



NEWSLETTER



South Carolina State FSA Office

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Monday - Friday
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Attention

Due to budget constraints, this newsletter is mailed to one recipient per address. Please share with others concerned in your household.

The SC State FSA Newsletter is published and distributed by the SC State FSA Office, located at 1927 Thurmond Mall, Suite 100, Columbia, SC 29201-2375. The phone number is (803) 806-3820.

W. Riley Odum appointed Acting State Executive Director, South Carolina Farm Service Agency

Mr. Laurie C. Lawson announced his retirement on November 1, 2012, after serving twelve years as State Executive Director under two presidential administrations. Mr. Lawson served his first term from 1993 until 2001 and was appointed again in 2009. Mr. Lawson has served farmers, landowners, and rural South Carolina with distinction. Laurie Lawson's personal faith, integrity, and leadership have been his passion as he has provided leadership not only in FSA but in his career as a South Carolina farmer and leader in various Agricultural positions he has held in the State. His leadership will be greatly missed.

Riley Odum has been appointed as Acting State Executive Director. His contact information is (803) 806-3820, ext. 118, or riley.odum@sc.usda.gov.

HISPANIC/WOMEN FARMERS and RANCHERS CLAIMS PROCESS

On February 25, 2011, the Secretary announced a unified claims process for women and Hispanic farmers who allege that they were discriminated against when they applied, or were discouraged from applying, for direct farm loans or direct farm loan servicing. Claimants will have 180 calendar days from the opening claims period date of September 24, 2012, through March 25, 2013, within which to file a complete Claims Package as outlined at www.farmerclaims.gov. Please call 1-888-508-4429 for details.

Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE)

The sign up for 2011 losses begins **October 22, 2012** and will end of **June 7, 2013**.

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters that occurred in the 2011 crop year. SURE is available to eligible producers on:

- farms in counties with Secretarial disaster declarations, including contiguous counties, that have incurred crop production or quality losses, or both, and includes all crops grown by a producer nationwide, **except** grazed crops
- any farm in which, for the crop year, the actual production on the farm because of disaster-related conditions is 50 percent or less than normal production of the farm.

To be eligible for SURE payments, a producer was required to have crop insurance on all crops in all counties or, if crop insurance is not available, to participate in the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) except for grazed acreage. However, crop insurance or NAP coverage is not required for crops that are not of economic significance or those where the administrative fee required to buy NAP coverage exceeds 10% of the value of the coverage.

Eligible farmers and ranchers who meet the definition of Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, or Beginning Farmer or Rancher are exempt from the risk management purchase requirement.

Importance of Accurate and Timely Acreage Reports

Filing an accurate and timely acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of program benefits. In stressing timeliness of making an acreage report, it is important for producers to know that if a crop is not reported by the established state reporting date, or the

required NAP reporting date (if applicable), a late-filing fee will be assessed. The crop can be considered timely reported as long as there is physical evidence of the crop still remaining in the field.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

Management and maintenance activities are prescribed in the Conservation Plan and must be completed outside of the primary nesting season. The primary nesting season is April 1 through September 1. CRP contracts will be considered in non-compliance if required management and maintenance activities are not performed or performed during the primary nesting season. Some types of required activities include disking firebreaks, disking wildlife strips, and burning longleaf pine acres. Carefully review and follow your conservation plan.

Dates to Remember

November 15, 2012	Acreage Reporting Date: Pasture Rangeland and Forage (PRF Pilot Program).
November 20, 2012	NAP Application Closing Date (Program Crop Year 2013): Alfalfa, apples, blackberries, caneberries, blueberries, grapes, all perennial grasses for hay or grazing , honey, kiwifruit, lespedeza, nectarines, peaches, pears, pecans, plums and figs.
December 3, 2012	Last day to return completed COC Election ballots to the USDA Service Center.
December 15, 2012	NAP Application Closing Date (Program Crop Year 2013): Artichokes, asparagus, basil, beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, all greens, kohlrabi, lettuce, green onions, <u>all peas</u> including English and field varieties, potatoes, radishes, rutabagas, turnips, and leeks.

NOVEMBER 2012 INTEREST RATES

Farm Operating	1.125%
Farm Ownership	3.125%
Farm Ownership – Beginning Farmer Down Payment	1.500%
Emergency – Actual Loss	2.125%

County Committee Elections

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 ensure FSA agricultural programs serve the needs of local producers.

