



NEWSLETTER



May 2012

**Georgia State
FSA Office**

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2012 Dates and Deadlines

Final Availability Dates for 2011 Crop Loans and LDP's

<u>May 31</u>	<u>Cotton, Corn, Grain Sorghum, Soybeans, Sunflower Seeds</u>
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Sign-up Deadlines:

<u>Now - June 1</u>	<u>Direct-Counter Cyclical Program</u>
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<u>Now - June 1</u>	<u>Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program</u>
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<u>May 31</u>	<u>Loan Availability Deadline Date for FY2011 Cotton, Corn, Grain Sorghum, Soybeans & Sunflower Seeds</u>
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Acres Reporting Deadlines:

<u>July 15</u>	<u>All other crops and land uses planted by July 15, 2012</u>
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Note: Crops with NAP Coverage:

If the crop being reported has NAP coverage, the final date to timely report the acreage is 15 days PRIOR to the onset of harvest or grazing. It is important for producers to remember that crops with NAP coverage will usually have a NAP crop reporting date EARLIER than the regularly established reporting dates for crops without NAP coverage.

Additional Program Deadlines

<u>Now</u>	<u>Inquire and Sign-up CRP Continuous Practices such as Riparian Buffers, Longleaf Pine, Habitat Buffers for Upland Birds</u>
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<u>Now</u>	<u>Emergency Conservation Approved Applicants -- report completed practices to FSA</u>
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<u>Now</u>	<u>Emergency Forestations Restoration Program Applicants -- report completed practices to FSA</u>
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<u>Now</u>	<u>Complete for 2012 form CCC-931, Average Adjusted Income Certification and Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information</u>
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Present Emergency Loan Application Deadlines in Georgia:

<u>May 7</u>	<u>Designation S3162 in 159 counties due to drought and excessive heat</u>
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<u>May 21</u>	<u>Designation S3170 in 7 counties due to drought</u>
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<u>Nov 16</u>	<u>Designation M4060 in 6 counties due to severe storms, tornadoes, straight-line winds and flooding</u>
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<u>Dec 20</u>	<u>Designation S3245 in 2 counties due to frost and freezing temperatures</u>
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NOTE: All producers are encouraged to contact their local FSA office for information specific to the Emergency Loan Program and to determine whether their counties are declared under a certain designation.

Farm Service Agency Cautions Producers on Clearing Land

FSA County Offices are reporting they are discovering numerous producers who are clearing land to plant crops without first discussing this activity with the FSA office or NRCS to insure they remain in compliance with the “Sodbuster/Swampbuster” provisions of the Farm Bill. FSA advises the main problem is the discovery of the land clearing activities is coming too late in many cases to prevent these producers from losing FSA program benefits. If the land is cleared-up BEFORE the person files form AD-1026 with FSA, and NRCS later determines the land in question is classified as “highly erodible” or “converted wetland”; the producer is in violation of the 1985 Sodbuster–Swampbuster Act, and could be ineligible for FSA benefits until the land is restored.

This problem is especially wide-spread throughout the state where land is being cleared up to go into crop production. Increasingly high commodity prices is the main contributing factor for some producers who are deciding to clear land adjacent to existing fields; other producers are expanding their farm operations by converting existing grasslands to row crop production. Many producers are under the impression that FSA and NRCS do not consider certain crops or land uses such as blueberries and grass “an annual agricultural commodity” because they are not planted and tilled on an annual basis. However, this is NOT correct! In fact, there are some situations where the land might meet FSA and NRCS standards, but not those of the Corps of Engineers as they relate to the Clean Water Act.

Therefore, **any time** a person is planning on clearing **any** land, they should come by their local FSA office and file form AD-1026 indicating what they intend to do and where they intend to clear land **BEFORE beginning work**. NRCS will then make a farm visit and provide an “official” determination on whether the land is “highly erodible” or considered a “wetland-type” soil.

REMEMBER – Check First, To Be Sure!

