



NACS was founded in 1973 and is a professional organization of USDA-Farm Service Agency employees working to support rural America. Our mission is to expand, improve and expedite USDA services, providing better delivery of Farm Loan Programs to farmers and ranchers around the United States.

2026 NACS Convention Newsletter



2026 NACS National Convention

The 2026 National Convention was held in Colorado Springs, Colorado on June 29th - July 1st at The Antlers Hotel. The Antlers hotel is one of the city's most iconic landmarks and has a history dating back 143 years, it's known for its central downtown location, views of Pikes Peak, and one of the most recognizable buildings in Colorado Springs.

It was yet again another successful national convention! Members heard updates from National Leadership both in person and virtually. They were able to experience a first hand preview from Allocore of the new Guaranteed Loan Software and hear about the new Modernization Initiatives going on with Farm Loan Programs, Future State (FY28).

The Convention Committee did a wonderful job planning and organizing this year's convention. Maureen Mausbach announced the committee was already working on finding a location for the 2027 National Convention. She explained the process for choosing a convention site and the obstacles the committee has to work around when planning convention.

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L to R: Keith Hiser, NADD President; Kayla Mattson, NASCOE President; Nancy Reiff, NASE President; Jerry Sonnenberg, CO CED; Dustin Mattingly, NACS President; Ransom Satterlee, FLCA Representative.

Employee Association Representatives

On the first day of General Assembly, the employee associations were well represented. In attendance was Kayla Mattson, NASCOE President; Keith Hiser, NADD President; Ransom Satterlee, FLCA Representative; Dustin Mattingly, NACS President; and Nancy Reiff, NASE President. The representatives, from NASCOE, NADD, and FLCA, each gave a brief history of their years of service with the agency, an overview of their association's goals, for both the employees and producers, and their association's concerns with the current and potentially upcoming changes being made with USDA-FSA.

L to R: Nancy Reiff, NASE President, Davina Willbanks, NACS; Joelle Hansen, NACS; Kimberly Lacy, NACS; Alisa Folsom, NACS; Jenny Koch, NACS; Whitney Simmons, NACS; Brenda Weems, NACS; Danielle Simross, NACS; Travis Helm, NACS; Tyler LePage, NACS; Elish Hanson, NACS; Jason Lujan, NACS, and Dustin Mattingly, NACS President.



First-Time Attendees

NACS and NASE First-Time Attendees were honored during General Assembly on the first day of convention. A First-Time Attendee is a NACS or NASE member who is attending their first National Convention. A meeting, for the First-Time Attendees, was held on Sunday. During this meeting, the NACS President gave an overview of convention by discussing the agenda for each day; including explaining the Committee Meeting and the Zone Meeting breakout sessions. He also explained the Wunder Fund and how First-Time Attendees can receive a reimbursement to help offset costs for attending the full convention. One lucky winner will also receive an additional reimbursement from our Sponsor Dillards Financial. This year we were very grateful for Dillards as they gave an extra reimbursement on top of their typical one.



THE WUNDER FUND

NACS maintains an endowment fund that is named for the vision of Bruce Wunder. The Wunder Fund is used to support members who are attending their first annual NACS convention. While at convention, you will often hear the phrase "Feed the Pig". Members can "Feed the Pig" by giving a donation to help build the Wunder Fund.

At the 2026 National Convention, NACS members contributed \$1,099 to help support the first-time attendees. **THANK YOU** to membership for your generous contributions and please remember you can "Feed the Pig" at both your Zone Meeting and at National Convention.

Congratulations to Zone A/B for winning the zone competition with raising the most funds.

Sponsors of the 2026 NACS/NASE/NADD Convention



Dillard Financial, FEDS Protection, Moody's Analytics, and National Rural Lenders Association

A huge **THANK YOU** to our wonderful sponsors! Convention would not be possible without the generosity of our sponsors. In addition to their donations, they provide great information and are very helpful with answering any questions asked at convention. We always enjoy visiting their booths during our meeting breaks and greatly appreciate the time they take to attend our convention!

