

The Farm Advocacy Program continues to operate through the LIC, with Mrs. Betty Puckett working as-needed, on a contractual basis. The LIC continues to offer small emergency grants (as available), to farmer's in distress, to help with their personal/household discretionary needs.

*Note: Betty continues to thank all of you all for your prayers after her November 2016 diagnosis of Chronic CML Leukemia. Betty is still in an ongoing chemo treatment plan and is still able to function in her position as LIC Farm Advocate. However, in May of 2018, Betty's eldest daughter died of lung cancer, which had only been diagnosed a couple of months before that time. **Please remember to keep Betty and her family in prayer.***

Farm Aid - Narrative Report for the Fall Board Meeting September 2018



From: Betty Puckett, Farm Advocate

Summary of Work and Activities March, 2018 September, 2018

Working with the LIC since 1986, I have counseled farmers, including women, black, and Hispanic claimants, from various states, even as far away as California. I am often contacted from individuals that I have assisted in the past. I am still working with various farmers regarding FSA & other debts, and gender discrimination complaints. Most of these cases are winding down, but often they have taken years to resolve. Many of the hotline calls from farmers continue to be referred to me by Farm Aid. I get calls from many areas of the country.

Two of the most recent calls I have received are from: (1) A Native American farmer from New Mexico who was successful with his discrimination complaint with USDA. There were funds still available for complainants because fewer farmers had filed complaints than was expected. I let him know this and he applied for additional funds and called me to let me know that his request was granted. He thanked me again for my assistance throughout the years. (2) The other call was actually from Farm Aid regarding problems some farmers are facing with low prices. I let Farm Aid know that I have not had any calls or concerns from farmers yet.

We currently have a limited amount of emergency funds available for farmers. Grants are given out in amounts of up to \$500 per farm family in cases of disasters or extraordinary medical/financial challenges. Per IRS regulations, grants are not to be used for actual farm operations but rather for the household/discretionary needs of the farm families. We are always looking for more ways to get this type of information out to farmers, some of which do not belong to any organizations that might otherwise help keep them abreast of such grant possibilities. Often these farmers do not have access to the Internet or current news sources.

Please support your local farmers when you are able to by purchasing local products. Also, please keep the local farm families in your prayers as they struggle to keep up with industrialized farming and foreign imports.