REVISED Crop Acreage Reporting Dates for FSA and Crop Insurance

Beginning this July, 2012, there will be a big change in many of the Crop Acreage Reporting Dates (CARD) for several of the crops planted in Georgia. The revision in reporting dates was the result of a combined effort of both FSA and the Risk Management Agency (RMA – crop insurance) to make acreage reporting easier by standardizing the acreage reporting deadline for crops for both FSA and crop insurance purposes.

As a result, there are more deadline dates applicable to specific fruit and vegetable crops than in prior years. The newly established deadline dates for the specific fruit and vegetable crops mentioned below will apply to these crops regardless of whether the producer has them covered under a crop insurance plan or not. These particular crops (apples, blueberries, peaches, cabbage, onions, pecans, fresh market sweet corn, fresh and market tomatoes) now have a specific FSA reporting deadline date and must be reported by the newly established reporting deadline whether the crop is covered by crop insurance or not.

Newly Established Crop Reporting Dates for Georgia – Effective July 1, 2012:

January 2 --- Honey (producers with NAP coverage)

January 15 --- Apples, Blueberries, Peaches, Barley, Canola, Oats, Rye, Wheat, and any other Fall-Seeded Small Grains, and Grazing and Forage crops with NAP coverage

March 15 --- Cabbage (Planted between 10/1-2/20), Onions (Planted between 10/21-2/1), and Pecans

May 15 --- Flue-cured Tobacco, Fresh Market Sweet Corn (Planted between 8/26-5/15), Fresh Market Tomatoes (Planted between 8/16-4/5)

July 15 --- Cabbage (Planted between 2/21-5/31), Corn, Cotton, Grain, Sorghum, Peanuts, Soybeans, and any other crops planted by this date and not already reported.

August 15 --- Cabbage (Planted between 6/1-7/15),
Fresh Market Tomatoes (Planted between 7/1-8/15)

September 15 --- Fresh Market Sweet Corn (Planted
between 7/15-8/25)

October 15 --- Cabbage (Planted between 7/16-9/30)

November 15 --- Apiculture and Pasture, Range,
Forage (PRF) – **NOTE: Apiculture is NOT the
same as NAP/Honey coverage and PRF is not the
same as NAP-covered grazing and forage; these
are 2 separate crop insurance programs**

December 15 --- Onions (Planted between 9/20-
10/20).

The BIG changes are:

- (1) Winter-seeded small grains were moved forward from March 1, to January 15
- (2) Grass and forage crops with NAP coverage moved up to January 15 from March 1 to coincide with small grain acreage reports, the same as in prior years.
- (3) Tobacco was moved back from May 1, to May 15
- (4) Specific dates were implemented for FSA acreage reporting purposes for numerous fruit and vegetable crops, depending on the planting date.

Producers are advised to contact their local FSA offices for more information on the revised crop acreage reporting deadlines and to obtain a copy of the new crop reporting deadlines.

Sale of Land under CRP Contract

This is a reminder for Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) participants who sell land under CRP contract to get a successor-in-interest to the contract. Failure to get the buyer to assume a contract will result in the original owner having to refund all CRP rental payments, cost share payments, incentive payments received on the contract, plus interest and liquidated damages. One

way to prevent this from happening is to have a sales contract prepared that requires the new owner to assume the CRP contract.

Local county FSA committees have no authority but to terminate a CRP contract when the CRP participant loses control of the land and there is no successor-in-interest to the contract. Please call or visit your local County FSA Office before you sell land that is currently in a CRP contract.

June 1, 2012: An Important Date for Georgia Producers

There are 2 major programs that have application closing dates on June 1, 2012. They are:

- 2012 Direct and Counter Cyclical Payment Program. In Georgia we have enrolled about half of our farms and although there are no advance payments this year, we ask that you visit your local FSA office and enroll your farms ASAP to avoid the anticipated rush.
- 2010 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program. The enrollment period for the 2010 version of this program will also end on June 1, 2012. You are again encouraged to visit your local FSA Office and initiate the enrollment process because there may be documents that you will need to gather before the application can be completed.

