? The ballots have been mailed for this year''s county committee election for Local Administrative Area #2 (LAA 2), which includes voters in Gibson, Jefferson, Monroe and Washington Townships. Voters have until December 1, 2008, to return their properly completed ballots to the county office. The newly elected committee member and alternates take office on January 1, 2009.

The county committee system allows producers to make important decisions concerning local administration of federal farm programs. Committee members apply their knowledge and judgment to make decisions on disaster and conservation programs, establishment of allotments and yields, producer appeals, employing FSA county executive directors and other local issues. FSA committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws.

Prospective Voter Requirements. Anyone who meets the requirements in either, 1 or 2, as well as item number 3, is eligible to vote for county committee members.

1. Voter is of legal voting age and participates or cooperates in any FSA program or
2. The voter is not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations on an entire farm.
3. The voter must also be eligible to participate in any FSA program provided by law, regardless of the status of funding.

Discrimination Prohibited - No person shall be denied the right to vote because of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or family status.

Eligible voters who do not receive ballots can obtain a ballot at the local USDA Service Center located at 801 Anson Street in Salem. December 1, 2008 is the last day for voters to submit ballots in person to the local USDA Service Center. Ballots returned by mail must be postmarked no later than December 1, 2008. Newly elected committee members and alternates will take office January 1, 2009