Richard Fordyce, Under Secretary for FPAC

We got the opportunity to hear from National Office leadership on Tuesday. Monday started with Under Secretary for FPAC, Richard Fordyce, via TEAMS. Mr. Fordyce began his presentation by thanking everyone for the work we do and recognizing the tremendous effort that Farm Loan Staff has made with loan obligations. He touched on One Farmer, One File and how it will help reduce redundancy. Modernization is their top priority right now and he stressed that it is in no way intended to reduce staffing numbers.



Bill Beam, FSA Administrator

Bill Beam, FSA Administrator, spoke at convention on Tuesday. Administrator Beam opened by sharing his personal connection to agriculture, his family's experience as FSA program participants, and his appreciation for the critical service FSA employees provide. He thanked NACS/NASE members for their continued engagement and advocacy on behalf of FSA staff.

A central theme of the presentation was Farmers First, emphasizing expanding access to credit and supporting producers through challenging seasons. Beam highlighted that so far in FY 2026, FSA has already obligated \$4.8 billion in farm loans, with 2/3rds of loans going to beginning farmers and ranchers.

Administrator Beam's four main topics he addressed were:

- ▽ Modernization Efforts
- ▽ Farm Program Updates
- ▽ Farm Bill Updates
- ▽ Reorganization

Modernization Efforts

- One Farmer, One File: A streamlined customer record that follows a producer throughout USDA.
- Farm Loan Modernization: Single customer file, online payments, Tools and systems to reduce bottlenecks and improve customer service.
- Acreage Reporting Pilot: A simplified, electronic reporting experience creating a customer focused experience.
- Login.gov: Public's One account for gov't.

Farm Program Updates:

Acreage Reporting Modernization effort underway in 3 Phases:

- Phase I- Pilot rolled out in some counties (North Dakota Piloting). They are using interactive maps to report acres, this has helped to reduce 50% of time spent certifying.
- Phase II - producers can do all at home on their phones
- Phase III - Work with software companies to pull records over to our systems. (ie. fieldview, etc)

2026 ARC/PLC sign up will be this fall.

Farm Bill Updates (pre-markups):

The Senate's proposed Farm Bill modernizes loan programs by increasing loan limits, updating inflation benchmarks for G-FO loan limits, changing beginning farmer eligibility requirements, assistance for distressed borrowers, and expanding access for commercial fishing operators.

Reorganization - anticipates zero impact on most -specifically field staff. No jobs eliminated - No plans to close Service Centers. In National office, Deputy Administrator areas will be reorganized - minimal impact to FSA Employees.



Steve Peterson, Associate Administrator

Steve Peterson, Associate Administrator, Mr. Peterson has 40 years with the agency and farmed with his Dad until 2016. He is very passionate about the work we do as we help keep farmers in business. Mr. Peterson showed a PowerPoint Presentation that discussed and compared the FY 26 Enacted Budget and the FY 27 President's Proposed Budget, which is just a target get by the President.

FY 2026 Enacted Budget



- The FY 2026 Enacted funding level is \$1.5 Billion which was an overall decrease of \$103.7 million from FY 2025 Enacted budget.
 - Salaries and Expenses took a \$84.3 million cut.
 - ACIF/Farm loans budget took a \$19.9 million cut.
 - Discussed the two funding sources for FSA and explained there were reductions in other parts of the FY 26 Enacted Budget to offset the increase for costs associated with rent (\$9.3M) and the 1% pay raise (\$15.7M). The agency absorbed a total increase of \$25M for these costs.
 - Per the FY26 appropriations language, \$15M is set aside for additional farm loan trainees, county office trainees, and county office staff.
 - Continuing with the FY 26 Enacted Budget, the Operating Cost reductions, from FY 25 funding levels, total \$10.48M. This includes a reduction in funding for Operating Expenses (Contracts, Travel, Supplies, Etc.), IT, Overtime, WDC travel, and Awards.
- As of PP 10, we are currently 339 bodies under FY 26 Revised FTE ceiling. When taking into consideration County Temps we are over ceiling by 674 bodies but we have ad hoc supplementary budget to implement disaster programs.

