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$20.7 Million for Producers

The Farm Service Agency’s 2014 Year Review notes that producers throughout Hawaii and the Pacific Basin received over $20.7 million in federal program payments and loans last year. The key to unlocking program benefits was the passage of the 2014 Farm Bill, one year ago, which set in motion the availability of a number of programs including the Livestock Disaster Assistance Program.

Disaster and price support topped state and regional payments at $14.4 million. Driven by numerous storms and a long standing drought, producers signed up to recoup a portion of their losses. The ever-popular Reimbursement of Transportation Costs Payment Program tapped out appropriated funds; thus, payments were reduced across the board by a national factor.

Producers’ financial opportunities and challenges were addressed through a total of 128 loans obligated for a total of $4.89 million. Loans were made to producers who were temporarily unable to obtain private or commercial credit, including 113 minority and women producers; 58 beginning producers; and 28 loans to youth.

Emergency Loans are Available

Producers facing economic hardship or challenges in rebuilding or replanting due to any of the numerous storms that took place in Hawaii or the Pacific Basin since last summer may want to visit with a Farm Service Agency (FSA) loan officer to learn more about what Emergency Loans are available.

Each loan application will be considered on its own merits, taking into account the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability. Producers can borrow up to 100 percent of actual production or physical losses, to a maximum amount of $500,000. Producers have eight months from the date of a disaster declaration to apply for emergency loan assistance. Key deadlines are:

- May 12, 2015 for Hurricane Iselle in Hawaii and Maui counties
- May 11, 2015 for Cyclone Halong in Guam
- May 11, 2015 for Rains, Flooding and Landslides in American Samoa

For more information, click on the fact sheet link Emergency Loan or contact your local FSA office.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interest Rates for February 2015</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farm Operating Loans</td>
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<tr>
<td>MicroLoans</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farm Ownership Loans</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farm Ownership Loans Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Loans</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Relief Available Following Winds in Hawaii and Honolulu Counties

Farmers and ranchers in the counties of Hawaii and Honolulu who suffered damages from severe winds on January 2-3, 2015 may be eligible for assistance under the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) administered by the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA). Criteria for damages include:

- It is so costly to rehabilitate that Federal assistance is required to return the land to productive agricultural use.
- Is unusual in character and is not the type that would recur frequently in the same area.
- Materially affects the productive capacity of the farmland.
- Impairs or endangers the land if not treated.

A producer qualifying under ECP may receive cost share assistance up to 75 percent of the eligible cost of restoration measures, with no producer eligible to receive more than $200,000 per natural disaster occurrence. The following types of practices may be eligible for cost share assistance:

- Removing debris from farmland.
- Grading, shaping, or re-leveling severely damaged farmland.
- Restoring permanent fences.
- Restoring conservation structures.

To be eligible for assistance, practices may not be started until all of the following are met:

- An application for cost-share assistance has been filed (Form FSA-848, Cost Share Request).
- Onsite inspection of the damaged area by the FSA has been completed.
- The agency responsible for technical assistance, such as the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has made a determination of need.

Producers who suffered a qualifying loss from this natural disaster may sign up for ECP March 2-31, 2015. The FSA Honolulu County Office will take ECP applications for both Hawaii and Honolulu county producers. Call 808-483-8600, extension 2 for an appointment.

Next County Committee Meeting Dates:

- Hawaii County - April 10 at 8:30 am
- Honolulu County - March 20 at 3:00 pm
- Kauai County - March 18 at 8:30 am
- Maui County - March 19 at 9:00 am
- Guam County - April 8 at 9:00 am
- CNMI County - April 8 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. A list of County Offices, contact numbers and addresses may be found at:


Farm Bill Website

For the latest on 2014 Farm Bill Programs administered by the Farm Service Agency, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/farmbill.
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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Crop</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 15</td>
<td>Coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 31</td>
<td>All other noninsurable crops</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>covered by Non-Insured Crop</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Disaster Assistance Program not listed in this</td>
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<td>table. Acreage reporting date is by March 31st of</td>
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<td></td>
<td>the subsequent crop year.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 31</td>
<td>Nursery for the ensuing crop year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 15</td>
<td>Banana, Papaya, Conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Aquaculture, Floriculture, Ginseng,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mushrooms, Turfgrass Sod for the ensuing year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>Grazed Forage - 15 days before the onset of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>grazing</td>
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<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Honey - for crop year 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

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

Filing for NAP Losses

The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. Timely filing a Notice of Loss is required for all crops including grasses. For losses on crops covered by the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and crop insurance, you must file a CCC-576, Notice of Loss, in the Farm Service Agency County Office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent.

If filing for prevented planting, an acreage report and CCC-576 must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

Livestock, Honeybee, and Farm-Raised Fish Assistance

The Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) provides emergency assistance to eligible livestock, honeybee, and farm-raised fish producers who have losses due to disease, adverse weather or other conditions not covered by other agricultural disaster assistance programs.

