

November 2008

At a Glance: **State Technical Committees**

Overview

State Technical Committees serve in an advisory capacity to the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and other agencies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) on the implementation of the natural resources conservation provisions of Farm Bill legislation. Committees are intended to include members from a wide variety of natural resource and agricultural interests. Chaired by the NRCS State Conservationist in each State, these Committees are composed of representatives from Federal and State natural resource agencies, American Indian Tribes, agricultural and environmental organizations, and agricultural producers.

The Committees meet regularly to provide information, analysis, and recommendations to appropriate USDA officials, who strongly consider their advice. Individuals or groups wanting to participate as members on a State Technical Committee may submit requests to the State Conservationist explaining their interest and relevant credentials.

Legislative Changes

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) made the following changes to State Technical Committees:

- Expanded agricultural and forestry involvement on Committees;
- Modified responsibilities of Committees;
- Exempted Local Working Groups from the Federal Advisory Committee Act;

- Expanded State Technical Committees' authority related to reviewing Local Working Groups' efforts to address State program priorities;
- Supports standardization of Committee operations through the development and publication of standard operating procedures; and
- Reaffirmed the role of the State Technical Committees as advisory in nature.

More Information

For more information about State Technical Committees and other Farm Bill topics, please refer to the Natural Resources Conservation Service Farm Bill Web site www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/farmbill/2008 or the State Technical Committee Web site www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/StateTech/.