FY 2027 President's Budget

- The President's budget for FY 2027 has a funding level of \$1.24 Billion an overall decrease of \$266 million from FY 2026 Enacted budget. This includes a total reduction of \$240.9M in Salaries & Expenses and a total reduction of \$25 million in FSA programs.
 - Salaries & Expenses - Staffing level reductions of 1,721 FTEs (**\$198M**) from projected FY26 levels (9,059 to 7,227)
 - Operating cost reductions of **\$42.9M**
 - FLP Programs total reduction of **\$25M**
 - ACIF/Farm Loan
 - \$4.2M reduction in PLCE funds
 - \$1M Direct Emergency Loan Subsidy
 - \$2.2M Direct Farm Ownership Subsidy
 - No Funding for the following:
 - \$6.5M State Mediation Grants,
 - \$7.5M Grassroots Source Water Program,
 - \$3.5M Transportation Cost Payment Program for Geographically Disadvantaged.

ASK THE ADMINISTRATOR! - Great way to bring your concerns to the Administrator that are affecting you or to share ideas on changes.

Trina Brake, DAFO

Trina Brake, DAFO, expressed her appreciation for being invited to attend the convention. She also expressed her support and commitment for all of the associations. Ms. Brake has 35 years with the agency and started her career with the Farmers Home Administration. She stated our insight and feedback is important to DAFO and she acknowledged the outstanding work we do for the farmers and ranchers.

- Ms. Brake stated that the ceiling reductions were 15% for FY 26.
- States do have the option to offer to reassign employees by voluntary transfer.
- OPM has designed a technical assessment tool for hiring that is being utilized - GS currently have to complete the assessment - come July CO will have to complete the assessment as well. The Technical assessment will have 170 critical or problem solving questions allowing 5 minutes per question to complete. To qualify for a government job, you must score 70% or higher. The score will apply for 1 year at grade & level that you completed it for.
- Working with the Administrator to figure out if awards can be offered.
- BU-841 was issued stating that DAFO capped Comp time to 24 hours. No OT for GS employees .
- Network Performance monitors are being put on 2,500 computers
- GS employee processing is being transferred to FPAC-HRD.
- Looking into other options for daily attendance tracking, we are still required to complete daily reporting.
- Leasing- Priority was getting extensions in place for FY 26, in FY 27 anticipate getting more finalized leases.



Houston Bruck, DAFLP; Ryan Lukassen, Assistant to DAFLP, and Matthew Henderson, Advisor to DAFLP

Houston Bruck, DAFLP; Ryan Lukassen, Assistant to DAFLP; and Matthew Henderson, Advisor to DAFLP were very thankful to everyone for making the time to attend convention as they understand the importance of the associations. They jointly provided a PowerPoint presentation that went over the Modernization Initiatives and Technology, Policy, and Workforce workstream.



Modernization Initiative - Future State "FS28"

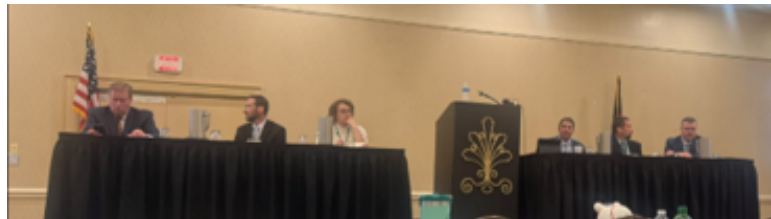
Access to capital is foundation to beginning farmers. The vision of the modernization initiative is to Reshape the Customer Experience, Transforming the Employee Experience, and Enabling Data-Driven Operations.

Modernization Objectives:

1. Reduce processing times - average processing times from complete date to disposition for both direct and guaranteed loans
2. Reduce Delinquency & Loss Rates - dollar delinquency and loss rates lower than historical averages.
3. Improve Program Administration - reduction in hours spent per loan request and existing functions.
4. Increase Beginning Farmer Participation - have BF loans account for a good majority of our loan activity.