2012 DCP “Concurrent Planting” Warning

The 2008 Farm Bill established the regulations that are to be employed to administer the Direct and Counter Cyclical Payment Program or DCP. This year, due to the price of pecans, we have experienced a large increase of pecan trees being planted. Some of the acreage between the newly planted trees is being utilized to grow commodity crops such as cotton or soybeans. We have also heard of watermelons and/or cantaloupes and cotton

being planted in the same field in “Concurrent Cropping” situations.

The 2008 Farm Bill allows fruits and vegetables (FAV) to be planted to acres holding DCP base acres if the FAVs are planted in a recognized “Double Cropping” practice in a recognized “Double Cropping” region of which Georgia is included. Regulations do not however allow “Concurrent Cropping” and if a FAV (which includes pecans, watermelons and cantaloupes) are planted on acres holding DCP base acres then those acres are reduced from the farm’s eligible payment acres. Note that all acres in the field planted to the FAV are considered planted to the FAV and used in the payment reduction calculation. It is also noted that if the pecan trees are not of a nut bearing age, then those acres planted to pecans can be excluded from the reduction equation, but a farm visit must be charged to verify the eligibility.

If you have recently planted pecan trees on farms with DCP base acres or have acres being “Concurrently Cropped” we suggest that you visit your local FSA Office and discuss with the office staff if your farms have sufficient free acres to cover your planting of pecan trees or other “Concurrent Cropping” intentions. If not, you should expect to see your 2012 DCP payments reduced accordingly.

Loans for Socially Disadvantaged Persons

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes and guarantees loans to eligible socially disadvantaged applicants (SDA) to buy and operate family-size farms and ranches. Each fiscal year, the Agency targets a portion of its direct and guaranteed farm ownership (FO) and operating loan (OL) funds to SDA farmers. Non-reserved funds can also be used by SDA persons.

An SDA group is a group whose members have been subject to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities. These groups consist of American Indians or Alaskan Natives, Asians, Blacks or African-Americans, Native

Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, and Women.

The Agency:

- Helps remove barriers that prevent full participation of SDA farmers in FSA's farm loan programs; and
- Provides information and assistance to SDA farmers to help them develop sound farm management practices, analyze problems, and plan the best use of available resources essential for success.

Direct farm ownership loans (FO) and farm operating loans (OL) are made by FSA to eligible farmers. Guaranteed FO and OL loans are made by lending institutions subject to Federal or State supervision (banks, savings and loans, and units of the Farm Credit System) and guaranteed by FSA. Typically, FSA guarantees 90 percent of any loss the lender might incur if the loan fails. FO funds may be used to purchase or enlarge a farm or ranch, purchase easements or rights of way needed in the farm's operation, erect or improve buildings, implement soil and water conservation measures, and pay closing costs. Guaranteed FO funds may also be used to refinance debt.

OL funds may be used to purchase livestock, poultry, farm equipment, feed, seed, fuel, fertilizer, chemicals, insurance, and other operating expenses. The funds also may be used for borrower training costs, closing costs, and to reorganize and refinance debt.

Repayment terms for direct operating loans depend on the collateral securing the loan and usually run from 1 to 7 years. Repayment terms for direct farm ownership loans vary but never exceed 40 years.

Interest rates are set periodically according to the Government’s cost of borrowing. Guaranteed loan terms are set by the lender. Interest rates for guaranteed loans are established by the lender.

For additional information interested persons should contact their local FSA office.

Farm Loan Information Chart

The following chart summarizes FSA farm loan information. Additional details are available at local FSA offices or on FSA’s Web site: www.fsa.usda.gov.

