

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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A TRUE Blueprint for Continued & Improved Efficiency!

On January 9th, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) publicized plans to streamline, make their operations more modern and efficient, and to be better stewards of the taxpayers' dollars. We applauded, and wholly agreed with those goals! Then, we read the rest of the article. Check out the facts, and see if the proposed steps will accomplish 'optimal use of USDA's employees, better results for USDA customers, and greater efficiencies for American taxpayers,' as they propose, or if we are about to fall prey to a political sound-bite, timed for completion just prior to this November's Presidential elections.

What is at stake is the Montgomery County Farm Service Agency (FSA) office, housed in a building that is wholly owned by the Montgomery Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) (you'll see why that matters in a minute). This building also houses personnel from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). This centralization, and the convenience of having all these government services in one building is no accident. It was in response to a cry for efficiency and government cooperation over ten years ago. And, in this case, it has been highly successful and convenient for our customers, the taxpayers.

The proposal is to close the Montgomery FSA office, moving the personnel and files currently housed in Montgomery County to Preble County, to gain efficiency and savings. Here is why that just isn't so.

The claim	The Truth
<i>Greater Efficiency</i>	The one-stop shops in both Montgomery and Preble would be lost, forcing customers to travel substantially further and to multiple places. Travel time and cost for Montgomery county customers will most assuredly prevent people from participating in FSA programs who otherwise would have!
<i>Only offices with 2 or less permanent staff will be closed</i>	The Montgomery FSA has 2 full time and 2 part time permanent staff
<i>This will make us more modern</i>	The Montgomery FSA is housed in a modern office building, designed specifically for their use. The Preble FSA is housed in an antiquated strip mall converted to cramped offices
<i>This will save us money</i>	The Montgomery SWCD leases at competitive rates, and is a stable office location. The Preble strip mall is not a reliable long term location, and can easily be affected by changes in ownership, etc. It does not have room for both offices.
<i>This will better serve USDA customers</i>	There is no room for the Montgomery FSA in the current Preble FSA office. To combine, both would have to move. Then, neither would be in their centralized locations, making customers travel to multiple locations, and making coordination among the SWCD, FSA, and NRCS substantially more difficult, costly, and time consuming (not less!)
<i>There will be no</i>	To accomplish consolidation, both Montgomery and Preble FSA offices will have to

<i>interruption in service</i>	move to a new location with all their staff and files. Have you ever moved and kept up with everything in your regular schedule? Me neither.
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These facts speak for themselves. What made a good sound-bite does not make good sense, or dollars! In an effort to look as if they are doing something (anything!) to help us taxpayers, the USDA will be severely harming a system that efficiently, effectively, frugally, and cooperatively serves the citizens of Montgomery County. The operations of the Preble FSA will be compromised as they attempt to take in new personnel and files, and the consolidated government offices of both counties will be lost. Money, modernization, and efficiency will be lost, all in the name of politics.

To help save your FSA office, and your money, tell the politicians to leave our Montgomery FSA as it is; efficient, cost-effective and modern.

We have several events on Monday, January 30th to highlight your support! Join us on at 11:00 am at Keller Animal Feeds & Needs, 11597 Upper Lewisburg Road, Brookville, Ohio, 45309 for a 'Tractorcade' to showcase our powerful agricultural partners. Bring your semi, tractor, or truck to join in! Please call Duane Plessinger at 937-902-5302 so Brookville Police can plan for the traffic. Next, at 12:00 pm, join us at Golden Gate Park, 545 E. Upper Lewisburg Road, Brookville, Ohio, 45309, for free food (chili and coffee) to chew on while you chew over the facts. Then head across the parking lot at 1:00pm to the Leiber Center for the official FSA Public Meeting, to make sure the politicians know you don't like them playing politics with your money.

Between now and then, talk with your neighbors, talk with U.S. Senators Rob Portman and Sherrod Brown, and U.S. Representatives Michael Turner, Steve Austria, and John Boehner. Talk with State Senators Peggy Lehner and Bill Beagle, and State Representatives Michael Henne, Jim Butler, Terry Blair, Clayton R. Luckie, and Roland Winburn. Email and call Christina Reed of the USDA Ohio FSA at Christina.Reed@oh.usda.gov, 614-255-2527.

We will have petitions for you to sign located at Boone Nursery, Brookville Rental, Dull Homestead Inc., Keller Animal Feeds & Needs, Koening Equipment, and the Montgomery SWCD office.

For more information, check out our website: www.MontgomerySWCD.org. We have addresses for where the petitions are located, as well as contact information for the politicians mentioned above, listed there. We look forward to seeing you January 30th!