

November 2017



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

# NEWSLETTER

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## New Jersey State FSA Newsletter

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### New Jersey Farm Service Agency

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**Phone:**

609-587-0104

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

**State Committee:**

Russell J. Marino, Chair  
Mary Jo Herbert

**State Executive Director:**

[Barry Calogero](#)

**Farm Loan Chief:**

[Kevin P. Murphy](#)

Please contact your [local FSA Office](#) for questions specific to your operation or county

**Important Dates:**

**Nov 10:** Offices closed in honor of Veteran's Day

**Nov 15:** Acreage Reporting Deadline for fall seeded small grains and perennial forage, including established hay

### FSA Announces New State Executive Director

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Barry Calogero as the new State Executive Director (SED) for New Jersey FSA. Mr. Calogero brings over 30 years' finance experience across various domestic and international operations.

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced the slate of Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Rural Development (RD) State Directors on November 3rd, all serving as appointees of President Donald J. Trump. FSA State Directors help implement U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) policies in planning, organizing, and administering FSA programs in their respective states. They are also responsible for running the day-to-day activities of the state FSA office. Similarly, RD State Directors work to help improve the economy and quality of life in rural America.

"These state directors will help ensure that USDA is offering the best customer service to our farmers, ranchers, foresters, and agricultural producers across the country," Secretary Perdue said. "FSA and RD both play a critical role in helping the people of agriculture, and are able to connect with people in their home states. They are the initial points of contact for millions of our USDA customers. Our goal is to help rural America prosper, and these state leaders will be of great assistance in that task."

Click here to see the full list of appointees

<https://www.usda.gov/media/press-releases/2017/11/03/perdue-announces-farm-service-agency-and-rural-development-state>

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## Secretary Perdue Launches Veteran Resources at USDA

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue today announced the launch of U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) resources to provide comprehensive and timely support to veterans interested in opportunities in agriculture, agribusiness, and in rural America. The resources include a [new website](#) and a USDA-wide AgLearn curriculum to allow all employees to understand the unique opportunities offered to our nation's veterans.

"From the beginning of this Administration, USDA has focused on how to best serve our veterans," said Secretary Perdue. "These men and women of the United States military have kept America free and deserve the utmost respect. Across the country, these veterans are beginning to fill roles that preserve rural communities while providing for their livelihood. Through these resources, USDA is committed to helping veterans in agricultural areas so we can strengthen the American economy and provide assistance for those who have served. Veterans and agriculture are just a great fit."

USDA supports veterans in the areas of the "three Es" – employment, education, and entrepreneurship, and pulls together programs from the Department's 17 agencies that veterans may use. [Watch this video](#) to learn more about USDA's new veteran's resources.

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## FSA Encourages Farmers and Ranchers to Vote in County Committee Elections

The 2017 Farm Service Agency County Committee Elections began on Nov. 6, when ballots were mailed to eligible voters. The deadline to return the ballots to local FSA offices is Dec. 4, 2017.

County committee members are an important component of the operations of FSA and provide a link between the agricultural community and USDA. Farmers and ranchers elected to county committees help deliver FSA programs at the local level, applying their knowledge and judgment to make decisions on commodity price support programs; conservation programs; incentive indemnity and disaster programs for some commodities; emergency programs and eligibility. FSA committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws.

To be an eligible voter, farmers and ranchers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm may also be eligible to vote.

Eligible voters in local administrative areas, who do not receive a ballot can obtain one from their local USDA Service Center. Dec. 4, 2017, is the last day for voters to submit ballots in person to local USDA Service Centers. Ballots returned by mail must also be postmarked no later than Dec. 4. Newly elected committee members will take office Jan. 1, 2018.

Information on which LAAs are up for election this year can be found on the New Jersey FSA website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/nj](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/nj).

More information on county committees, such as the new 2017 fact sheet, can be found on the FSA website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/elections](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections) or at a local USDA Service Center.

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## 2018 Acreage Reporting Dates

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit their County FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline.

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for all New Jersey Counties:

- November 15, 2017 fall seeded small grains and perennial forage, including established hay
- January 2, 2018 honey

- January 15, 2018 apples, peaches, cane berries, strawberries and **grapes\* (NEW)**

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.
- If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of “cover only,” “green manure,” “left standing,” or “seed,” then the acreage must be reported by July 15th.

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.

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## Be Counted - Ag Census

Calling all New Jersey farmers, large and small, the census is coming! Once every 5 years USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service takes a complete picture of NJ Ag. It is important that New Jersey producers take this opportunity to show the importance of agriculture in New Jersey, your county, and your locale. Surveys go out in December. You have an option to respond online. Please pay attention to reporting expenses in the back. It is important not only to show the contribution of agricultural production, but also the economic contribution of agricultural inputs. Also, economists can then accurately assess the effect of policy on farm profitability. Finally, please also pay particular attention to Farm Related Income also toward the back. For example you can find agri-tourism, boarding, and pollination included there. All individual data are held by law strictly confidential.

### Fruit Chemical Use Survey

New Jersey is among the important fruit producing states that is part of the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service Fruit Chemical Use Survey. This is producers' opportunity to be the true and best data source of pesticide use. Who knows better than producers? Peaches and blueberries are the target crops for this survey in New Jersey. Without good data from farmers, policy makers can use faulty assumptions about how much and how pesticides are used to protect our food. If you are asked, please help the cause and participate.

