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Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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West Virginia FSA Newsletter

West Virginia Farm Service Agency

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Michael W. Taylor

State Committee:

Marjorie Burke, Chair
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Please contact your local FSA Office for questions specific to your operation or county

Seeking Nominations for USDA Advisory Committees

Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers and the Advisory Committee on Minority Farmers

The USDA Secretary of Agriculture is soliciting nominations for membership for the Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers and the Advisory Committee on Minority Farmers.

The **Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers** advises the Secretary of Agriculture on matters broadly affecting new farmers and ranchers including strategies, policies, and programs that will enhance opportunities and create new farming and ranching operations. The **deadline for applications is June 15, 2017.**

For additional information about the Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers, please visit <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/05/31/2017->

[11214/advisory-committee-on-beginning-farmers-and-ranchers-acbfr-request-for-nominations](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/06/01/2017-11214/advisory-committee-on-beginning-farmers-and-ranchers-acbfr-request-for-nominations).

The **Advisory Committee on Minority Farmers** works in the interest of the public to ensure socially disadvantaged farmers have equal access to USDA programs. The **deadline to apply is June 16, 2017**.

For additional information about the Advisory Committee on Minority Farmers, please visit <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/06/01/2017-11216/advisory-committee-on-minority-farmers-request-for-nominations>.

Prior applicants under the previous solicitations are not required to reapply. An organization may nominate individuals from within or outside its membership. Alternatively, an individual may nominate herself or himself. Nomination packages should include a nomination form along with a cover letter or resume that documents the nominee's background and experience. Nomination forms are available on the Internet at <https://www.ocio.usda.gov/document/ad-755>.

Deadlines for other agency advisory boards:

- [Nomination Deadline: June 30, 2017 – USDA Seeks Nominations for National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee](#)
- [Nomination Deadline: June 30, 2017 – USDA Seeks Nominees for the National Watermelon Promotion Board](#)
- [Nomination Deadline: July 1, 2017 – USDA Seeks Nominees for the U.S. Potato Board](#)
- [Nomination Deadline: July 14, 2017 – USDA Seeks Nominees for American Egg Board](#)

[Nomination Deadline: August 7, 2017 – USDA Seeks Nominees for National Organic Standards Board \(NOSB\)](#)

Nominations Open for the 2017 County Committee Elections

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) encourages all farmers, ranchers, and FSA program participants to take part in the Name County Committee election nomination process.

FSA's 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.

Committee 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. One-third of the seats on these committees are open for election each year. County committees may have one or more appointed advisors to further represent the local interests of underserved farmers and ranchers. Underserved producers are beginning, women and other minority farmers and ranchers and land owners and/or operators who have limited resources. Other minority groups including Native American and Alaska Natives; persons under the poverty level, and persons that have disabilities are also considered underserved.

All nomination forms for the 2017 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA service center by Aug. 1, 2017. 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: www.fsa.usda.gov/elections.

2017 Acreage Reporting Dates

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

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for West Virginia:

July 15, 2017 All other crops such as: corn, soybeans, grain sorghum, vegetables, etc.

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.

Enrollment Period for 2017 Safety Net Coverage Continues

Through Aug. 1

Producers on farms with base acres under the safety net programs established by the 2014 Farm Bill, known as the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs, can visit their local FSA office to sign contracts and enroll for the 2017 crop year. The enrollment period will continue until Aug. 1, 2017.

Since shares and ownership of a farm can change year-to-year, producers on the farm must enroll by signing a contract each program year.

If a farm is not enrolled during the 2017 enrollment period, the producers on that farm will not be eligible for financial assistance from the ARC or PLC programs for the 2017 crop should crop prices or farm revenues fall below the historical price or revenue benchmarks established by the program. Producers who made their elections in 2015 must still enroll during the 2017 enrollment period.

The ARC and PLC programs were authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill and offer a safety net to agricultural producers when there is a substantial drop in prices or revenues for covered commodities. Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium grain rice (which includes short grain and sweet rice), safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat. Upland cotton is no longer a covered commodity. For more details regarding these programs, go to www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc.

For more information, producers are encouraged to visit their local FSA office. To find a local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

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.

Double-Cropping

Each year, state committees will review and approve or disapprove county committee recommended changes or additions to specific combinations of crops.

Double-cropping is approved when the two specific crops have the capability to be planted and carried to maturity for the intended use, as reported by the producer, on the same acreage within a crop year under normal growing conditions. The specific combination of crops recommended by the county committee must be approved by the state committee.

Double-cropping is approved in West Virginia on a county-by-county basis. Contact your local FSA Office for a list of approved double-cropping combinations for your county.

A crop following a cover crop terminated according to termination guidelines is approved double cropping and these combinations do not have to be approved by the state committee.

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).