

February 2019



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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Table of Contents

- [Acreage Reporting Dates](#)
- [Beginning Farmer Loans](#)
- [Breaking New Ground](#)
- [Preauthorized Debit Available for Farm Loan Borrowers](#)
- [Save Time – Make an Appointment with FSA](#)
- [February 2019 Interest Rates](#)
- [FSA Hawaii & Pacific Basin State Committee](#)
- [Sign Up Today for Text Alerts from FSA](#)
- [Hawaii County Mailing Address Update](#)

SED's Comments

It's great to have our county offices open again to provide our full range of services for the ag producers of Hawaii and the Pacific Basin!

Many of you have questions about the 2018 Farm Bill, which was enacted December 20, 2018. Through the Farm Bill, USDA's Farm Service Agency supports America's farmers and ranchers through a variety of farm loans, safety net, conservation and disaster assistance programs. In that regard, the U.S. Department of Agriculture is hosting a listening session for initial input on the 2018 Farm Bill. USDA is seeking public input on the changes to existing programs implemented by the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service and Risk Management Agency. Each agency will take into account stakeholder input when making discretionary decisions on program implementation.

Deadline for registration to attend the event in person is February 22, 2019. Register at www.farmers.gov/farmbill. The event will be streamed live on www.farmers.gov/farmbill for those who are unable to attend in person. No registration is required to view the livestream.

Written comments are encouraged by February 22, 2019; additional comments will be accepted through March 1, 2019. To submit comments, go to the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> and search for Docket ID USDA-2019-0001. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments. You may also submit written comments at the listening session. Comments received will be publicly available on www.regulations.gov.

Congratulations to all newly elected COC Members. Mahalo for your willingness to serve.

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

Hawaii & Pacific Basin FSA State Office

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FAX: 855-356-9493

State Executive Director:
AL Frenzel

Acting Chief Program Specialist:
Kristen Kiriu

Chief, Farm Loan Program:
Theresa Correa

Upcoming County Committee Meetings:

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

Maui County Committee
March 21, 2019 at 8:30 am

Kauai County Committee
April 17, 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.](#)

Website for Hawaii and Pacific Basin FSA:

www.fsa.usda.gov/hi

Acreage Reporting Dates

In order to comply with Farm Service Agency (FSA) program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to make an appointment with their FSA County Office to file an accurate crop certification report by the following deadlines:

January 2 - Honey

March 15 - Coffee

March 31 - All other non-insurable crops covered by Non-Insured Disaster Assistance Program not listed in this table. Acreage reporting date is by March 31 of the subsequent crop year.

May 31 - Nursery for the ensuing crop year

July 15 - Banana, Papaya, Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

September 30 - Aquaculture, Floriculture, Ginseng, Mushrooms, Turfgrass Sod for the ensuing year

December 16 - Grazed Forage - 15 days before the onset of grazing

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.

- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.

- Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact your local County FSA office.

Beginning Farmer Loans

FSA assists beginning farmers to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's average size farm.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

Breaking New Ground

Agricultural producers are reminded to consult with FSA and NRCS before breaking out new ground for production purposes as doing so without prior authorization may put a producer's federal farm program benefits in jeopardy. This is especially true for land that must meet Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions.

Producers with HEL determined soils are required to apply tillage, crop residue and rotational requirements as specified in their conservation plan.

Producers should notify FSA as a first point of contact prior to conducting land clearing or drainage type projects to ensure the proposed actions meet compliance criteria such as clearing any trees to create new cropland, then these areas will need to be reviewed to ensure such work will not risk your eligibility for benefits.

Landowners and operators complete the form AD-1026 - Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification to identify the proposed action and allow FSA to determine whether a referral to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for further review is necessary.

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>

Save Time – Make an Appointment with FSA

Producers are encouraged to call their local FSA office to schedule an appointment to ensure maximum use of their time and to make sure FSA staff is available to tend to their important business needs. Please call your local FSA office ahead of your visit to set an appointment and to discuss any records or documentation that might be needed during your appointment. To find your local FSA office, visit: <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>.

February 2019 Interest Rates

Farm Operating Loans 3.750%
Farm Operating Microloans 3.750%
Farm Ownership Loans 4.375%
Farm Ownership Microloans 4.375%
Farm Ownership Loans Direct Down Payment for Beginning Farmer or Rancher 1.500%
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

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.

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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