

October 2013



## Alabama FSA State Updates

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### Alabama FSA State Office

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**State Executive Director:**  
Daniel Robinson

### State Committee Members:

Dr. Walter Hill, Chairperson  
Laura Elliott, Member  
Danny Ellison, Member  
George Hodge, Member  
Fred Hughes, Member

### Next State Committee

**Meeting:** Scheduled as needed  
-- dates to be announced

### Topics for October

- [SED Comments](#)
- [Report 2014 Perennial Forage Crops by November 15, 2013](#)
- [FSA County Committee Election Ballots to be Mailed in November](#)
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### SED Comments

There is now an enacted Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 continuing resolution that provides funding for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA). We are in the process of an orderly start-up of farm program and farm loan activities for FY 2014. Thank you for your patience and support during the period that our services were unavailable.

We realize that the temporary lapse in service has created a backlog in requests and service delivery needs. While this backlog was not created overnight and will not be addressed overnight, we are committed to a proactive and customer-focused approach to prioritize activities so that we can provide the service you expect and deserve as quickly as possible. Please contact your local FSA office if you have any questions or need additional information.

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## Report 2014 Perennial Forage Crops by November 15, 2013

All producers are reminded that the final acreage reporting date for perennial forage crops is Nov. 15, 2013. This applies to apiculture, PRF (pasture, rangeland, and forage) insured crops, and permanent grasses, including, but not limited to Bahia, Bermuda, Dallas, and Fescue. Please call for an appointment to certify your perennial forage crops.

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## **FSA County Committee Election Ballots to be Mailed in November**

Watch your mailbox for your official county office committee election ballot starting early next month. Ballots will be mailed to all eligible voters on Nov. 4, 2013. If you are an eligible voter in the Local Administrative Area where the election is being held, and do not receive a ballot by mid-November, contact your local FSA office. Completed and signed ballots must be returned to the county offices by close of business on Dec. 2, 2013.

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## **Increased Guaranteed Loan Limit**

The Farm Service Agency has announced that the loan limit for the Guaranteed Loan Program will increase to \$1,355,000 on Oct. 1, 2013. The limit is adjusted annually based on data compiled by the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

The lending limit increases every year according to an inflation index. The maximum combined guaranteed and direct farm loan indebtedness will also increase to \$1,655,000. As a reminder, the one-time loan origination fee charged on FSA guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans is 1.5 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan.

Producers should contact their local FSA County Offices with questions about farm loans.

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## **Loans for the Socially Disadvantaged**

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Farm operating loans are available as well as loans to purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for members of socially disadvantaged applicants. A socially disadvantaged applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities.

For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African-Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders. FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

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## **Electronic Services Available**

If a producer has Internet access, program participants can access many services from home 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and receive approval and payment by direct deposit within 48 hours.

To participate in these services, you must meet all program eligibility requirements. Online services have stringent security measures to protect your private information.

To utilize electronic services a producer needs an active USDA eAuthentication Level 2 account, which requires an e-mail address and filling out an online registration form at [www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/](http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/) followed by a visit to the county office for identity verification.

If you would like assistance establishing your account, just contact your local USDA Service Center.

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## **Farm Safety**

Flowing grain in a storage bin or gravity-flow wagon is like quicksand — it can kill quickly. It takes less than five seconds for a person caught in flowing grain to be trapped.

The mechanical operation of grain handling equipment also presents a real danger. Augers, power take offs, and other moving parts can grab people or clothing.

These hazards, along with pinch points and missing shields, are dangerous enough for adults; not to mention children. It is always advisable to keep children a safe distance from operating farm equipment. Always use extra caution when backing or maneuvering farm machinery. Ensure everyone is visibly clear and accounted for before machinery is engaged.

FSA wants all farmers to have a productive crop year and that begins with putting safety first.

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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).

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