

December 20, 2011

Mary Behm  
President  
Wisconsin Association of FSA County Office Employees  
390 Red Cedar Street  
Menomonie, WI

Dear Mary:

Thank you for your December 9, 2011, letter regarding staffing and workload. As always, I appreciate and respect your comments and suggestions.

In order to respond to each of your concerns, below please find a response to each of the four items you identified in your letter regarding reassignment of existing staff due to reduced ceilings:

- 1) The State Office inquired to DAFO on your request to allow statewide volunteers for any understaffed offices; unfortunately, that is not an option and was thus denied. DAFO's response was consistent with previous direction provided by HRD and DAFO as well as the policy contained in FSA handbook 27-PM – employees in the local commuting area must be offered the first opportunity at jobs within their commuting area.
- 2) Accept your recommendation regarding Wisconsin Notice PM-1161 and hold off alerting understaffed offices until the full impacts of the second round of VERA are known.
- 3) Updated information on "over/understaffed" office status information will be made available prior to asking for voluntary reassignments.
- 4) Management, SED, DDs, and the STC are committed to periodically reviewing workload and continually trying to improve upon the process study in an effort to ensure staffing resources are distributed in fair and transparent manner. The numbers not used in permanent staffing allocations were either temporary/inconsistent/unpredictable workload items or were of a small statistical value, thus having minimal impact. Going forward, workload will continue to be monitored and adjustments made. Please be assured that I and the entire management team will continue to work with WASCOE on workload in the future.

As your SED, I recognize the important role that our staff plays in providing our family farmers with important farm bill programs. As in the past, our state will continue to closely monitor our current staffing ceiling and make hiring decisions based on program and resource needs.

Sincerely,



Brad Pfaff  
State Executive Director