

September 2019



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

# NEWSLETTER

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## SED's Comments

Agricultural producers affected by major natural disasters in 2018 and 2019 can now apply for assistance through the Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program Plus (WHIP+). Sign-up for this U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) program began Sept. 11, 2019 and will extend at least 4 more months through 2020. **WHIP+** will be available for eligible producers who have suffered eligible losses of certain crops, trees, bushes or vines in counties with a Presidential Emergency Disaster Declaration or a Secretarial Disaster Designation. Disaster losses must have been a result of hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, typhoons, volcanic activity, snowstorms or wildfires that occurred in 2018 or 2019.

This includes: • April flooding of Kauai and Honolulu Counties; • Lava and VOG impacting Hawaii County after the volcano eruption; • Hurricane Lane; and • Typhoons Mangkhut, Yutu and Wutip (2019).

**Outreach Meetings** FSA will hold 9 more customer outreach meetings to discuss WHIP+. The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will also be on hand to discuss programs they offer to producers and landowners. Producers are highly encouraged to attend the outreach meetings to learn first-hand the records requirements necessary to document their losses in order to apply for assistance. The next outreach meetings will take place at:

### Hawaii County:

- Sept. 27, 4-6 p.m., Pahoia Community Center, 15-3022 Kauhale St., Pahoia, HI

- Sept. 30, 4-6 p.m., Kau District Gym Multi-Purpose, 96-1219 Kamani St, Pahala, HI
- Oct. 1, 4-6 p.m., CTAHR Ext. Office - Kainaliu Office, 79-7381 Hawaii Belt Road, Kealahou, HI

#### **Kauai County:**

- Oct. 2, 4-6 p.m., Kapaa High School, Room TBA, 4695 Mailihuna Rd, Kapaa, HI
- Oct. 3, 4-6 p.m., Hanalei Neighborhood Center, 5-5358 Kuhio Hwy, Hanalei, HI
- Oct. 10, 4-6 p.m., Koloa Neighborhood Center, 3461 Weliweli Road, Koloa, HI

#### **Maui County:**

- Oct. 4, 4-6 p.m., UH CTHAR Comm Service Bldg #205, 310 Ka'ahumanu Ave., Kahului, HI
- Oct. Date pending/time/location pending - Molokai

#### **Honolulu County:**

- Oct. 9, 4-6 p.m., FSA Office, 3375 Koapaka St., Suite b-211 Honolulu, HI

Our wonderful team of dedicated professionals at FSA look forward to seeing you at the upcoming outreach meetings and anytime you visit us at your local FSA Customer Service Center.

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

## **Hawaii & Pacific Basin FSA State Office**

PJKK Federal Building  
P.O. Box 50065  
300 Ala Moana Blvd, Rm 5-108  
Honolulu, HI 96850

Phone: 808-541-2600 x 2  
FAX: 855-356-9493

#### **State Executive Director:**

AL Frenzel

#### **Chief Program Specialist:**

Patrick Lewis

#### **Chief, Farm Loan Program:**

Theresa L. Correa

#### **Upcoming County Committee Meetings:**

Hawaii County Committee  
October 11, 2019 at 8:30 am

## **Higher Limits Now Available on USDA Farm Loans**

Higher limits are now available for borrowers interested in USDA's farm loans, which help agricultural producers purchase farms or cover operating expenses. The 2018 Farm Bill increased the amount that producers can borrow through direct and guaranteed loans available through USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) and made changes to other loans, such as microloans and emergency loans.

Key changes include:

- The Direct Operating Loan limit increased from \$300,000 to \$400,000, and the Guaranteed Operating Loan limit increased from \$ 1.429 million to \$1.75 million. Operating loans help producers pay for normal operating expenses, including machinery and equipment, seed, livestock feed, and more.
- The Direct Farm Ownership Loan limit increased from \$300,000 to \$600,000, and the Guaranteed Farm Ownership Loan limit increased from \$1.429 million to \$1.75 million. Farm ownership loans help producers become owner-operators of family farms as well as improve and expand current operations.
- Producers can now receive both a \$50,000 Farm Ownership Microloan and a \$50,000 Operating Microloan. Previously, microloans were limited to a combined \$50,000. Microloans provide flexible access to credit for small, beginning, niche, and non-traditional farm operations.

Honolulu County Committee  
September 20, 2019 at 3:00 pm

Maui County Committee  
October 17, 2019 at 8:30 am

Kauai County Committee  
October 23, 2019 at 9:00 am

Guam County Committee  
October 10, 2019 at 9:00 am

CNMI County Committee  
October 10, 2019 at 11:00 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.](#)

#### **Website for Hawaii and Pacific Basin FSA:**

[www.fsa.usda.gov/hi](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/hi)

- Producers who previously received debt forgiveness as part of an approved FSA restructuring plan are now eligible to apply for emergency loans. Previously, these producers were ineligible.
- Beginning and socially disadvantaged producers can now receive up to a 95 percent guarantee against the loss of principal and interest on a loan, up from 90 percent.

#### **About Farm Loans**

Direct farm loans, which include microloans and emergency loans, are financed and serviced by FSA, while guaranteed farm loans are financed and serviced by commercial lenders. For guaranteed loans, FSA provides a guarantee against possible financial loss of principal and interest.

For more information on FSA farm loans, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) or contact your [local USDA service center](#).

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## **Every Season is #scamseason**

Remember to discuss your USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) account information only with people you recognize and trust.

If you have questions about your FSA accounts, contact your [local FSA County Office](#).

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## **Reimbursement of Transportation Cost Payment Program-Deadline**

Producers are reminded that November 1, 2019 is the last day to submit receipts for the Reimbursement of Transportation Cost Payment Program.

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## **ASKFSA**

Are you looking for answers to your FSA questions? Then ASK FSA at [askfsa.custhelp.com](http://askfsa.custhelp.com).

AskFSA is an online resource that helps you easily find information and answers to your FSA questions no matter where you are or what device you use. It is for ALL customers, including

underserved farmers and ranchers who wish to be enrolled in FSA loans, farm, and conservation programs.

**Through AskFSA you can:**

- Access our knowledge base 24/7
- Receive answers to your questions faster
- Submit a question and receive a timely response from an FSA expert
- Get notifications when answers important to you and your farming operation are updated

Customize your account settings and view responses at any time.

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## Disaster Assistance Meetings

### Hawaii County:

- September 27, 4-6 p.m., Pahoia Community Center, 15-3022 Kauhale St., Pahoia, HI
- September 30, 4-6 p.m., Kau District Gym Multi-Purpose, 96-1219 Kamani St, Pahala, HI
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## September 2019 Interest Rates

Farm Operating Loans 2.75%

Farm Operating Microloans 2.75%

Farm Ownership Loans 3.50%

Farm Ownership Microloans 3.50%

Farm Ownership Loans Direct Down Payment for Beginning Farmer or Rancher 1.500%

Emergency Loans 3.750%

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## FSA Hawaii & Pacific Basin State Committee

Teena Marie Rasmussen, Chairperson

Wilson Kenzo Koike

Glenn Martinez

Boyd J. Ready

Simon Russell

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## 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.

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

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Maui County: **HPBMaui**

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## Hawaii County Mailing Address Update

Please send correspondence to the following address:

Hawaii County FSA  
P O Box 845  
Hilo, HI 96721

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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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