For election purposes, counties are divided into Local Administrative Areas, or LAAs. Most counties are divided into three LAA's, and combined counties may have up to five LAA's. This year's election is for LAA 2, and for the following LAA's for combined counties: Abbeville/Greenwood/McCormick - LAA 2 and LAA 5, Calhoun/Richland - LAA 2 and LAA 4, Chester/Fairfield - LAA 2 and LAA 4, and Kershaw/Lancaster - LAA 2 and LAA 4.

Election Timetable

Nov. 5, 2012 – Ballots are mailed to eligible voters
Dec. 3, 2012 – Deadline to return completed ballots to the FSA County Office
Jan. 1, 2013 – Newly elected county committee members take office.

For more information on the election, who can vote, who can hold office, or other general COC election information, please contact your local FSA County Office or you can visit us at the following website: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/sc>. You can also visit the FSA elections website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections>.

Acreage Reporting Date Changes for the 2013 Crop Year.

In an effort to simplify acreage reporting requirements between the Farm Service Agency and the Risk Management Agency whom administers Crop insurance programs, new acreage reporting dates have been established that will be applicable to both Agencies for crop year 2013. **Late filed fees will not be charged as the new dates are being implemented.**

2013 Final Crop Reporting Dates	
CROPS	REPORTING DATES
All Perennial Grasses intended for Hay, Grazing or SOD, Apiculture, PRF	November 15, 2012
Clams and other Aquaculture	November 30, 2012
Apples, Fall Barley, Blueberries, Fall Oats, Peaches, Rye, Fall Wheat, other Fall-Seeded Small Grains, Orchard Crops, and Vineyards	January 15, 2013
Spring Fresh Market Tomatoes and spring seeded fruits and vegetables	May 15, 2013
Corn, Cotton, Flue-Cured Tobacco, Grain Sorghum, Peanuts, Soybeans, summer seeded fruits and vegetables, CRP, and all other crops and land uses.	July 15, 2013
Fall Fresh Market Tomatoes and fall seeded fruits and vegetables	August 15, 2013

NOTE: For spring and fall planted fruit and vegetable crops not planted by the final reporting date, the acreage must be reported by 15 calendar days after planting is completed.

NAP Coverage

The Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) was designed to reduce financial losses that occur when natural disasters cause a catastrophic loss of production or prevented planting of an eligible crop by providing coverage equivalent to catastrophic (CAT) insurance. Statute limits NAP to each commercial crop or agricultural commodity, except livestock, for which CAT is not available and is produced for food or fiber.

The application deadline to apply for many 2013 NAP crops is soon approaching.

For alfalfa, apples, blackberries, caneberries, blueberries, grapes, **all perennial grasses for hay or grazing**, honey, kiwifruit, lespedeza, nectarines, peaches, pears, pecans, plums and figs, the deadline date is **November 20, 2012.**

For artichokes, asparagus, basil, beets, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, all greens, kohlrabi, lettuce, green onions, all peas including english and field varieties, potatoes, radishes, rutabagas, turnips, and leeks the deadline is **December 15, 2012.**

Producers who already have coverage on 2012 NAP crops may choose to continue coverage on the same crop or crops for 2013, if the applicable service fee is submitted by the application closing date. A new CCC-471, application for coverage is not required to be signed when applying for continuous coverage of the same crop or crops.

Producers who choose to add a new crop(s) or delete a crop(s) from previous year's coverage or changing crop shares must file a new CCC-471 with signatures and pay the applicable service fee.

NAP coverage for 2013 costs \$250 per crop, but not more than \$750 per producer per county, or not more than \$1875 total per producer for all counties. Service fees may be waived for eligible limited resource producers.

Producers with NAP coverage must remember to complete the following to qualify for benefits:

- Timely file acreage reports.
- Maintain production records and report production to the county office for APH purposes.
- File a "Notice of Loss" within 15 days of when a loss is apparent, due to drought, hail, etc.

Farm Programs – Farm Records

The 2008 farm bill ended September 30, 2012. The Direct and Counter Cyclical Program has ended and Congress has not enacted legislation to provide a safety net for USDA to administer at this time. It is anticipated in the near future a program will be enacted by congress.

During this interim period farm owners and operators should continue to provide FSA with changes to farming operations such as member changes in Corporations, LLC's and partnerships that will be effective for 2013. Also, any land ownership changes, new operators or producers on your farm for 2013 should be reported for updates in FSA's farm records system. This will help to minimize the time you spend in the County Office once a farm bill is announced and sign-up begins.

Please visit our website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/sc>

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