

# Can Mediation Help?

## Kansas Agricultural Mediation Services

### Mediation as an FSA Farm Program appeal option

If you received an adverse decision letter from the FSA Farm Program, you have appeal options. One choice is mediation. For more than 20 years, Kansas Agricultural Mediation Services (KAMS) has provided free, confidential financial and legal help and mediation services to the Kansas agricultural community.

#### ***What is KAMS?***

A confidential place to ask questions and receive help

#### ***What is KAMS mediation?***

Voluntary, confidential discussions facilitated by a trained mediator with all parties to clarify issues, identify options, and explore solutions

#### ***Why use KAMS mediation?***

Avoids costly, time-consuming appeals and litigation; maintains confidentiality; restores and fosters important communication between USDA personnel and program participants; allows parties to reach their own solutions; offers a timely, low-cost alternative to appeals and litigation; and provides an impartial setting in which to openly discuss sensitive issues.

#### ***Who can use KAMS' services?***

Kansas program participants who have received written notice of an adverse decision and have been offered appeal rights

#### ***How much does it cost?***

All calls to KAMS are free. A \$60 administrative fee is due only when signing an agreement to mediate. An additional fee is shared by FSA and the producer to offset the cost of the mediator. This fee can be waived or reduced based on financial situations.

#### ***Where are the mediations held?***

At a neutral location near the producer's community

#### ***When should I call?***

KAMS services are always available, but if you received an adverse decision letter, you must request mediation or appeal within 30 days of receipt of the letter.

#### ***What if mediation is not successful?***

Program participants will still have the balance of their 30-day appeal period to request other appeal options.

#### ***How can I request mediation services?***

Send a written request to KAMS within the 30-day appeal period

### In addition to KAMS assistance, KAMS also can offer support to producers through the Farm Mediation Legal Counseling Program

Experienced agricultural attorneys with Kansas Legal Service (KLS) provide advice to KAMS clients.

- Explain FSA rules and regulations and producer's legal rights and obligations
- Assist communication and negotiation with USDA personnel
- Explore the option of using mediation
- Clarify producer's legal rights and responsibilities and implications of proposed solutions
- Define legal documents
- Minimal fees are based on producer's income level

### Remember! Don't let the 30-day deadline expire!

- What you say remains confidential
- KAMS provides support for you to explore options and make sound decisions
- Call KAMS with any farm/ranch questions
- Additional services are available through KAMS including working with a Farm Financial Analyst
- Anyone can call KAMS at any time with any agricultural legal or financial question



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All services can be accessed by calling 1-800-321-FARM (3276)