For more information contact: Bruce A Eklund, State Statistician U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service Field Operations, New Jersey Field Office 503-308-0404, [bruce.eklund@nass.usda.gov](mailto:bruce.eklund@nass.usda.gov) | [www.nass.usda.gov](http://www.nass.usda.gov)

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## Combined resources can increase assistance to protect resources on preserved NJ farmland

*Application Periods set for 2018 conservation and easement programs.*

New Jersey farms already enrolled in the New Jersey State Agriculture Development Committee's (SADC) farmland preservation program that are eligible for USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) [Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#) may apply for both EQIP and N.J. Department of Agriculture (NJDA) Conservation Cost-Share Program (CCSP) this year. This opportunity to enhance natural resource protection on preserved farms is part of SADC's "[Whole Farm Systems Conservation Trial](#)," a project that was awarded \$644,000 through NRCS's 2017 [Regional Conservation Partnership Program](#) (RCPP).

Through this RCPP agreement, NRCS has set aside \$344,000 to support conservation practices offered through EQIP for landowners who have preserved their farmland through the SADC farmland preservation program. By participating in both of these programs, landowners can realize a higher rate of payments for

implementing soil and water conservation practices on permanently preserved farmland, estimated to be about 75 percent to up to 90 percent of project costs. Eligible applicants interested in this opportunity should submit an application at their [local NRCS office](#) by COB **November 17, 2017**, to be considered for the FY18 programs.

The additional \$300,000 of RCPP funding will be available in Salem County through NRCS's [Agricultural Conservation Easement Program \(ACEP\) - Wetlands Reserve Easements \(WRE\)](#). This pilot program will help farmland owners in that county preserve wetlands or other environmentally sensitive areas of a farm under a separate conservation easement at the time a farm enters the [NJ Farmland Preservation Program](#). Applicants from Salem County interested in this opportunity should contact NRCS in Woodstown (856-769-1126, ext. 3) for questions regarding WRE. Questions about the State Farmland Preservation Program should be directed to Katie Mazzella (SADC) (609-984-2504). The application period for FY18 ACEP-WRE will close **November 30, 2017**, and those interested are encouraged to contact NRCS and SADC soon.

In addition to SADC and NJDA, the Open Space Institute/William Penn Foundation, New Jersey Conservation Foundation, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation are making additional funding available to supplement the federal program, contributing over \$9 million to this partnership effort in New Jersey.

NRCS program information is available at [www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nj.nrcs.usda.gov). For more information about the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, follow links to Financial Assistance>Environmental Quality Incentives Program. For more information about the opportunity in Salem County, follow the link to Easements> Agricultural Conservation Easements Program>Wetlands Reserve Easements.

NRCS provides financial and technical assistance to help agricultural producers with erosion control, water management, water quality, and other resource concerns through conservation programs authorized by the Farm Bill.

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## Youth Finds Eggs-cellent Success with FSA Youth Loan

By Dana Rogge, Public Affairs Specialist

His vision – build an egg empire. Aaron Muhammad, 15, of [Dawson, Georgia](#), wasn't raised on a farm and had no prior farm experience, but decided to try something new and discovered his passion for raising chickens. When he's not tackling his school work, he's working on building his eggs-troinary business.

Muhammad decided to raise chickens at the age of 12 to expand his horizons and to try something new. To help him get started, he worked with Fatima Jones, farm loan manager, at the Farm Service Agency (FSA) in Dawson to obtain a youth loan to purchase his chickens and to build a coop.

[FSA Youth Loans](#) help youth between the ages of 10 and 21 start and operate income-producing projects in connection with their participation in 4-H, the [National FFA Organization](#), a Tribal youth group, or other similar agricultural youth organizations. Youth Loans provide an opportunity for young entrepreneurs to acquire experience and education in agriculture-related skills.

Muhammad currently sells his eggs to family and friends, but would like to become a more well-known source, and supply eggs to businesses such as bakeries.

"Since 2014, I have watched Aaron grow as a responsible youth, taking control of his egg production, keeping records of his expenses and income, making decisions, making payments on time, dealing with disaster and communicating with local FSA loan officials," Jones said.

Muhammad is currently in his third semester studying Electronics Technology at [Albany Technical College](#) while continuing to raise his chickens and sell eggs. He currently sells his eggs to family and friends, but would like to become a more well-known source, and supply eggs to businesses such as bakeries.

"I would like to be the first name on people's list when they need eggs," Muhammad said.

He said the Youth Loan helped him to pursue this business venture without putting a financial burden on his parents. He credits his parents for helping guide him through the process of building a business.

“They helped me financially and mentally by giving me tips for building a business as far as what to do and what not to do,” Muhammad said.

Muhammad said through the FSA Youth Loan he has learned how to maintain a line of credit and how to pay debts on time. Aside from the business skills he has acquired, he said he has learned a lot about patience.

“In the city, everything is instant,” he said. “With raising chickens, it all takes time. Time to give them water, to feed them to watch them grow – the whole cycle takes time.”

To learn more about FSA's Youth Loan program, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/youthloans](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/youthloans)

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