region Wildfire Council will hold their April Meeting through a “Zoom” online, video conferencing meeting. The meeting is on April 9, 2020, 1:00-3:00pm. You can register for the online Zoom meeting at www.COWildfire.org. It only takes a minute (or two) and does not require an account or password. After registering, you will receive a link and passcode to access the meeting and will be given the opportunity to add the meeting to your calendar.

The featured speaker for the April meeting is Cordell Taylor, GMUG Forest FMO. Cordell will be presenting on Potential Operational Delineations (PODs). PODS were developed by USFS/Rocky Mountain Research Station and Colorado Forest Restoration Initiative (CFRI). The Potential Operational Delineations (POD) process “front-loads” wildfire response planning based on detailed risk assessment maps. Created collaboratively based on potential control lines, topographic features, vegetation, values at risk, etc., these maps help fire personnel identify “wildfire response areas” and primary response strategies: Maintain, Restore Protect, Exclude, High Complexity.



New Soil Conservation Technician in Gunnison

Katie Walsh started in the Gunnison NRCS Field Office mid February. Katie says, “I wanted to work for NRCS in Colorado because of the diverse ecosystems and landscapes associated with the Rocky Mountains and the opportunity to participate in on the ground management.” She grew up on the coast of California and started her career as a seasonal employee for the National Park Service. Katie has a strong background in wildland fire, fire ecology and vegetation management. She chose a career in agriculture because she is passionate about working with the public to improve the efficiency and sustainability of land use on both public and private land. “My career goals include continuing to learn about NRCS conservation methods, techniques and implementation,” Katie continues.



When Katie is not working, she loves cross-country skiing, hiking, biking, rafting and camping. When she is not exploring the outdoors, she enjoys quilting and gardening.

What is the Conservation Client Gateway?

Continued from Front Page...

Conservation Client Gateway is a secure web portal that lets you work with NRCS online. Landowners and land managers, whether operating as individuals or authorized representatives of business entities, can track their payments, report completed practices, request conservation assistance, and electronically sign documents. Conservation Client Gateway provides users the flexibility to determine when they want to engage with NRCS online and when they prefer in-person conservation planning assistance. To set up an account and log in, go to: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/cgate/>.



Wildlife Conservationist of the Year

Continued from pg. 3...

of treating 720 acres of oak, serviceberry and pinyon-juniper trees to improve cattle forage and remove trees that predators use as perches while searching for sage-grouse nests (122 acres down, 600 acres in progress). Following their brush treatments, Elizabeth and Linda will be seeding disturbed areas and treating weeds, which will be needed to restore the rangelands after disturbance. Their upcoming work will include 190 rock structures, which slow the flow of water through drainages and catch sediment before it is transported downhill. These structures slowly help to rebuild the water table, restore perennial vegetation in drainages and swales, and improve insect abundance for grouse as they rear their young (which eat insects for the first several months of their lives).

Monitoring since their project began shows a great improvement in grass heights and residual grass cover,

which provides concealment for nesting birds. Their changes to grazing, as well as other management actions like rock work and brush management, will benefit grouse throughout their annual life cycle, as well as providing excellent forage for big game. This project is time and labor intensive, but they have done an excellent job and are putting in quality work!

Linda said “Our families for 6 generations have enjoyed this land and will continue the practices of improving the environment for the next generation to enjoy. There are few people who have such a long and rich legacy to live by.” Elizabeth said, “We have an appreciation for having such a great place to grow up, and a responsibility to be conscientious about what they are passing on to the next generations.” They are trying to leave the property in good shape to keep it as an asset for future generations.



