For: State and County Offices

National Farm Bill Training for Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) Programs

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs

J. Michael Schmidt

1 Overview

A Background

The Agricultural Act of 2014 (2014 Farm Bill) authorized the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) Program and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) Program, which are administered by FSA. ARC/PLC provides revenue and price loss payments to eligible producers for the 2014 through 2018 crop years.

To ensure successful delivery and implementation of the ARC/PLC program, FSA will conduct a "train-the-trainer" **National training session** for FSA field office employees. The training session will include specific ARC/PLC policies, procedures, "hands-on" exercises to gain understanding of automation/IT processes, and an overview of general compliance provisions, such as HELC/WC provisions; finality rule and equitable relief; payment reductions and violations; and payment limitation/AGI.

The training will prepare FSA field office staff to train other FSA employees and to deliver the ARC/PLC program to provide services and benefits to our producers, ranchers and farmers, according to the 2014 Farm Bill.

B Purpose

This notice informs State and County Offices of the ARC/PLC training and provides detailed information on:

- dates and location
- hotel accommodations
- transportation travel authorization.

C Contacts

If there are any questions about this notice, contact either of the following:

- Brent Orr by e-mail at **brent.orr@wdc.usda.gov**
- Kimberly Graham by e-mail at **kimberly.graham@wdc.usda.gov**.

Disposal Date	Distribution
December 1, 2014	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

2   National ARC/PLC Training

A "Train-the-Trainer" Approach

The National ARC/PLC training was designed using the "Train-the-Trainer" model. Training attendees will be responsible for delivering training to applicable FSA employees in their respective States.

The training sessions will include lectures and group exercises. The presenters will provide training and communication materials to all training participants to support their training of others in their respective States. The training materials will be made available electronically.

Training participants who have a government laptop shall bring their laptop with them to the training to view training materials, which will be made available on the DAFP intranet site on Friday, September 12, 2014. Training participants are encouraged to download the training materials and have them available on your laptop when you attend the National training.

B Training Date and Location

The training session will begin on **Monday, September 15, 2014, at 8 a.m. and end Thursday, September 18, 2014, at 6 p.m.** Training participants shall make travel arrangements to ensure that they are able to attend the entire applicable portion of the training. Attendees are **not** authorized to make any airline reservations that would require them to leave the applicable training session before the scheduled end time.

For training participants attending the **general compliance portion of the training only**, travel is not authorized until Tuesday, September 16, 2014. The general compliance portion of the training is scheduled to begin Wednesday, September 17 at 2 p.m. CST and end Thursday, September 18, 2014.

The training will be held at the Doubletree Hotel by Hilton Hotel Bloomington - Minneapolis South, MN. Detailed hotel information is provided in subparagraph 3 C.

C State Training Attendee Slots

SED's were provided by e-mail on August 27, 2014, a specific number of training attendee slots based on several factors including, number of employees in a State to be trained, expected ARC/PLC workload and/or participation, and timeframe to complete end user training in the applicable State.

The final list of training participants will be contacted by e-mail with specific details and logistics about the training session.

3   Travel and Hotel Authorizations

A   Travel Authorization

Participants are responsible for making their own travel arrangements, as soon as possible, using the most efficient means of transportation.

Each employee **must** have a GovTrip electronic travel authorization **before** incurring travel expenses. This notice does **not** constitute an approved travel authorization. Per diem for Minneapolis, MN is $204 ($133 for lodging and $71 for M&IE) per day.

In GovTrip, the trip type is "trip by trip" and the trip purpose is "training". This will populate automatically when the traveler prepares an authorization. Employees shall select the accounting code that begins with their normal accounting code, but ends in "**FB-TRAINING**" as the accounting code in GovTrip.

B   Travel Codes

The 2014 Farm Bill funds for training and for TDY (GovTrip) travel have had accounting codes created with "-FB-TRAINING" added at the end of existing accounting codes for all offices, **except** FLP. For FLP, see **Notice BU-752**, subparagraph 3 A for guidance.

For example, someone who is traveling:

- for State training from the Texas State Office would search in GovTrip for code "14-TX-STO-FB-TRAINING"

- from the Clay, Texas Service Center would use GovTrip code "14-48077-FB-TRAINING".

The travel software codes for local travel have the last 6 zeroes replaced with "FBEXPS" for Farm Bill expenses for both FA and CE.

For example, in the travel software, someone traveling for Farm Bill training from the:

- Texas State Office would use FA code "48404884FBEXPS".
- Knox, Missouri Service Center would use CE code "48729103FBEXPS".

3   Travel and Hotel Authorizations (Continued)

C   Hotel Accommodations

A block of rooms have been reserved at the:

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Bloomington – Minneapolis South
7800 Normandale Boulevard
Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55439
Telephone: 952-835-7800.

The per diem rate for lodging is $133 and M&IE is $71. To receive the Government per diem rate, participants must book under FSA's block of rooms using the following information:

Group Name: National ARC/PLC Farm Bill Training
Per Diem Rate: $133/night
Check-In: September 14, 2014
Check-Out: September 18 or 19, 2014

The DoubleTree Hotel is sending an e-mail reservation to each attendee for this training. Participants **should only respond** to the e-mail if changes are needed but not later than September 10, 2014.

Important: Participants shall confirm the room with a credit card upon check-in.

Check in time is 3 pm. Checkout time is noon. In the event that a reservation needs to be canceled, participants shall notify the hotel 72 hours before the date of check-in to avoid a cancellation fee. Any reservation canceled less than 72 hours before check-in will result in the individual's credit card being charged a minimum of one night's stay and tax. Also, guests must advise the hotel at or before check-in of any change in the scheduled length of stay to avoid an early departure fee of $75. Hotel staff can arrange to check baggage for those arriving early when rooms are unavailable.

3   Travel and Hotel Authorizations (Continued)

D   Hotel Transportation Options

Transportation from area airports to the hotel is available by airport shuttle or taxi. The Doubletree Hotel also provides 1,500 on-site complimentary parking spaces. Transportation options to the Doubletree Hotel include the following:

- complimentary shuttle service—based upon availability at the time of request, leaving airport to hotel starting from 6 am – midnight, departing from hotel to airport starting from 5:30 am – 11:30 pm.

- taxis available at airport starting at $35 per trip.

E   Reasonable Accommodations

Participants shall notify the airline and hotel directly if any special accommodations are necessary.

If special accommodations are necessary to attend this training, notify Barbara Harris by **noon EST September 9, 2014**, by either of the following:

- e-mail to **barbara.harris@wdc.usda.gov**
- telephone at 202-720-3135.

4   Additional Training Information

A   Documenting Training Attendance in WebTA

When reporting in the **Activity Reporting System** section of WebTA use program code "NOAUTH-P2" for ARC/PLC and activity code "NOAUTH-A2" for Farm Bill activity. Training related to base and yield election, etc. should be reported as "Common - NOAUTH-A2".

Note: Use these same codes proportionally for reporting travel time.

B   Subsequent "In-State" Training Sessions

It is recommended that State training be conducted for ARC/PLC by the end of October, 2014. States shall **not** conduct training September 29 through October 3, 2014 unless prior approval is obtained.

When developing training delivery options States shall consider past training practices that have been effective, as well as innovative training methods that are cost-effective.

Note: No more than 3 days is needed for each training session.

States shall input the type of in-State training being planned/performed and estimated training costs into the DAFO SharePoint site for reporting planned in-State Farm Bill training.