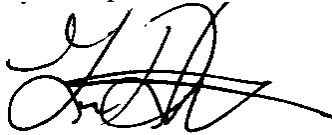


For: FSA Employees

Outreach to Support Local, Regional, and Organic Food Systems

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Field Operations



1 Overview

A Background

Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food, (KYF2) and the Organic Working Group are USDA-wide efforts to carry out President Obama’s commitment to strengthening alternative food systems, and ensure that USDA meets the needs of all types of producers. KYF2 supports many producers who are small, or mid-sized and diversified, and sell their products into local markets to meet consumer demand to “buy local”. The Organic Working Group helps FSA and other agencies better support the unique needs of organic producers, whether they sell locally or into national or export markets. USDA has established goals to:

- expand FSA credit and risk protection programs among local food producers and other small or midsized diversified producers
- increase the number of organic farming operations.

B Purpose

This notice provides:

- outreach guidance on conducting targeted meetings with local food and organic producers
- guidance on entering KFY2 activities in the Outreach Tracking Information System (OTIS)
- a list of food hubs and organic operations to assist with outreach efforts
- instructions for employees to complete the KYF2 webinar and Organic 201 Training in AgLearn.

Disposal Date	Distribution
January 1, 2016	All FSA employees; State Offices relay to County Offices

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1 Overview (Continued)

C Contact

If there are questions about this notice:

- County Offices shall contact State Offices
- State Offices shall contact Matthew Pavone, Outreach Specialist, by either of the following:
 - e-mail to matthew.pavone@wdc.usda.gov
 - telephone at 202-260-9455.

2 KYF2 and Organic Outreach

A Targeted Meetings and Events

FSA offices are required to conduct outreach activities that align with the agency's FY 2015 Outreach Goals. Outreach Goal 1 instructs offices to market USDA programs, loans, careers, and initiatives to the public and potential customers. In supporting the Secretary's Know Your Farmer Initiative and the Departmental Guidance on Organic, offices shall.

- Conduct or participate in a minimum of two FSA outreach activities targeted at organic producers, local food producers, food hubs and/or farmers markets this FY. Offices are encouraged to conduct this outreach in conjunction with RD, NRCS, and other agencies as appropriate.
- Use FSA programs such as microloans, NAP, and FSFL to promote and encourage both local and organic producers into new opportunities. Offices should familiarize themselves with the special provisions under FSFL for diversified fruit and vegetable producers. Loan personnel shall encourage NAP participation when cost effective for the operation and when beneficial to the applicant's overall farm plan as directed in Notice FLP-702.
- Collaborate with USDA agencies to participate in State and regional organic and local food-focused conferences, exhibiting the programs FSA has available, as well as the COC's and career opportunities.

2 KYF2 and Organic Outreach (Continued)

B Reporting Outreach Activities and Events

An FSA pre-entered goal must be selected to align with each Outreach Activity entered in OTIS. After selecting FSA Goal 1, results of targeted activities and events conducted for local and/or regional specialty crop and organic producers shall be recorded in OTIS using the Program Code, "KYFKYF". The comment box shall be used to enter specific details about the activity.

Examples of activities to record:

- events
- conferences
- meetings
- field days
- seminars
- workshops
- farmer's market exhibiting.

Note: FSA reports KYF2 activities to the Department on the **14th** of each month. SED's shall ensure that all activities are loaded into OTIS monthly.

C Lists, Directories, and Educational Materials

Knowledge of organic and local food producers assists employees in conducting effective targeted outreach activities.

The following tools are available on the DAFO Outreach Sharepoint web site at <https://fsa.sc.egov.usda.gov/mgr/DAFO/Outreach>, under Outreach Toolkit:

- KYF2 Folder:
 - a list of food hubs, which work with many local food producers to aggregate and market product
- **Note:** Food hubs can be important partners to convene producers who could benefit from USDA programs.
- Know Your Farmer outreach materials, including powerpoint slides, talking points, brochures, and flyers
- Organic Agriculture Folder:
 - a list of certified organic operations
 - a list of agents by State
 - organic brochures and resource guides.

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2 KYF2 and Organic Outreach (Continued)

D AgLearn Training Courses

The USDA Field Outreach Subcommittee for the KYF2 Initiative created a webinar for FSA employees showing the collaboration of agencies to support local food producers. FSA employees should add the USDA Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food (KYF2) Training Webinar in AgLearn to their learning plan and complete training by **July 30, 2015**.

USDA employees were previously instructed to complete Organic 101, "Introduction to Organic".

FSA employees are asked to complete Organic 201, "Intermediate Organic" by **July 30, 2015**.

Note: SED's shall ensure that new employees hired since FY 2013 complete the courses in AgLearn.