The FS28 Strategy Workstream includes 3 areas:

1. Technology
2. Policy
3. Workforce



Technology Workstream

- This involves replacing 130+ duplicative systems into 1 unified system, along with introducing AI, automation, and streamlined workflows to improve accuracy and speed. We will also be shifting from legacy systems dating back to 1968 to modern cloud-based environment.
- Claribel is an AI program that searches the FLP handbooks to answer questions - went into production on June 30th.
- FMMI Integration is in the works - FMMI will replace PLAS.
- Moving to real time integrations vs. overnight processing.
- Guaranteed system to be in production and rolled out by end of CY 2026 - this will move the program to paperless.
 - The proposed timeline is July the system will be ready, Sept. rolling out for Agency testing, End of Sept. rolling out for lender testing - rolling out to ALL End of CY 2026.

Policy Workstream

- Make AFT permanent and Introduce Delegated Authority for Guaranteed loans.
- Enable automation on direct loan eligibility discretionary components.
- Farm Bill Implementation - prepare for potential farm bill statutory changes.
- Continue to evaluate and update current processes to drive efficiency.

Additional Policy Proposals - MINOR:

- Clean - up: Aligning crop insurance policy with statute, clarifying Delegations of Authority to include DSED's, simplified certified mail requirements, removing references to obsolete sections of CFR.
- Guaranteed loan processing - changes to how notifications are sent to lenders with new system.
- Direct OL security - clarify that equipment is not practicable to separate.
- Increasing acceptable age of appraisals for direct loans - allow for use over 18 months, adopting similar policy that GL's follow and to align with industry standards.

Houston Bruck, DAFLP; Ryan Lukassen, Assistant to DAFLP, and Matthew Henderson, Advisor to DAFLP— Cont.

Additional Policy Proposals - MINOR: -- Continued

- Increasing RE Evaluation Threshold - increasing ability to use evaluations over appraisals - limited to less complex and smaller loan sizes (\$250K - \$500K). There are potential concerns with added burden to loan staff with limited RE Evaluation knowledge that would be mitigated by various steps.
- Simplified Direct Loan Subordinations by removing feasibility analysis and focusing on security after subordination to help expedite the process.
- Guaranteed Loan Servicing- Reduce Concurrence for additional unguaranteed loans & advances. Lenders will still collect same information and conduct same analysis they currently do internally just removing the FSA concurrence requirement. Mitigate risk by having the ability to reduce or deny loss claim if lender failed to do proper internal analysis.
- Guaranteed Loan Servicing- Streamlined Annual Analysis - no longer required for Term Loans performing under \$500,000, high risk loans will still be reviewed. Only required for G-LOC's, T-OL's over \$500,000, and any non-performing term loans. Required submission to FSA will only be for G-LOC's and non-performing loans.
- Interest Only Installments - Interest only will still be available as they are today, just won't be the default.
- Release of Security Clarification - clarifying that none of the prior 3 payments be more than 90 days past due to qualify for release.

Additional Policy Proposals - MAJOR

- Delegated Authority for Certain Guaranteed Lenders - this would allow certain lenders to determine credit worthiness, financial feasibility, and adequacy of loan security without review by the Agency (ie. PLP lenders). This would significantly reduce application turnaround times. Potential concerns of increased Agency risk would be mitigated by limiting it to experienced lenders, improving lender oversight and monitoring, and stronger guardrails regarding lenders performance and documented deficiencies.
- Direct Loan Modernization are in the early stages of identifying any policy changes as they work to implement the new Direct Loan system in 2027.
- NEPA - Currently working with OGC to determine if FSA can justify that FLP should be exempt from NEPA like several RD programs.

Workforce Stream

- Analyzing staff talents to ensure staff are set up for growth and success.
- Removing progress metrics and going back to goals.
- Specialization structures allowing for specialization of duties to move away from being generalist and having to know everything. This will allow for staff to do more outreach, meeting with customers and bankers, etc.
- Modernization is anticipated to save 83,000 hours through increased efficiencies and a more consistent and timely PLP loan process.

Andy Quinn -- McAllister & Quinn

NACS Legislative Consultant

The third day of convention is when membership is provided a Legislative Briefing from Legislative Committee member, Christina Escobedo and Dustin Mattingly, President, and our legislative consultant, Andy Quinn from McAllister & Quinn.

