

*Refreshments are being served this week at the Grant center during regular business hours to commemorate the agency's longevity.*

Six.

That's the total number of name changes the Farm Service Agency has seen since its birth in 1933. With each change came new responsibilities, new programs and new incentives for farmers and ranchers to produce affordable food and fiber for U.S. consumers.

The 1929 stock market crash combined with the dust bowl of the 1930s merged into the Great Depression, which created high levels of unemployment and a long list of farm failures. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected, promising Americans a New Deal. FDR stated in a speech that, "A nation that destroys its soils destroys itself."

Therefore, as part of the New Deal promise, FDR created the Agricultural Adjustment Administration in 1933.

Known as the Triple A, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration was designed to stabilize farm prices at a level farmers could survive. The law established state and county committees of farmers called Triple A Committees—which still exist today as county committees—that oversaw the first federal farm program.

The first program offered price support loans to farmers for crop reduction.

By 1942, the agency changed its name to the Agricultural Adjustment Agency, taking on new challenges with conservation, crop support and marketing legislation.

Programs such as commodity marketing controls and Congressional policies that helped farmers obtain parity in prices and income assigned the federal government a role as an influential decision maker on behalf of the nation's farmers.

After Pearl Harbor in 1943, the War Food Administration was formed as part of Triple A to meet the increased needs of a country at war.

By 1945, after World War II, the War Food Administration was terminated and Triple A was replaced by the Production and Marketing Administration.

The post-war period of adjustment created an overproduction of certain commodities that threatened farm income levels.

Surpluses remained a problem for farmers and policymakers until 1953 when the Commodity Stabilization Service (CSS) was formed.

The primary job of the CSS was to preserve farm income through programs such as the Soil Bank, which brought supplies in line with demand by taking land out of production for periods of time.

The CSS became the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) in 1961 to reflect the agency's stabilization and resource conservation missions.

By 1994, a reorganization of USDA created the Consolidated Farm Service Agency. The new agency combined ASCS, Federal Crop Insurance Corporation and the farm credit portion of the Farmers Home Administration.

The Farmers Home Administration was originally known as the Farm Security Administration and was developed in 1935 to help relocate farm communities to areas where they could be more profitable. It later took on other roles of providing producers and eventually non-farm

citizens with credit, farm and home management planning, and technical supervision.

The Consolidated Farm Service Agency was later renamed the Farm Service Agency (FSA) in November 1995.

Today, FSA is organized into five divisions—Farm Programs, Farm Loans, Commodity Operations, Management and Field Operations. The agency continues to provide America's farmers with a strong safety net through the administration of farm programs.

It also provides disaster assistance, conservation programs and credit to producers who are unable to receive commercial credit, with emphasis on beginning, minority and women farmers and ranchers.

At its peak in 2000, FSA employed 20,693 people, most of them in county offices throughout the nation. Today, there are 12,527 FSA employees, 7,851 of them working in county offices.