

USDA Local Working Group Meeting open to all Ag Producers, Ag Leaders, and Individuals with Interest in Resource Conservation – Wednesday, January 15, 2020

**By Corrie Bowen
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Wharton County**

At 2:00 p.m. next Wednesday, January 15, 2020, in conjunction with the 2020 Western Rice Belt Conference, the USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service will hold their annual Local Working Group (LWG). I encourage all farmers, ranchers, federal, state and local agencies, agricultural leaders, organizations, businesses and other individuals to attend the Local Working Group meeting. The LWG is Wharton County's annual opportunity to identify and prioritize the resource concerns that can be addressed through conservation practices identified and funded through the Farm Bill.

The meeting's purpose is to collect input from farmers, ranchers, federal, state and local agencies, agricultural leaders, organizations, businesses and other individuals who have an interest in natural resource conservation. Input allows the LWG to identify and prioritize a county's resource concerns that need to be addressed through eligible 2018 Farm Bill conservation practices and also aids in establishing ranking criteria for county based funding. Meeting recommendations are provided to and reviewed by the State Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) which advises the State Conservationist on the conservation programs offered by NRCS. Through stakeholder meetings like LWGs, the public has an opportunity to help local conservation leaders prioritize and set natural resource concerns in their counties.

I've attached the invitation letter that has been sent out by David Daniels with the Wharton County USDA-NRCS office. I hope all ag producers in Wharton County will come out and attend the **Local Working Group meeting at 2:00 p.m. at the El Campo Civic Center next Wednesday, January 15, 2020.** The process of identify and prioritize the resource concerns usually lasts one hour.

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