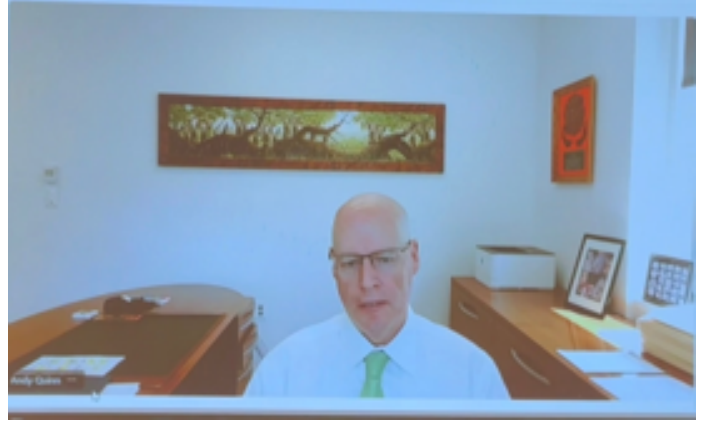
Legislative Updates:

- \$1.3 Billion cut to Direct Ownership loan appropriations
- \$1.3 Billion increase to Guaranteed Loan appropriations
- Currently anticipating another 1 year extension to the Farm Bill

Farm Bill Updates:

House & Senate Provisions:

- ❖ Lower FO Eligibility from 3 yrs to 2 yrs.
- ❖ Refinance distressed Guaranteed Loans with Direct Loan funds, even FO's.
- ❖ Loan Limits
 - D-FO's \$850,000
 - D-OL's \$750,000
 - G-FO's \$3,500,000
 - G-OL's \$3,000,000
- OPM Rule - 2/5/2026- issued new rule moving policy-influencing employee to at will - this would affect 50,00 employees
- McAllister & Quinn Activities
 - April 2026 performed Hill Visits alongside NACS Legislative Committee Members
 - A. House Ag Appropriations Sub Committee – Majority
 - B. Senate Ag Appropriations Sub Committee – Majority & Minority
 - C. Senator Deb Fisher
 - D. Representative Andrew Clyde
- Ag Round Table has quarterly calls with the most recent being in June 2026 with members being:
 1. ICBA – Independent Community Bankers Association
 2. ABA – American Bankers Association
 3. NRLA – National Rural Lenders Association
 4. Sustainable Ag
 5. Young Farmers
 6. Farm Credit Association
- NACS's Legislative Issues for 2026/2027
 - EM loan revamping - policy & regulations are not helping producers when they are needing assistance.
 - \$15M for hiring - Initially set aside for ACIF funding - was funded by increasing GL fee from 1% to 1.5% - when did that change.
 - Changes to term limits vs. a complete repeal of term limits



NACS Annual Meeting

After the Legislative briefing, the NACS Annual Meeting is reconvened. There is a roll call of chapters present, in which each chapter confirms the number of delegates and alternates that are present at the convention. They then tell an interesting fact about their state. NACS Board Members provide a brief report regarding the position they hold and state where their report can be found in the Annual Report. Past presidents, that are in attendance at the National Convention, are recognized and then the convention attendance roll call is started.

The convention attendance roll call is a fun way to see how long members have been attending the National Conventions. They start with the current convention and then name the convention sites from the most recent to the oldest. Members then sit down when the location of their first convention is called.



The Committee Reports are then presented. During this portion of the meeting, changes can be made to either amend or move a resolution to non-adopt and members can bring new resolutions to the floor for discussion.

Members have the chance to debate with each other why they feel the proposed action does or does not need to take place. Once all discussion is completed, then the membership votes. If it seems to be a close vote, the Election Committee gets called up to tally the votes. The picture to the left is of the election committee counting votes. Only the resolutions that are adopted are sent to the National Office for consideration.

The final order of business during the Annual Meeting, is the election of officers. The officers for the next year are elected by the membership that is in attendance. This year we had a contested election for the Vice President position.



REMEMBER TO SUBMIT YOUR RESOLUTIONS

Resolutions are the Association's way of identifying issues and proposing solutions. The resolution process begins with each NACS member and is the backbone of existence for NACS. Each member is encouraged to submit issues and solutions that they identify in their work environment for appropriate consideration by the Association. Items of an urgent nature that require immediate NACS attention should be brought to the attention of the NACS Board.

Resolutions may be submitted online at the NACS web site or in writing at State Association, Zone, or National Convention meetings.