Eligible livestock losses include grazing losses not covered under the Livestock Forage Disaster Program, loss of purchased feed and/or mechanically harvested feed due to an eligible adverse weather event, additional cost of transporting water because of an eligible drought and additional cost associated with gathering livestock to treat for cattle tick fever.

Eligible honeybee losses include loss of purchased feed due to an eligible adverse weather event, cost of additional feed purchased above normal quantities due to an eligible adverse weather condition, colony losses in excess of normal mortality due to an eligible weather event or loss condition, including Colony Collapse Disorder, and hive losses due to eligible adverse weather.

Eligible farm-raised fish losses include death losses in excess of normal mortality and/or loss of purchased feed due to an eligible adverse weather event.

Producers who suffer eligible livestock, honeybee, or farm-raised fish losses from October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2015 must file:

- A notice of loss the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent or by November 1, 2015
- An application for payment by November 1, 2015

The Farm Bill caps ELAP disaster funding at $20 million per federal fiscal year.

The following ELAP Fact Sheets are available online:

- [ELAP for Farm-Raised Fish Fact Sheet](#)
- [ELAP for Livestock Fact Sheet](#)
- [ELAP for Honeybees Fact Sheet](#)

To view these and other FSA program fact sheets, visit the Farm Service Agency fact sheet web page at [www.fsa.usda.gov/factsheets](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/factsheets).
2014 Farm Bill Conservation Compliance Changes

Changes mandated through the 2014 Farm Bill require producers to have a Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification (AD-1026) on file.

For farmers to be eligible for premium support on their federal crop insurance, a completed and signed AD-1026 form must be on file with the Farm Service Agency (FSA). Since many FSA, Natural Resource Conservation (NRCS) and Risk Management Agency (RMA) programs have this requirement; most producers should already have an AD-1026 on file. If producers have not filed, they must do so by June 1, 2015. When a farmer completes the AD-1026, FSA and NRCS staff will outline any additional actions that may be required for compliance with the provisions.

Since enactment of the 1985 Farm Bill, eligibility for most commodity, disaster, and conservation programs has been linked to compliance with the highly erodible land conservation and wetland conservation provisions. The 2014 Farm Bill continues this requirement that producers adhere to conservation compliance guidelines to be eligible for most programs administered by FSA, NRCS and RMA. This includes the Livestock Disaster Assistance programs and conservation programs, as well as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and other programs.

Farm Service Agency recently released a revised form AD-1026, which is available at USDA Service Centers and online at: www.fsa.usda.gov. The Department will publish a rule later this year that will provide details outlining the connection of conservation compliance with crop insurance premium support. Producers can also contact their local USDA Service Center for information.

Frequently Asked Questions

Here are answers to a few frequently asked questions receive from customers in hopes that they may be of benefit and assistance to you and/or someone else you may know.

**Question:** “I’m a beginning farmer. Where can I find local resource information for new farmers?”

**Answer:** The University of Hawaii at Manoa, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources has a resource web page that can be found at the following link: http://www.ctahr.hawaii.edu/sustainag/NewFarmer/index.html

**Question:** “I want to make sure that I am using pesticides properly and that I am in compliance with pesticide use regulations. Who can I contact for information on pesticide labels and pesticide regulations?”

**Answer:** Hawaii Department of Agriculture, Pesticides Program, Education Unit

- **Oahu, Kauai, Maui/Molokai**
  - Steve Russo, Environmental Health Specialist at 808-973-9409
  - Daisuke Inoyama, Environmental Health Specialist at 808-973-9424
- **Big Island - Hawaii**
  - Derek Shigematsu, Environmental Health Specialist at 808-974-4143

**Question:** “What Agency can I contact locally to obtain information on importing or exporting plant materials like fruits, vegetables, and flowers?”

**Answer:** United States Department of Agriculture, Animal Plant Health Inspection Service, Plant Protection and Quarantine

Honolulu Inspection Station, Honolulu International Airport, 300 Rodgers Blvd., #58 Honolulu, HI 96819-1897, 808-834-3240

Big Island – Hawaii: call (808) 933-9040 for export questions

**Dates to Remember**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Deadline to apply for Emergency Conservation Program due to high winds in Hawaii and Honolulu counties</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 31, 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 11, 2015</td>
<td>Deadline for American Samoa &amp; Guam producers to apply for Emergency Loans due to flooding and Tropical Storm Halong</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 12, 2015</td>
<td>Deadline for Hawaii &amp; Maui County producers to apply for Emergency Loans due to impacts of Hurricane Iselle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 30, 2015</td>
<td>Deadline for Hawaii, Maui and Honolulu producers to apply for an Emergency Physical Loss Loan due to high winds and flooding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. 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).