Program	Maximum Loan Amount	Rates and Terms	Use of Proceeds
Direct Farm Ownership (FO)	\$300,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Up to 40 years - Rates based on Agency borrowing costs - Temporary limited resource interest rates are available for those unable to repay at regular rates - Interest rate 5% if 50% of loan amount provided by other lender 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purchase farm - Construct buildings or other improvements - Soil and water conservation - Pay Closing Costs
Down payment Program	The least of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 45% of the purchase price, - 45% of the appraised value, - \$225,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Term: 20 years - Interest rate: Direct FO rate less 4% with a floor of 1.5% - Down payment: 5% 	Purchase farm
Direct Operating (OL)	\$300,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From 1 to 7 years - Rates based on Agency borrowing cost - Temporary limited resource interest rate is available for those unable to repay at regular rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Purchase livestock, poultry, equipment, feed, seed, farm chemicals and supplies - Soil and water conservation - Refinancing indebtedness with certain limitations
Direct Emergency	100% actual or physical losses	- From 1 to 7 years for non-real estate	- Restore or replace essential property



	\$500,000 maximum program indebtedness	<p>purposes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Up to 40 years for physical losses on real estate - Interest rate: 3.75% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year - Pay essential family living expenses - Reorganize the farming operation - Refinancing indebtedness with certain limitations
Guaranteed Operating	\$1,214,000 (Amount adjusted annually for inflation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From 1 to 7 years - Rates not to exceed the rate charged to lenders' average agricultural loan customers - Interest rate reduction of 4% available for those unable to repay at regular rates (with certain limitations) 	Same as Direct OL except loan may be used to refinance debts
Guaranteed Farm Ownership	\$1,214,000 (Amount adjusted annually for inflation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Up to 40 years - Rates not to exceed the rate charged to lenders' average agricultural loan customers 	Same as Direct FO except loan may be used to refinance debts
Guaranteed Conservation Loan	\$1,214,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rates: determined by lender - Term: not to exceed 20 years, or shorter term, based on life of security 	- Implement any conservation practice in an NRCS approved conservation plan. Loan may also be used to refinance debts as related to implementing an NRCS approved conservation plan

FSA County Committee Election

Overview

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to ALL farmers and ranchers, whether beginning or long-established, with large or small operations. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

County committee members are a critical component of the operations of FSA. They help deliver FSA farm programs at the local level. Farmers and ranchers who serve on county committees help with the decisions necessary to administer the programs in their counties. They work to make FSA agricultural programs serve the needs of local producers.

- County committees provide local input on:
- Commodity price support loans and payments
- Conservation programs
- Incentive, indemnity and disaster payments for some commodities
- Emergency programs
- Payment eligibility

FSA county committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out Federal laws. County committee members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions.

Election Period

June 15, 2012 - The nomination period begins. Request nomination forms from the local USDA Service Center or obtain online at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections>

Aug. 1, 2012 - Last day to file nomination forms at the local USDA Service Center

Nov. 5, 2012 - Ballots mailed to eligible voters

Dec. 3, 2012 - Last day to return voted ballots to the USDA Service Center

Jan. 1, 2013 - Newly elected county committee members take office.

Nominations

To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign nomination form FSA-669A. The form includes a statement that the nominee agrees to serve if elected. This form is available at USDA Service Centers and online at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections>.

Nomination forms for the 2012 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on Aug.1, 2012.

Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in an FSA program may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee. Individuals may nominate themselves or others as a candidate. Additionally, organizations representing minority and women farmers or ranchers may nominate candidates. Nomination forms are filed for the county committee of the office that administers a producer's farm records.

Who Can Vote

Agricultural producers of legal voting age may be eligible to vote if they participate or cooperate in any FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm may also be eligible to vote. More information about voting eligibility requirements can be found in the FSA fact sheet titled "FSA County Committee Election - Eligibility to Vote and Hold Office as a County Committee Member." Producers may contact their local USDA Service Center for more information.

Don't Miss Out on Voting

Ballots will be mailed to voters by Nov. 5, 2012, and must be returned to the FSA county office or postmarked by Dec. 3, 2012. Eligible voters should contact their local FSA county office before the final date if they did not receive a ballot.

Uniform Guidelines

USDA issued uniform guidelines for county committee elections to help ensure that FSA county committees fairly represent the agricultural producers of a county or multi-county jurisdiction, especially minority and women producers. Minority persons are African-Americans, American Indians or Alaska Natives, Hispanics, Asians, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders. The guidelines govern the FSA county committee election process and are designed to increase participation by minorities and women.

