UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Farm Service Agency
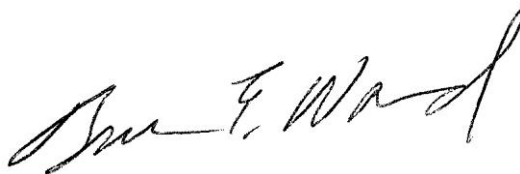Washington, DC 20250

Notice AO-1594

For: FSA Employees

Reporting Farm Bill Implementation in the Activity Reporting System

Approved by: Acting Associate Administrator for Operations and Management

[signature]

1 Overview

A Background

On February 7, 2014, the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Pub. L. 113-79) (Farm Bill) was signed into law by the President. For FSA, the Farm Bill included $100 million for costs associated with carrying out Title I programs. FSA is responsible for providing an accounting of the use of the funds. FSA will be using the Activity Reporting System to capture the cost and number of employees contributing to the implementation of Title I provisions. A notice will be provided under separate cover for tracking other types of costs.

B Purpose

This notice provides instruction for employees throughout FSA to report time related to the implementation of programs and activities related to all Farm Bill activity, but specifically to Title I programs for which the implementation funding was targeted.

C Contacts

For questions about this notice, contact either of the following by e-mail:

- Vicki Larson at **vicki.larson@wdc.usda.gov**
- Mitzi Lankford at **mitzi.lankford@wdc.usda.gov**.

Disposal Date	Distribution
July 1, 2014	All FSA employees; State Offices relay to County Offices

2   Program Information for Farm Bill

A   Activity Reporting System

The Activity Reporting System is integrated with WebTA in the T&A process. New programs and activities may be added to the "Work Time" section of the T&A by clicking "New" on the bottom left of the "Work Time" section. Employees will select the applicable:

- transaction code for type of work
- accounting code for correct FY and work organization
- program as directed in this paragraph or 21-AO, Exhibit 6
- activity as directed in paragraph 3.

B   Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) Programs

"**NOAUTH-P2**" is designated for reporting ARC and PLC because of the similarity of the ARC and PLC Program implementation. Producers will be considering both programs and electing to participate in either or both programs on each farm with which they are associated. For that reason, ARC and PLC will be reported using 1 program code.

ARC and PLC provide safety net protection to eligible producers and landowners on farms with base acres. For a farm where all producers make the election to obtain:

- ARC, payments shall be made if, for any 2014 through 2018 crop years, the actual crop revenue is less than the ARC guarantee determined for the crop year

- PLC, payments shall be made if, for any 2014 through 2018 crop years, the effective price of the covered commodity is less than the reference price for the covered commodity.

    Note: The programs replace the former DCP, ACRE, and SURE.

C   Margin Protection Program for Dairy Producers (MPP)

"**NOAUTH-P3**" is designated for reporting MPP. MILC has been extended through September 1, 2014, and all activity related to the MILC Program shall continue to be reported by selecting "MILC".

MPP indemnifies dairy producers when the average difference between the USDA National All-Milk price and a ration index falls below a producer's selected coverage level. Enrolled producers may receive coverage on 25 to 90 percent of their milk production history. The production history is determined at signup in the first year of the program from the highest of calendar year 2011, 2012, or 2013 marketings.

2   Program Information for Farm Bill (Continued)

D   Cotton Transition Assistance Program (CTAP)

"**NOAUTH-P4**" is designated for reporting CTAP.

CTAP provides transition assistance to producers of upland cotton in light of the repeal of availability of direct payments, inapplicability of ARC and PLC to upland cotton, and the delayed implementation of the Stacked Income Protection Plan for Producers of Upland Cotton required by the Federal Crop Insurance Act to be implemented no later than 2015 crop year for upland cotton. Upland cotton producers on a farm for which cotton base acres were available in the 2013 crop year may be eligible for transition payments.

E   Common Programs

With the designation of "NOAUTH" program codes for new Farm Bill programs, "Common" programs shall **not** be used for reporting Farm Bill activity, rather than selecting the applicable programs.

Exception: Activity that is related to the Farm Bill, but is not specific to a program but rather multiple programs, shall be reported using "Common" programs. Examples are as follows:

- adjusted gross income
- payment limitation
- active personal management
- signature authority
- farm records
- assignment of payments.

3   Activity Information for Farm Bill

A   Base Acre and Yield Activity

The following processes will be reported as "**Common**" program and "**Farm Records**" activity:

- retention or reallocation of base acres – all activity related to the retention of base acres, including generic base acres; reallocation of base acres, including reviewing historic data or information provided by producers for calculation of 4-year average; adjusting acres; updating base acres

- determination and adjustment of yields – all activity related to the establishment of yields for each farm and for any designated oilseed or any covered crop for which a yield was not previously established; reviewing historic yield data or production information provided by producer; calculating average or assigning new yields as directed; updating yields.

3   Activity Information for Farm Bill (Continued)

B   Farm Bill Implementation Activity

"**NOAUTH-A2**" was designated for Farm Bill activity in November 2012 for FSA employees who were actively assisting with reviewing information for the upcoming Farm Bill. At that time, the following key tasks were provided:

- reviewing proposed legislation
- identifying issues and drafting policy papers
- providing historical information
- participating in meetings and conference calls.

"NOAUTH-A2" activity shall be used with the applicable program; that is, "NOAUTH-P2" through "NOAUTH-P4" discussed in paragraph 2 or other existing FSA programs that have been affected by the Farm Bill. "NOAUTH-A2" will continue to represent activity for the Farm Bill with the amendment or addition of the following key tasks:

- reviewing Farm Bill legislation for implementation planning

- drafting through clearance of all policy papers, handbooks, and notices, which includes all employees who participate in details to assist with this process

- developing software requirements through testing software results, which includes all employees who participate in details to assist with this process

- all Farm Bill training from development through delivery, which includes all employees who assist in planning for the training site, developing the training, and presenting, assisting, or participating in the training

   Note: Training includes reading and learning new policy and procedure provided in notices, handbooks, etc.

- all Farm Bill travel, which includes all travel to and from Farm Bill training for employees participating on details for Farm Bill policy or software, and other travel associated with Farm Bill.

C Outreach Activity

Outreach will be used for Farm Bill activity related to:

- preparing and sending newsletters that provide information related to new Farm Bill legislation, signup dates for program, and other topics related to Farm Bill to producers

- planning for and speaking at informational meetings held with producers to discuss new programs or changes to existing programs.

3   Activity Information for Farm Bill (Continued)

D Signup and Eligibility Activity

Having one-on-one conversations with producers in the office is a daily occurrence and is heightened significantly in a Farm Bill year. Throughout the years, employees have been directed to report time discussing program participation, applications, contracts, eligibility factors, etc. in the Activity Reporting System using "Signup & Eligib". Types of activities included are:

- providing information to answer producers' questions

- discussing eligibility determinations that apply to program participation

- election of base acres and commodities, if applicable

- assisting with the completion of program applications, contracts, or other applicable forms.

Note: Review 21-AO, Exhibit 4, pages 24 and 25 for more information about tasks included in "Signup & Eligib" activity.

E Receipt for Service

"**NOAUTH-A5**" is designated for activity related to receipt for service.

Task related is completion of receipt for service for current or prospective producer or landowner, who requests, in person or in writing, any service or benefit according to future instructions to be provided.