



GUAM County News

GUAM County FSA
400 Route 8, Suite 306
Maite, GU 96910-2003

Phone Numbers:
GUAM
(671) 472-7569
FAX: 472-7580
CNMI
(670) 236-0896

Core Hours
Monday - Friday
9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Website Address:
www.fsa.usda.gov

County Committee
Rueben Flores, SED

County Executive Director
Thomas Camacho

Farm Loan Officer
Laurie Talbo

Staff
Janice Ogo,
Program Technician

Catalina deGuzman,
Program Technician

IN THIS ISSUE:

- **COC Election Information**
- **NAP Amendments**
- **Foreign Buyers**
- **Power of Attorney**
- **Payment Limits**
- **Bank Changes**
- **Know your land - Highly Erodible & Wetlands**
- **Special Assistance**
- **Spouses Signatures**
- **Complaint Process**
- **Civil Rights**
- **Controlled Substance CSP**
- **EQIP**
- **WHIP**
- **Farm Loan Program**

County Office Committee (COC) Update

Local Administrative Area (LAA) boundaries are setup for **Guam**. They are as follows:

- LAA #1 Andersen AFB, Yigo, parts of Dededo (north of Ysengsong Road)
- LAA #2 Parts of Yona (north of Route 17), Apra Heights, Piti, Asan, Ordot, Chalan Pago, Mangilao, Barrigada, Barrigada Heights, Sinajana, Agana, Agana Heights, Maina, Mongmong-Toto-Maite, Tamuning-Tumon-Harmon, part of Dededo (south of Ysengsong Road)
- LAA #3 Parts of Yona (south of /Route 17), Santa Rita, Agat, Umatac, Merizo, Inarajan, Talofofo.

The LAA boundaries for the **CNMI** are as follows:

- LAA #1 The island of Rota
- LAA #2 The island of Saipan
- LAA #3 The island of Tinian

If you would like to see if your name is registered, please come into our office. The deadline for submitting your name to register to vote for your County Office Committee is May 2006.

County Office Committee Nominations Open June 15, 2006

Candidates to run for the Farm Service Agency county committee representing producers in Local Administrative Area 1, 2, and 3 will be accepted from June 15 through August 1, 2005. LAAs are elective areas. Single counties are divided into three LAAs. Elections are held each year to replace a member whose three-year term will expire.

All farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural producers are encouraged to participate. The county committee provides local input on commodity price support loans and payments; establish allotment and yields; conservation programs; disaster assistance payments and programs. More information on the elections, including nomination forms, is available at the county office or online at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Tropical Ag Amendments

Tropical Ag amendments to your 2006 NAP policy have been approved and are currently in effect beginning January 1, 2006. Eligible natural disasters is any of the following: Typhoons, Hurricanes, Named/Numbered Tropical Storms and other specified natural disasters as determined by CCC. Coverage period begins January 1 and ends December 31 – For nursery and aquaculture, the crop year begins on October 1 and ends September 30. In addition, we are doing away with planting periods. FSA will be looking at timely filed acreage reports for crops that are currently on the ground at the time of the disaster. **NO FILED REPORT, NO ASSISTANCE**. Plus, you will be in non-compliance and may be required to refund all CDP assistance payment issued with interest. Our Loss Adjusters and FSA employees will be conducting periodical farm visits and will be asking to see your records. FSA will be scheduling NAP training/outreach in the near future.

Foreign Buyers Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA. Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA within 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25% of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, Realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

Power of Attorney

If you're too busy getting work done around the farm to come into your local FSA office to conduct business and complete your paperwork, here's a solution. Retain an agent to act on your behalf for programs and transactions authorized under the 2002 Farm Bill and most other FSA administered programs. This can be done by completing an FSA-211, Power of Attorney. The form is available at your local USDA Service Center or on-line at <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov>. Forms obtained and completed outside USDA Service Centers offices must be notarized. To find out more, call the office.

Payment Limitation/Eligibility

USDA payments and benefits are subject to producer eligibility and limitation provisions as defined by law. Documents and forms to determine eligibility and limitation once completed are reviewed on an annual basis. It is the producer's responsibility to report changes in the farming operation which may affect payment eligibility and payment limitation. The Environmental Quality Incentive Program has a \$450,000 payment limitation total for fiscal years 2002 – 2007. The Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program annual limit is \$100,000 per person, per crop year. Entities such as corporations, limited partnerships, trusts and estates are required to provide names, addresses, and ID numbers of their members.

Bank Account Changes?

As of January 1, 1999, all FSA payments are supposed to be electronically transferred into your bank account. In order to make timely payments, you need to notify the office if you close your account or if another financial institution purchases your bank. Payments can be delayed if we are not aware of changes to your account and routing numbers.

Attention Producers, Landowners!

- Do you intend to clear timber areas to create or to expand existing crop areas?
- Are you converting a pasture field into a crop field?
- Are there any areas on your farm(s) that you are considering cropping that have not been cropped in recent years?
- Is there a wet spot in a field that you want drain to make cropping easier?
- Are you disturbing a wildlife habitat area of any type?
- Are you doing anything different on your farm(s) this year?