Colorado SNOTEL Snow/Precipitation Update Report

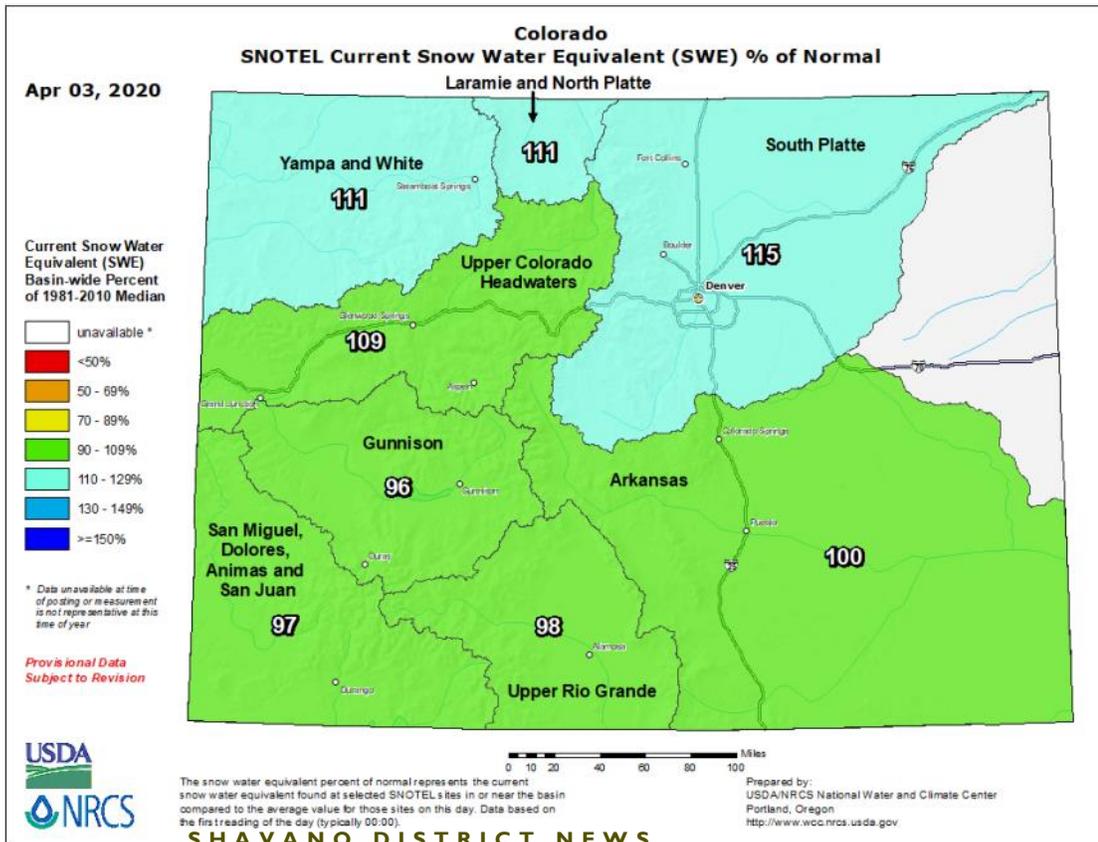
As of THURSDAY: April 3, 2020

BASIN Data Site Name	ELEV. (Ft)	SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT			TOTAL PRECIPITATION		
		Current	Median	Median %	Current	Average	Avg %
GUNNISON RIVER BASIN							
Butte	10160	13.6	13.6	100	12.4	16.0	78
Cochetopa Pass	10020	6.0	3.8	158	6.5	7.2	90
Columbine Pass	9400	15.1	16.6	91	16.9	22.9	74
Idarado	9800	12.3	14.3	86	15.2	18.6	82
Mc Clure Pass	9500	16.1	16.2	99	18.1	20.7	87
Mesa Lakes	10000	11.9	17.3	69	14.7	21.0	70
Overland Res.	9840	10.8	11.7	92	12.5	16.3	77
Park Cone	9600	10.2	10.0	102	10.1	12.0	84
Park Reservoir	9960	20.4	25.5	80	19.6	27.2	72
Porphyry Creek	10760	18.3	15.5	118	16.5	15.4	107
Red Mountain Pass	11200	23.7	23.3	102	23.8	25.7	93
Sargents Mesa	11530	12.1	-M	*	12.6	-M	*
Schofield Pass	10700	29.9	30.8	97	22.6	31.6	72
Slumgullion	11560	14.8	13.7	108	12.2	13.3	92
Upper Taylor	10640	12.3	-M	*	14.2	-M	*
Wager Gulch	11100	10.5	-M	*	12.3	-M	*
				-----			-----
Basin Index (%)				96			81

-M = Missing data

* = Data may not provide a valid measure of conditions.

Units = inches for the Current and Normal Snow Water Equivalent and Total Precip. values



Would you like the SCD News delivered to your in-box?

Call
Mendy Stewart
at 964-3582
or email to
mendy.stewart@co.nacdnet.net

USDA SERVICE CENTER CONTACT INFORMATION

FARM SERVICE AGENCY

970-249-8407

Direct Phone



MIKE STEFFEN, District Director **964-3590**
LORI MEIER, County Executive Director **964-3589**
JO TRICE, Program Technician **964-3572**
DEBBIE STEWART, Program Technician **964-3571**

MONTROSE-GUNNISON-OURAY COUNTY COMMITTEE

BRYAN DISTEL, Chairperson
CHERRI COOPER, Vice Chairperson
ERNIE ETCHART, Regular Member
SARAH MCCONNELL, Regular Member
TYLER HANSON, Regular Member



NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

970-249-8407



Direct Phone

BILL HEAD, Civil Engineering Technician **964-3585**
DAVID OLIVERO, Shavano Engineering Technician **964-3581**
JACKIE KRAGEL, District Conservationist **964-3588**
JEFF LONG, Ag Engineer Project Leader **249-8407**
JEREMY OMVIG, Cultural Resource Specialist **964-3593**
JERRY ALLEN, Shavano IWM Specialist **964-3575**
NANCY DEANS, Program Support Assistant **964-3570**
NICK FOSTER, Engineer Technician **964-3591**
SARAH MYERS, Soil Conservationist **964-3578**



SHAVANO CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Website: www.shavanocd.org

Direct Phone

KEN LIPTON, President **626-3951**
LANNY DENHAM, Vice President **323-5461**
BERT EARLE, Secretary/Treasurer **417-8064**
RON GERMANN **250-1201**
EDWARD ATENCIO **303-898-5855**
JACK BRUNGARDT **249-5081**
ROXI STEWART **249-0706**
SHELLY MALISH, Board Elect
SETH URBANOWITZ, CSU Extension, ex-officio **874-2197**
PENNY BISHOP, Manager **964-3584**
MENDY STEWART, Education Coordinator **964-3582**

HOW TO CONTACT US

Montrose USDA Service Center
102 Par Place, Montrose, CO 81401
PHONE (970) 249-8407

Phone Extension

Farm Service Agency.....2
 Natural Resources Conservation Service.....3
 Shavano Conservation District.....3



COLORADO STATE FOREST SERVICE

Web Site: csfs.colostate.edu

MONTROSE FIELD OFFICE — 970-249-9051

(Montrose, Ouray and San Miguel Counties)

New Address - 535 S Nevada Ave, Montrose

Phone Extension

JODI RIST, Supervisory Forester **132**
 jodi.rist@colostate.edu
AUSTIN SHELBY, Forester **133**
 austin.shelby@colostate.edu
SCOTT JOHNSON, Forester **127**
 scott.johnson2@colostate.edu
TANYA BANULIS, Forester **129**
 tanya.banulis@colostate.edu

GUNNISON FIELD OFFICE - 970-641-6852

(Gunnison and Hinsdale Counties)

106 Maintenance Drive, Gunnison, CO 81230

SAM PANKRATZ, Supervisory Forester
MIKE TARRANTINO, Forester
KYLE KLEVE, Forester
ANN WOOD, Administrative Assistant



WEST REGION WILDFIRE COUNCIL

Phone 970-615-7300 www.cowildfire.org

New Address - 510 S Cascade Ave, Montrose

LILIA FALK, Director of Finance & Agreements Lilia.Falk@COwildfire.org
JAMIE GOMEZ, Executive Director Jamie.Gomez@COwildfire.org
MAGGIE MCCAFFREY, Assist. Director Maggie.mccaffrey@cowildfire.org
COURTNEY HAYNES Courtney.Haynes@COwildfire.org
 Wildfire Mitigation Specialist - Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel Counties

Dates to Remember

Now	Report any crop or livestock losses/adverse weather conditions to the county office within 15 days of the event.
April 7, 2020	Cancelled—Shavano CD Board Meeting 7:00pm
April 26-May 2, 2020	Stewardship Week
May 12, 2020	4th Grade Natural Resource Festival, Tentative
May 12, 2020	Shavano CD Board Meeting, 7:00pm
May 25, 2020	Memorial Day - Office Closed
June 15-19, 2020	Ag in the Classroom Summer Teachers Institute-Advanced Course Brighton, CO
June 9, 2020	Shavano CD Board Meeting, 7:00pm
June 15, 2020	Acreage Reporting Deadline for Onions
June 27, 2020	Cancelled—UWP Ridgway RiverFest
June 30, 2020	2020 ARC/PLC Enrollment Deadline
July 3, 2020	Independence Day (Observed) - Office Closed
July 4, 2020	Independence Day
July 6-10, 2020	Ag in the Classroom Summer Teachers Institute, Grand Jtn, CO
July 5-11, 2020	Camp Rocky, Divide, Colorado
July 14, 2020	Shavano CD Board Meeting, 7:00pm
July 15, 2020	Acreage Reporting Deadline for Perennial forage and all other crops
September 30, 2020	Deadline for updating PLC Yields

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its program and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of Discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).

Reasonable accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment to attend or participate in meetings or events sponsored by the Farm Service Agency. If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in one of our meetings/events/functions, please call the FSA county office and we will be happy to make any needed arrangements.