

June 2019



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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SED's Comments

Disaster relief bill will provide \$19 billion in assistance

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue commended President Trump's June 6, 2019 signing of the disaster relief bill that will provide \$19 billion in assistance to states and territories hit by flooding, hurricanes, wildfires and other natural disasters. "Congress provided much needed resources to assist farmers, ranchers and producers dealing with extensive damage to their operations caused by natural disasters," said Secretary Perdue. "President Trump is committed to helping America's farmers get back on their feet following recent natural disasters."

The disaster relief bill will benefit Hawaii and Pacific Basin producers who had severe crop loss resulting from the eight Presidential declared disasters that impacted Hawaii and U.S. Territories in the Pacific region in 2018. The headquarters staff for the various agencies of USDA must turn the legislative language into executable instructions with software and implementation guidance so our field offices can accept and process applications; this could take several months. Once we have instructions we will provide outreach presentations in each of Hawaii's Counties as well as Guam, Saipan and American Samoa. Disasters covered under this legislation include: Tropical Storm Gita, April Flooding of Kauai and Honolulu Counties, Tropical Storm Maria, Hawaii County Volcano Eruption (Lava and VOG), Hurricane Lane, Tropical Storm Olivia, Typhoon Mangkhut, and Typhoon Yutu.

Sign up dates for assistance as well as dates and locations for outreach events will be announced as soon as they are available.

AL Frenzel, State Executive Director
USDA Farm Service Agency Hawaii & Pacific Basin

Hawaii & Pacific Basin FSA State Office

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State Executive Director:
AL Frenzel

Chief Program Specialist:
Patrick Lewis

Chief, Farm Loan Program:
Theresa Correa

Upcoming County Committee Meetings:

Hawaii County Committee
July 12, 2019 at 8:30am

Honolulu County Committee
June 21, 2019 at 3:00pm

Maui County Committee
June 20, 2019 at 8:30 am

Kauai County Committee
June 19, 2019 at 9:00 am

Contact the County Office to confirm meeting date and time, as budget constraints may limit the County Committee's ability to meet each month.

[Click here for a list of County Offices, contact numbers and addresses.](#)

Eligibility for Nominations for the 2019 County Committee Elections

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees are a critical component of the day-to-day operations of FSA and allow grassroots input and local administration of federal farm programs.

Committees are comprised of locally elected agricultural producers responsible for the fair and equitable administration of FSA farm programs in their counties. Committee members are accountable to the Secretary of Agriculture. If elected, members become part of a local decision making and farm program delivery process.

A county committee is composed of three to 11 elected members from local administrative areas (LAA). Each member serves a three-year term. To be eligible for nomination and hold office as a committee member or alternate, a person must fulfill each of the following requirements: (1) be a producer with an interest in farming or ranching operations, (2) participate or cooperate in any FSA program provided for by law, (3) be a U.S. citizen, (4) be of legal voting age, (5) meet the basic eligibility requirements, and (6) reside in the county or multi-county jurisdiction in which they will be serving.

All nomination forms for the 2019 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA service center by Aug. 1, 2019. For more information on FSA county committee elections and appointments, refer to the FSA fact sheet: *Eligibility to Vote and Hold Office as a COC Member* available online at: fsa.usda.gov/elections.

2019 Livestock Forage Losses

Producers in Kauai and Hawaii Counties are eligible to apply for 2019 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) benefits on native pasture, improved pasture and mixed forage intended for grazing.

LFP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who suffer grazing losses for covered livestock due to drought on privately owned or cash leased land or fire on federally managed land.

County committees can only accept LFP applications after notification is received by the National Office of qualifying drought or if a federal agency prohibits producers from grazing normal permitted livestock on federally managed lands due to qualifying fire. Eligible livestock producers must complete a CCC-853 and the

Website for Hawaii and Pacific Basin FSA:

www.fsa.usda.gov/hi

required supporting documentation no later than January 31, 2020, for 2019 losses.

Additional Information about LFP, including eligible livestock and fire criteria, is available at your local FSA office or online at: www.fsa.usda.gov.

USDA Designates Kauai County, Hawaii, as a Primary Natural Disaster Area

Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue designated Kauai County, Hawaii, as a primary natural disaster area. Producers who suffered losses caused by recent drought may be eligible for U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) [emergency loans](#).

This natural disaster designation allows FSA to extend much-needed emergency credit to producers recovering from natural disasters. Emergency loans can be used to meet various recovery needs including the replacement of essential items such as equipment or livestock, reorganization of a farming operation or the refinance of certain debts.

The deadline to apply for these emergency loans is Jan. 30, 2020.

FSA will review the loans based on the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability.

FSA has a variety of additional programs to help farmers recover from the impacts of this disaster. FSA programs that do not require a disaster declaration include: [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program](#); [Emergency Conservation Program](#); [Livestock Forage Disaster Program](#); [Livestock Indemnity Program](#); [Operating and Farm Ownership Loans](#); and the [Tree Assistance Program](#).

Farmers may contact their local USDA service center for further information on eligibility requirements and application procedures for these and other programs. Additional information is also available online at farmers.gov/recover.

Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency makes loans to youth to establish and operate agricultural income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5000.

Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

- Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien
- Be 10 years to 20 years of age
- Comply with FSA's general eligibility requirements
- Be unable to get a loan from other sources
- Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above

- Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the youth loan applicant, along with providing adequate supervision.

Stop by the county office for help preparing and processing the application forms.

