

United States Department
of Agriculture
Rural Development
California
Business • Housing • Utilities
Paul Venosdel, State Director



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Introduction Biography D. Paul Venosdel State Director

As State Director of Rural Development for the United States Department of Agriculture since January of 2002, Paul Venosdel has traveled from Arvin to Ukiah, Watsonville to Chester, visiting with local officials, community leaders and businesspeople in over 100 rural cities and towns. He oversees the work of 150 employees in 26 offices in the state, including loan officers, engineers, network managers, university interns, as well as marketing, financial and administrative professionals.

Paul's goal is to ensure that all rural areas in California have access to USDA programs that provide vital economic opportunity.

"No community is too small or has too many challenges to get our attention," said Venosdel. "Our proven economic strategy is to invest in local infrastructure improvement while providing tangible financial leverage for critical business and affordable housing development needs. This stimulates the local economic climate and leads to job creation."

In Fiscal Year 2003, under Paul's encouragement and direction, the Rural Development California Business Program Team led the nation with \$118.8 million in loans and grants, contributing over 3,300 jobs to Rural California's economy.

Since his first year as State Director, Paul's team increased Rural Development loan and grant funding in California by \$90 million for a total of \$330 million in 2003. He has led the agency's efforts in numerous White House Initiatives, including the USDA activity in California for Faith-Based Initiatives. He also actively supports the Federal Freedom Corps volunteer mission and is working to help achieve President George W. Bush's goal of 5.5 million new minority homeowners by year 2010.

Prior to his appointment as State Director, Paul was Federal Policy Director for the California Farm Bureau Federation. He developed positions on federal legislation and regulations relating to farm programs, budget and taxation issues. He also implemented a comprehensive grassroots volunteer network for Farm Bureau to maximize family farmer/rancher representation in Sacramento and Washington, D.C.

Paul has served on the staff of a state elected official, developing agricultural policy and managing constituent communications. He is a graduate of California State University in Fresno with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Business with an emphasis on economic analysis. A rural resident for much of his life, Paul was born in Pittsfield, Illinois and has lived and worked in Bakersfield, Fresno, Fullerton and Salinas. He currently resides in Sacramento with his wife Cindy and son, J.D. and has experienced his own local growth with the addition of another young son, Bret Ryan in May of 2004.

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