SUBMIT IT!

NACS Annual Meeting-continued

Membership Dues Update:

The National Association of Credit Specialists (NACS) remains committed to supporting its membership across the country through advocacy, and a voice that strengthens our programs and enhances service to our producers.

After careful review of the association's financial outlook and ongoing budget needs, the NACS Board has approved a modest increase of \$2.50 per pay period in membership dues beginning in pay period 17. Our NACS Treasurer, Tiffany Grody, is working with each state's AO or Deputy SED to complete these adjustments. This adjustment ensures that NACS can continue providing the high-quality support our members expect.

We understand that any increase in cost deserves clear communication and transparency. The decision was made only after evaluating our budget and determining that a dues adjustment was the most responsible way to sustain the association's mission and get the budget back in the black. Please reference the Treasurer's Report found in the Annual Report on page 12-16, report can be found [here](#).

We appreciate your continued membership and engagement. NACS thrives because of the dedication and professionalism of its members, and this dues adjustment helps ensure we can continue providing the support and representation you rely on. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to excellence in credit delivery and for being part of a strong, nationwide community of credit specialists.

If you have questions about the updated due's structure or would like additional information on how funds will be used, please reach out to the NACS board.



Committee Sign-Up

Now is the time to get signed up for a committee of your choice to serve on for the upcoming years. As a committee member you work on reviewing, vetting, and amending submitted resolutions to prepare them to present at National Convention.

Sign up here: <https://nacsfsa.weebly.com/signup-for-committee.html>

The new website is LIVE and can be found at www.NACS-FSA.ORG.

Ray Turknett Blood, Sweat and Tears Award

The Past President has the honor of presenting the Ray Turknett Blood, Sweat and Tears Award to a member based on the recipient's service to NACS and its members. This award is named in honor of our founding and then longest serving President. It is considered the most prestigious award presented by NACS. This year's Blood, Sweat and Tears recipient was Irby McWilliams from TX. Irby began his career with FSA in July 2014. Irby has attended several Zone Meetings and NACS National Conventions over the years. He is a humble, dedicated leader who never seeks the spotlight, which makes his recognition all the more fitting. He has spent years supporting committees, attending meetings, and welcoming new members with warmth and enthusiasm. Colleagues describe him as remarkably genuine, selfless, and supportive—someone who checks in on others, builds them up, and carries the weight of the office without complaint. His commitment to NACS and to his team is evident in everything he does, from changing personal plans to help when needed to showing up early every day with a smile and a pot of coffee. Irby consistently demonstrates true leadership, mentorship, and heart, making him exceptionally deserving of this honor. **Congratulations Irby!!!**



Irby McWilliams and NACS Past President Kaiti Steckman

2026-2027 NACS BOARD



From Left to Right:

Past President – Dustin Mattingly

Zone C Representative – Vicki Swift

Treasurer – Tiffany Grody

Zone D Representative – Sara Harris

President – Jeremy Burner

Vice-President – Crystal Zwilling

Secretary – Callie Erickson

Zone A Representative – Ransom Satterlee

Zone B Representative – Eric Mortimer

Meet the New NACS President

My name is Jeremy Burner, and I am honored to serve as your 2026/2027 NACS President. My journey began in June 2008 as a Farm Loan Officer Trainee, and today I have the privilege of serving as the Farm Loan Manager in Fredericksburg, VA, where our team supports producers across 36 counties.

Throughout my career, NACS has been a constant source of connection, purpose, and professional growth. From attending my first convention in 2009 to serving as a committee member and chair, Zone Representative, State President, and NACS Vice President, I have seen firsthand the incredible impact this organization makes.

My wife, Katelyn, and I are raising two wonderful children, Jackson and Lindsey who stay actively involved in 4-H. Our family remains deeply rooted in agriculture through our commercial meat goat operation, supplying local 4 H members with project animals as well as specialty markets. When I'm not at the office, you can usually find me on the farm, at a 4 H event, or involved in our church community—all places that remind me why our work matters.

As we move into the year ahead, I challenge each of you to actively engage in NACS whether on the state or national level. Your ideas, experience, and voices truly shape the direction of our organization and our agency.