These are Highly Erodible and Wetlands provision questions that need to be considered each year by producers to assure that they may remain eligible for USDA benefits. If you have any question or concern that something you plan to do on your farm could jeopardize your eligibility for benefits, please contact your NRCS representative before you begin work.

Special Accommodations

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the county FSA office directly or by phone.

Spousal Signatures

Husbands and wives may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation programs in which either has an interest. This option is automatically available unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office staff by either spouse.

Complaint Process

After an FSA official makes a decision on your request for USDA services or application, you will be sent a letter informing you of the decision and options you can pursue if you disagree.

Generally, program participants have four choices – an informal review with the original agency decision-maker, an opportunity for mediation, appeal to State Committee and appeal to the USDA National Appeal Division (NAD).

Civil Rights Complaint Process

Any person, class or group of persons may file a discrimination complaint with 180 days of an alleged discriminatory action. Complaints may be filed in writing or orally with the agency head, any designated agency official or the Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Assistance in filing a complaint can be obtained by calling or visiting any FSA

office.

Controlled Substance

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium poppies and other drug producing plants.

Change in Farming Operations?

Update signature authorization when changes in the operation occur. Producers are reminded to contact the office of a change in operations on a farm so records can be kept current and accurate.

Conservation Security Program (CSP)

The Conservation Security Program (CSP) is a voluntary program that supports ongoing stewardship of agricultural lands by providing payments for maintaining and enhancing natural resources. Payments are made using three tiers of conservation contracts. CSP is only offered in Northern Guam (Agana, Agana Heights, Sinajana, Chalan Pago-Ordot, Mongmong-Toto-Maite, Mangilao, Barrigada, Tamuning, Dededo and Yigo) for fiscal year 2006. CSP sign-up is from February 13, 2006 through March 31, 2006. For additional information, please contact Colleen Simpson, NRCS, Farm Bill Program Manager, at 472-7467.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary cost-share conservation program to help eligible participants with financial and technical assistance in the installation and implementation of conservation practices on eligible agricultural land. Through EQIP, farmers in the Pacific Basin Area (Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and Guam) may receive assistance for agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible goals. Sign-up is continuous, please contact the NRCS Guam Field Office (671) 735-2111 or the Saipan Field Office (670) 236-0888 for additional information, or visit us online at www.pb.nrcs.usda.gov.

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)

The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is a voluntary cost-share program for people who want to develop and improve wildlife habitat primarily on private land. WHIP provides both technical assistance and up to 75 percent cost-share assistance to establish and improve fish and wildlife habitat (available in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and Guam). WHIP agreements between NRCS and the participant generally last from 5 to 10 years from the date the agreement is signed. Sign-up is continuous, please contact the NRCS Guam Field Office (671) 735-2111 or the Saipan Field Office (670) 236-0888 for additional information, or visit us online at www.pb.nrcs.usda.gov.

FARM LOAN PROGRAM

Applications for FSA Farm Loan Assistance

Farmers and ranchers that intend to apply to the Farm Service Agency for loan assistance for the upcoming crop year are encouraged to file their applications as early as possible. Filing early will help ensure that your loan is processed and approved as early as possible so that planting decisions can be made. Failure to apply early can result in a delay in processing loans due to the volume of applications that must be processed in date order. Contact your local FSA Farm Loan Officer for more details and assistance in applying.

If you are interested in applying for a farm operating or ownership loan, please contact Laurie Talbo, Farm Loan Officer or Janice Ogo, Program Technician at (671) 472-7569.

Interest Rates - March 2006

Farm Operating Loan - Direct	4.875%
Farm Ownership Loan- Direct	5.125%

New Toll-Free Number for Direct Loan Borrowers

FSA now has a useful new service that we are providing to our customers. As of February 2, 2006, FSA direct loan borrowers will be able to check the status of their accounts any time, day or night, using the new toll-free telephone number, 1-888-518-4983. The system provides FSA direct loan borrowers the following information:

- Loan number
- Original loan amount
- Unpaid principal
- If the borrower is delinquent and the amount of the delinquency
- Due date of next installment
- Principal and interest amount of next scheduled installment
- Date last payment was received
- Amount of interest paid in current calendar year
- Amount of interest paid for prior loan year

The initial time borrowers call the system, they will enter their tax identification number/social security number (TIN/SSN) associated with their loan. They will also need to enter their zip codes. Borrowers will create a personal identification number (PIN) to ensure personal information remains secure. Customers must enter their PIN every time they use the system, and they may change their PIN as necessary.

The system is user-friendly. It prompts users so they can easily find their loan information. The system may also ask borrowers to contact their local FSA servicing office if action is required on their accounts. To make a final payment on their account, borrowers will be told to contact their local FSA office servicing their account.

Now Open For Fun and Games



www.fsa.usda.gov/fsakids

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs). Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**United States Department of Agriculture
Farm Service Agency
400 Route 8, Suite 306
Maite, GU 96910-2003**

Return Service Requested