

Madam Chairman and members of the Senate Ag Committee: My name is Dr. Sara Faivre-Davis. I am deeply humbled to have been nominated by President Obama to serve on the Board of Directors of the Federal Agricultural Mortgage Corporation. It is indeed an honor to appear before you today. I would like to share with you a bit of my story and my passion for agriculture.

Agriculture runs deep in my blood. Both sides of my family have been farmers since they immigrated to this country several generations ago. I was born and raised on a family farm in DeKalb, Illinois, where I spent my childhood helping milk cows and spending as much time as I was allowed on the tractors and grain trucks with my Dad and brothers. Our farm matured technologically, and my high school job included entering computer code, tracking commodities markets and surveying our property lines for one of the first GPS-guided systems in the country.

I graduated with honors from Iowa State University with majors in Agricultural Business and Animal Science. I selected Texas A&M for graduate work, and received my Ph.D. in Genetics through the Animal Science Department in the early 90s. I had a “surf and turf” education; researching the genetics of Gulf Shrimp and as part of the first NCBA (National Cattleman’s Beef Association) sponsored research on genetic markers in beef.

After graduate school, I worked as a staff scientist with the USDA’s Meat Animal Research Center on the Bovine Genome project and later with the University of Iowa on the Human Genome Project. From there I entered academic life as a professor at the University of Illinois and Texas A&M University. Although my research was cutting-edge scientifically, I always had an eye to its practical application to industry.

The spirit of entrepreneurship runs strong in me. I left University life in 2000 to sequentially co-found two different agricultural animal biotech companies in Austin, TX. As an executive in each company, I gained a first-hand appreciation of financing, leverage and shareholder value. I am also aware of the critical role the board of directors plays in a company’s success.

Over the course of 2004-2005, I segued out of my executive role to become a full time rancher and to provide to my two young sons the same benefits of on-farm life that I enjoyed growing up. My husband, Ralph, and I run a 333 acre cattle ranch in Cameron TX, about an hour away from Texas A&M. I have never felt obligated to do things the way they’ve always been done. From the beginning, the business plan for our ranch has been to raise top-quality registered Angus and Red Angus breeding stock and to produce the best beef in Texas under our own brand. This year, we expect to sell 20,000 pounds of Wild Type Ranch premium pasture-raised beef through farmer’s markets and local retail outlets. Direct-marketing our beef also gives me a chance to be an active ag-advocate and to educate consumers about farm life and agricultural issues. As managing partner, I am active in all parts of the company, from marketing and bookkeeping to genetic selection, data analysis and breeding.

On both ends of my life in agriculture, the Farm Credit System has played an important role. My father built our family farm from nearly nothing to a thriving business through access to agricultural credit. My own family business of today would likely not exist if it weren’t for Capital Farm Credit of Texas. If

confirmed, my life experiences, business credentials and education make me uniquely suited to serve as a director of FAMC. It would be my great honor to do so.

Thank you again for giving me the opportunity to be here today, and I will be happy to answer your questions.