Changes in Your Farming Operation

If you have bought or sold land, or if you have picked up or dropped rented land from your operation, make sure you report the changes to the office as soon as possible. You need to provide a copy of your deed or recorded land contract for purchased property. Failure to maintain accurate records with FSA on all land you have an interest in can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties. Making the record changes now will save you time in the spring. Update signature authorization when changes in the operation occur. Producers are reminded to contact the office if there is a change in operations on a farm so that records can be kept current and accurate. It is your responsibility to report changes in your farming operation to **NRCS**, in writing, if you participate in NRCS programs.

Preauthorized Debit Available for Farm Loan Borrowers

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) has implemented pre-authorized debit (PAD) for Farm Loan Program (FLP) borrowers. PAD is a voluntary and alternative method for making weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual payments on loans.

PAD payments are pre authorized transactions that allow the National Financial and Accounting Operations Center (NFAOC) to electronically collect loan payments from a customer's account at a financial institution.

PAD may be useful for borrowers who use nonfarm income from regular wages or salary to make payments on loans or adjustment offers or for payments from seasonal produce stands. PAD can only be established for future payments.

To request PAD, customers, along with their financial institution, must fill out form RD 3550-28. This form has no expiration date, but a separate form RD 3550-28 must be completed for each loan to which payments are to be applied. A fillable form can be accessed on the USDA Rural Development (RD) website at <http://www.rd.usda.gov/publications/regulations-guidelines>. Click forms and search for "Form 3550-28."

If you have a "filter" on the account at your financial institution, you will need to provide the financial institution with the following information: Origination ID: 1220040804, Agency Name: USDA RD DCFO.

PAD is offered by FSA at no cost. Check with your financial institution to discuss any potential cost. Preauthorized debit has no expiration date, but you can cancel at any time by submitting a written request to your local FSA office. If a preauthorized debit agreement receives three payment rejections within a three month period, the preauthorized debt agreement will be cancelled by FSA. The payment amount and due date of your loan is not affected by a cancellation of preauthorized debit. You are responsible to ensure your full payment is made by the due date.

For more information about PAD, contact your local FSA office. To find a local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>

Changing Bank Accounts

FSA program payments are issued electronically into your bank account. In order to make timely payments, you need to notify your FSA servicing office if you close your account or if your bank information is changed for whatever reason (such as your financial institution merging or being purchased). Payments can be delayed if FSA is not notified of changes to account and bank routing numbers.

Report Damage or Loss of NAP Covered Crop Acres

As the year progresses, remember that any damage to or loss of Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) covered crops must be reported to your county FSA office. NAP notices of loss must be filed for weather-related disaster events or adverse natural occurrences that cause damage to or loss of the NAP covered crop. For crops that are hand-harvested, a notice of loss must be filed in the administrative county by:

- Within 72 hours of the date damage or the loss becomes apparent.

For losses on grazing or other non-hand-harvested crops, notices must be filed by the earlier of either of the following:

- 15 calendar days after the disaster occurrence or date of loss or damage to the crop or commodity first becomes apparent
- 15 calendar days after the normal harvest date.

When you decide the NAP covered crop will be destroyed, abandoned, or not taken to harvest as intended, you must report this to your county FSA office so a field visit can be conducted by a certified loss adjuster. Once the crop appraisal has been completed, the loss adjuster will release the field and you can destroy the covered crop acres, replant to a different crop, or harvest the acres for a different use.

Keep in mind that failure to timely notify your FSA county office of crop damage or loss of NAP covered acres will result in denial of NAP payment benefits. Destroying NAP covered crop acres or harvesting for a different use without a loss adjuster appraisal will result in those acres being determined ineligible for NAP payment benefits.

If you have any questions about NAP policy requirements, contact your local county FSA office for more information.

June 2019 Interest Rates

Farm Operating Loans – 3.250%

Farm Operating Microloans – 3.250%

Farm Ownership Loans – 3.875%

Farm Ownership Microloans- 3.875%

Farm Ownership Loans Direct Down Payment for Beginning Farmer or Rancher – 1.50%

Emergency Loans – 3.750%

FSA Hawaii & Pacific Basin State Committee

Teena Marie Rasmussen, Chairperson
Wilson Kenzo Koike
Glenn Martinez
Boyd J. Ready
Simon Russell

Sign Up Today for Text Alerts from FSA

Subscribers Can Receive Important Program Reminders and Updates

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) farmers and ranchers now can receive notifications from their county office through text messages on their cell phone.

Whether producers are in the field, on a tractor or even on horseback, this service enables FSA customers and stakeholders to receive notifications while on the go. Producers will receive text messages regarding important program deadlines, reporting requirements, outreach events and updates.

Producers can text the **short codes** below to FSANOW (372-669) to subscribe to text message alerts from their respective counties. Standard text messaging rates apply. Contact your wireless carrier for details associated with your particular data plan. Participants may unsubscribe at any time.

Hawaii County : **HPBHawaii**
Honolulu County: **HPBHonolulu**
Kauai County: **HPBKauai**
Maui County: **HPBMaui**

Please contact your [local FSA office](#) if you have questions regarding FSA's email news service or the text message option.

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Kauai County: **HPBKauai**
Maui County: **HPBMaui**

Please contact your [local FSA office](#) if you have questions regarding FSA's email news service or the text message option.

Hawaii County Mailing Address Update

Please send correspondence to the following address:

Hawaii County FSA
P O Box 845
Hilo, HI 96721

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).

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