

For: State and County Offices

**Notifying Trade Adjustment Assistance for Farmers (TAAF)
Program Applicants of Approval Status**

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



1 Notifying TAAF Applicants

A Background

All application deadlines for submitting FSA-229-1's for FY 2011 approved TAAF Program petitions for American lobster, blueberries, and shrimp have ended. TAAF applicants approved for benefits must be notified of their application status. FSA must promptly identify TAAF applicants and notify applicants of their status so that initial training is provided within 90 calendar days from the end of a petition application period.

TAAF applicant notifications will be made according to the following:

- FSA County Offices will notify approved TAAF applicants
- FAS will notify disapproved TAAF applicants.

B Purpose

This notice instructs State and County Offices to notify TAAF applicants approved for benefits of their application status.

C Contact

For questions or situations **not** addressed in this notice, State Offices shall contact Danielle Cooke by either of the following:

- e-mail at danielle.cooke@wdc.usda.gov
- telephone at 202-720-1919.

Disposal Date	Distribution
January 1, 2012	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

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1 Notifying TAAF Applicants (Continued)

D Notification for Approved Applicants

As provided by 1-SP, subparagraph 76 A, until the web-based software is available for loading FSA-229-1 data, the TAAF Excel spreadsheet will be used as an interim tool for recording FSA-229-1 information. For all applicants listed in the TAAF Excel spreadsheet with a status code of "A" for approved status in column S, County Offices shall:

- download and save the notification letter of approval to a desired drive location

Notes: The notification letter (FSA-931-TAAF COF, Exhibit 1) may be found on the FFAS Employee Forms/Publications Online web site, located at <http://fsaintranet.sc.egov.usda.gov/dam/ffasforms/forms.html>.

Before saving the document, enter the name of CED and applicable County Office name, address, and telephone number in the space provided on FSA-931-TAAF COF.

- complete a letter mail merge through Microsoft Word of the downloaded FSA-931-TAAF COF and the Excel spreadsheet address information for approved applicants, according to subparagraph 2 A
- complete a label mail merge through Microsoft Word of the Excel spreadsheet address information for approved applicants, according to subparagraph 2 B
- mail notification letters to approved applicants by the deadline provided in subparagraph E.

E Deadline for Notifying Approved Applicants

County Offices must mail letters notifying applicants of their approved status for TAAF benefits as soon as possible but no later than **COB February 16, 2011**.

F Notification for Disapproved Applicants

County Offices shall **not** mail letters of disapproval to TAAF applicants. FAS will notify applicants disapproved for TAAF benefits and provide appeal rights.

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2 Using Microsoft Mail Merge for Letters and Labels

A Letter Mail Merge

County Offices shall complete a mail merge of FSA-931-TAAF COF with applicant address information from the TAAF Excel spreadsheet according to the following.

Step	Action
1	Access Microsoft Word.
2	CLICK “Mailings” from the Microsoft ribbon at the top of the screen.
3	CLICK “Start Mail Merge”.
4	CLICK “Step by Step Mail Merge Wizard”.
5	In the mail merge window on the right of the screen, select “Letters” as the document type and CLICK “Next” to continue.
6	Select “Start from existing document”.
7	Select “More Files” and CLICK “Open”.
8	Browse to find the location where FSA-931-TAAF COF was saved and CLICK “Open”. FSA-931-TAAF COF will be displayed.
9	CLICK “Select Recipients”.
10	CLICK “Browse”.
11	CLICK “Connect to New Data Source. odc”.
12	CLICK “Other/Advanced” from the Data Connection Wizard and CLICK “Next” to continue.
13	CLICK “Microsoft OLE DB Provider for ODBC Drivers” from the Data Link Properties Menu and CLICK “Next” to continue.
14	CLICK “Use Data Source Name” from the Data Link Properties Connections tab and use the drop-down box to select “Excel Files” and CLICK “OK” to continue.
15	Select the file for the TAAF Excel spreadsheet from the location where it is saved and CLICK “OK” to continue.
16	Select the appropriate sheet name and CLICK “Finish” to continue.
17	Select “Insert Merge Field” from the Mailings tab at the top of screen and from the drop-down menu select the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• F9 F10 F8 for [NAME]• F11 for [ADDRESS]• F12 F13 F14 for [ADDRESS].
18	CLICK “Write Your Letter” and enter the appropriate date for the letter.
19	CLICK “Preview Your Letters” to ensure that all information is correctly formatted.
20	CLICK “Complete the Merge” and print the letters.

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2 Using Microsoft Mail Merge for Letters and Labels (Continued)

B Label Mail Merge

County Offices shall complete a mail merge for labels with applicant address information from the TAAF Excel spreadsheet according to the following.

Step	Action
1	Access Microsoft Word.
2	CLICK "Mailings" from the Microsoft ribbon at the top of the screen.
3	CLICK "Start Mail Merge".
4	CLICK "Step by Step Mail Merge Wizard".
5	In the mail merge window on the right of the screen, select "Labels" as the document type and CLICK "Next" to continue.
6	Select the appropriate label vendor and label product number from the Label Options Menu and CLICK "OK" to continue.
7	CLICK "Select Recipients" and CLICK "Next" to continue.
8	CLICK "Browse".
9	Select the data source previously used for letters and CLICK "OK" to continue.
10	CLICK "Arrange Your Labels".
11	Select "Insert Merge Field" from the Mailings tab at the top of the screen and from the drop-down menu select and in the first blank label insert the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• F9 F8 for [NAME]• F11 for [ADDRESS]• F12 F13 F14 for [ADDRESS].
12	CLICK "Preview Your Labels" to ensure that all information is correctly formatted.
13	CLICK "Complete the Merge" and print the labels.

C Mailing Expenses

County Offices must report administrative expenses for postage, delivery, and other miscellaneous expenses according to 1-SP, subparagraph 35.

Example of FSA-931-TAAF COF

The following is an example of FSA-931-TAAF COF.



**Agricultural
TRADE
ADJUSTMENT
ASSISTANCE**

[FSA Approval Date]

**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

Farm and Foreign
Agricultural
Services

Farm
Service
Agency

[NAME]
[ADDRESS]
[ADDRESS]

Dear TAA Applicant:

Thank you for applying for benefits under the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) for Farmers Program. We are pleased to inform you that your application has been approved.

The TAA for Farmers Program provides training to help producers of eligible commodities develop business plans and adjust their business practices to be more effective in the changing economic environment. The program also provides producers up to \$12,000 in cash payments to implement their business plans.

You will soon be notified of the upcoming schedule for the Initial Orientation. Please be aware that all approved applicants must complete the Initial Orientation in order to receive benefits under the program. After completing it, you will be eligible for the Intensive Technical Assistance workshops. Note that some of these workshops may immediately follow the Initial Orientation at the same location.

The most up-to-date information and dates for training can be found on the TAA for Farmers web site at <http://www.taafarmers.org/>. Additionally, applicants can sign up at this web site to take online courses for credit, including the Initial Orientation; view their status toward completion; and complete the required phases of TAA. To do this, please complete the instructions on the TAA web site for registering for a new account. If you would like to take advantage of this resource, but do not have access to a high-speed internet connection, we encourage you to visit your local library. If you have any questions regarding training please contact the Center for Form Financial Management at 612-625-1964.

If you need additional information, please contact my office at the telephone number below.

Sincerely,

[Name of CED]
County Executive Director
[COF NAME]
[COF ADDRESS]
[COF TELEPHONE NUMBER]

FSA-931-TAA COF (02-08-11)

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