

Interested persons are hereby given an opportunity to apply for designation to provide official services in the Northeast Indiana region under the provisions of Section 7(f) of the Act and section 800.196(d) of the regulations issued thereunder. Applications and other available information will be considered in determining which applicant will be designated.

Designation in the Northeast Indiana region is for the period beginning about January 1, 1998, and not to exceed 3 years as prescribed in section 7(g)(1) of the Act. Persons wishing to apply for designation should contact the Compliance Division at the address listed above for forms and information.

**AUTHORITY:** Pub. L. 94-582, 90 Stat. 2867, as amended (7 U.S.C. 71 *et seq.*)

Dated: August 14, 1997.

**Neil E. Porter,**

*Director, Compliance Division.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Natural Resources Conservation Service

#### National Commission on Small Farms; Meeting

**AGENCY:** Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of public meeting.

**SUMMARY:** The Secretary of Agriculture by Departmental Regulation No. 1043-43 dated July 9, 1997, established the National Commission on Small Farms (Commission) and further identified NRCS to provide support to the Commission. The purpose of the Commission is to gather and analyze information regarding small farms and ranches and recommend to the Secretary of Agriculture a national policy and strategy to ensure their continued viability. The chair of the Commission has decided that the Commission may hold subcommittee meetings in order to gather public input from different regions of the country.

*Place, Date and Time of Meeting:* The Commission's first subcommittee meeting will be at the Marriot, 189 Wolf Road, Albany, New York. The subcommittee will meet from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on September 2, to hear public testimony. The meeting is open to the public. We are seeking testimony from various sources to arrive at conclusions and recommendations that will ensure the continued viability of small farms. The Commission requests that testimony and comments include

ideas and recommendations based on the following questions. Concerns or problems of individual farms that relate to specific USDA programs should be addressed only in the context of a recommendation for the Commission to consider.

The questions are:

1. How are current USDA programs helping or hurting the viability of small farms?

2. What are the needs of small farms in terms of financing, research, extension, marketing and risk management and other areas? What recommendations would you make about these needs that could be part of a long-range strategy to ensure the continued viability of small farms?

3. Are there innovative non-governmental or state efforts to assist beginning and smaller independent farms that might be replicated or supplemented at the Federal level?

4. What changes in USDA policy or practices are needed to make USDA programs in the areas of credit, research, extension, marketing, risk management and other areas more effective in enabling small farms to survive and thrive?

5. What new programs could provide effective and affordable support for small farmers as commodity programs are phased out?

6. What can be done to assist beginning farmers and farm workers to become farm owners?

7. What role should the Federal government play to ensure a diversified, decentralized and competitive farm structure?

8. What do small farms contribute to your community and your state?

9. What other generic issues pertaining to small farms should the Commission consider?

Interested parties wishing to testify must contact the office of the National Commission on Small Farms by August 26, 1997 in order to be placed on a list of witnesses. Oral presentations will be limited to 5 minutes. Those wishing to testify, but unable to notify the Commission office by August 26, will be able to sign up as a presenter September 2. Sign up will begin at 9:30 a.m. and end at 12:00 Noon. These presenters will testify on a first come, first served basis and comments will be limited based on the time available and the number of presenters. Written statements will be accepted at the meeting or may be mailed or faxed to the Commission office by September 12, 1997.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments and statements should be sent to National Commission

on Small Farms, U.S. Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 2890, Room 5237, South Building, Washington, D.C. 20013.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Jennifer Yezak Molen, Director, National Commission on Small Farms, at the address above or at (202) 690-0648 or (202) 690-0673. The fax number is (202) 720-0596.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The purpose of the Commission is to gather and evaluate background information, studies, and data pertinent to small farms and ranches, including limited-resource farmers. On the basis of the review, the Commission shall analyze all relevant issues and make findings, develop strategies, and make recommendations for consideration by the Secretary of Agriculture toward a national strategy on small farms. The national strategy shall include, but not be limited to: changes in existing policies, programs, regulations, training, and program delivery and outreach systems; approaches that assist beginning farmers and involve the private sectors and government, including assurances that the needs of minorities, women, and persons with disabilities are addressed; areas where new partnerships and collaborations are needed; and other approaches that it would deem advisable or which the Secretary of Agriculture or the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service may request the Commission to consider.

The Secretary of Agriculture has determined that the work of the Commission is in the public interest and within the duties and responsibilities of USDA. Establishment of the Commission also implements a recommendation of the USDA Civil Rights Action Report to appoint a diverse commission to develop a national policy on small farms.

Dated: August 8, 1997.

**Pearlie S. Reed,**

*Acting Assistant Secretary for Administration.*

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## ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT AGENCY

### Announcement of the William C. Foster Fellows Visiting Scholars Program for the 1998-99 Academic Year

The U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency (ACDA) will conduct a competition to select visiting scholars to serve at the Agency during