

## NewsWatch

# Steinkruger named FSA director

**D**AN Steinkruger, who started with the Farm Service Agency in 1977, has been appointed director of the Nebraska FSA office. Steinkruger first worked as a field reporter with the Lancaster County office when the agency was known as the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

He had been serving as acting state FSA director.

His other FSA positions include working as a program assistant in the Harlan County ASCS office until be-

coming the county executive director in Cass County in December 1979. He moved to the state office in Lincoln in 1993 where he worked as a conservation programs specialist. In 1996, Steinkruger was promoted to the chief of the production compliance programs section.

"I look forward to representing the president and USDA in the administration of federal farm programs to Nebraska farmers," Steinkruger says. "We have an excellent team in 71 field offices in Nebraska that will continue to

provide loans and deliver safety net programs to assist Nebraska agriculture."

Maxine Moul, a former lieutenant governor of Nebraska from 1990 to 1993, was named USDA Rural Development director for the state.

The USDA-Rural Development offices in Lincoln, Kearney, North Platte, Scottsbluff, Ainsworth and Norfolk provide access to the federal government's loans and grants for rural business, housing, utilities and community development programs.



DAN STEINKRUGER

# Farm Bureau calls for more aid from USDA

**N**EBRASKA Farm Bureau has called on USDA to consider several actions to help struggling beef, dairy and pork producers in the state and nationwide.

"Nebraska's livestock producers have been hit with low prices for well over a year, resulting in millions of dollars in financial loss, for them personally and for Nebraska's economy," Farm Bureau President Keith Olsen says. Olsen is a farmer from Grant.

Cattle feeders are trying to cope with market prices that are well below their break-even point, Olsen adds, and pork

producers have seen their Chinese and Russian export markets disappear because of the H1N1 flu scare.

"Farmers and ranchers are no strangers to tough times, but they need assistance now," he explains. "Some livestock farmers are at the point of going out of business, which will hurt local employment and the entire local economy."

Farm Bureau asked USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack to consider these actions to provide immediate assistance:

- make meat commodities the main target for export sales, through

the Market Access and Foreign Market Development programs

- redirect funds in the Emerging Markets Program to improve technical assistance for promotion of beef and pork exports in newer foreign markets

- use unobligated funds to increase Farm Service Agency loan guarantees for livestock producers, to give them access to private capital to remain in business

- direct FSA and the Farm Credit Administration to allow for greater forbearance and deferments on outstanding operating loans for livestock

producers

- ask other members of the president's Cabinet to make procurement of meat products a priority in their departments

Nebraska produces 20% of U.S. beef and is the fifth-largest producer of pork. The livestock industry is responsible for two-thirds of the cash receipts for agriculture, the state's largest industry.

"Nebraska's farmers and ranchers are the backbone of our economy," Olsen says. "When they suffer economically, it's never long before the entire state feels the impact."



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