The following are just some of the specifics of the guidelines that are now in effect:

- If no valid nominations are filed, the Secretary of Agriculture may nominate up to two individuals to be placed on the ballot.
- County committees must annually review local administrative area boundaries to ensure the fair representation of minority and women producers in their county or multi-county jurisdictions.
- FSA county offices shall actively locate and recruit eligible candidates identified as minority and women farmers and ranchers as potential nominees for the county committee elections through outreach and publicity, including the development of partnerships with community based organizations.

To read the guidelines in their entirety, visit the County Committee Elections page at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections>. In addition to minority and women producers, USDA strongly encourages beginning farmers to actively seek a position on a county committee.

LAA's Holding a 2012 Election

COUNTY	LAA		COUNTY	LAA		COUNTY	LAA		COUNTY	LAA
Appling	3		Calhoun	2		Dooly	3		Grady	1
Atkinson	1		Calhoun	4		Early	2		Hall	5
Bacon	1		Candler	2		Effingham	3		Hart	1
Baker	1		Carroll	2		Elbert	1		Hart	3
Berrien	3		Coffee	1		Elbert	5		Henry	1
Bleckley	1		Colquitt	1		Emanuel	2		Henry	4
Bleckley	3		Cook	1		Floyd	2		Irwin	2
Brooks	3		Crisp	1		Floyd	3		Jackson	5
Bulloch	2		Decatur	1		Gordon	4		Jeff Davis	3
Burke	2		Dodge	1		Gordon	5		Jefferson	3

Jefferson	5		Marion	5		Randolph	2		Turner	2
Jenkins	2		Miller	1		Randolph	3		Union	1
Lamar	2		Mitchell	2		Screven	3		Union	2
Lamar	5		Montgomery	2		Seminole	2		Walker	3
Laurens	3		Montgomery	4		Sumter	1		Walton	3
Laurens	4		Morgan	2		Sumter	5		Walton	4
Lee	2		Oconee	1		Tattnall	1		Washington	4
Lowndes	1		Oconee	3		Tattnall	3		Wayne	1
Lowndes	3		Peach	2		Telfair	1		Webster	3
McDuffie	1		Peach	3		Terrell	1		Webster	5
McDuffie	4		Pierce	1		Thomas	3		Wilcox	1
Macon	2		Putnam	3		Tift	1		Wilkes	2
Marion	1		Putnam	5		Toombs	3		Wilkes	5
									Worth	2

For More Information

For more information about FSA county committees, visit a local FSA or USDA Service Center or the Web site at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections>.

FSA's GovDelivery

The USDA Farm Service Agency offices are moving toward a paperless operation.

Producers are asked to enroll in the new GovDelivery system which will provide notices, newsletters and electronic reminders instead of a hard copy through the mail.

FSA, like many other organizations, is trying to work smarter and be more efficient. Moving to

electronic notifications via email will help conserve resources and save taxpayer dollars.

County Committee ballots will continue to be mailed to all eligible producers. Producers can now subscribe to receive free e-mail updates by going to <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe>.



FSA Near You - May 2012 Featured Producer: Mrs. Charline Cambron, Cobb County

The Charline Cambron Farm was established in 1958 by Mrs. Cambron's father. At that time, the land was overgrown and forested and her father cleared and planted permanent forages and began a cattle operation that existed until 1990. With the desire to keep the family farm which lies less than 1000 feet to the west of Interstate I-75 and surrounded by subdivisions, Mrs. Cambron began to raise 20 head of Boer goats focusing on selling goat meat, show wethers and breeding stock. Since

retiring from the Georgia State Department of Agriculture where she worked with the food inspection division, Mrs. Cambron now works cross-breeding Boer goats with Kiko billies. The majority of the offspring will be sold for meat and a few will be sold as pets with emphasis placed toward the pet's future and overall well being. Currently the farm has 70 nannies, 2 billies and 97 kids running about with 4 herd dogs watching over them.

