



# NEWSLETTER



July 2012

**Georgia State  
FSA Office**

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## 2012 Dates and Deadlines

**Acreage Reporting Deadlines:**

<u>July 16</u>	<u>All other crops and land uses planted by July 16, 2012</u>
<b>Note: Crops with NAP Coverage:</b> If the crop being reported has NAP coverage, the final date to timely report the acreage is 15 days PRIOR to the onset of harvest or grazing. It is important for producers to remember that crops with NAP coverage will usually have a NAP crop reporting date EARLIER than the regularly established reporting dates for crops without NAP coverage.	

**Important COC Election Dates:**

<u>Jun 15</u>	<u>Nomination period begins. Nomination forms are available from your local FSA Office.</u>
<u>Aug 1</u>	<u>Last day to file nomination forms at the local FSA Office. Nomination forms are available from your local FSA Office.</u>
<u>Nov 5</u>	<u>Ballots mailed to eligible voters.</u>
<u>Dec 3</u>	<u>Last day to return voted ballots to the local FSA Office.</u>
<u>Jan 1, 2013</u>	<u>Elected committee members and alternates take office.</u>

**Additional Program Deadlines**

<u>Now</u>	<u>Inquire and Sign-up CRP Continuous Practices such as Riparian Buffers, Longleaf Pine, Habitat Buffers for Upland Birds</u>
<u>Now</u>	<u>Emergency Conservation Approved Applicants -- report completed practices to FSA</u>
<u>Now</u>	<u>Emergency Forest Restoration Program Applicants -- report completed practices to FSA</u>
<u>Now</u>	<u>Complete for 2012 form CCC-931, Average Adjusted Income Certification and Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information</u>

**Present Emergency Loan Application Deadlines in Georgia:**

<u>Nov 16</u>	<u>Designation M4060 in 6 counties due to severe storms, tornadoes, straight-line winds and flooding</u>
<u>Dec 20</u>	<u>Designation S3245 in 2 counties due to frost and freezing temperatures</u>

**NOTE:** All producers are encouraged to contact their local FSA office for information specific to the Emergency Loan Program and to determine whether their counties are declared under a certain designation.

## **REVISED Crop Acreage Reporting Dates for FSA and Crop Insurance**

Beginning this July, 2012, there will be a big change in many of the Crop Acreage Reporting Dates (CARD) for several of the crops planted in Georgia. The revision in reporting dates was the result of a combined effort of both FSA and the Risk Management Agency (RMA – crop insurance) to make acreage reporting easier by standardizing the acreage reporting deadline for crops for both FSA and crop insurance purposes.

As a result, there are more deadline dates applicable to specific fruit and vegetable crops than in prior years. The newly established deadline dates for the specific fruit and vegetable crops mentioned below will apply to these crops regardless of whether the producer has them covered under a crop insurance plan or not. These particular crops (apples, blueberries, peaches, cabbage, onions, pecans, fresh market sweet corn, fresh and market tomatoes) now have a specific FSA reporting deadline date and must be reported by the newly established reporting deadline whether the crop is covered by crop insurance or not.

### Newly Established Crop Reporting Dates for Georgia – Effective July 1, 2012:

January 2 --- Honey (producers with NAP coverage)

January 15 --- Apples, Blueberries, Peaches, Barley, Canola, Oats, Rye, Wheat, and any other Fall-Seeded Small Grains, and Grazing and Forage crops with NAP coverage

March 15 --- Cabbage (Planted between 10/1-2/20), Onions (Planted between 10/21-2/1), and Pecans

May 15 --- Flue-cured Tobacco, Fresh Market Sweet Corn (Planted between 8/26-5/15), Fresh Market Tomatoes (Planted between 8/16-4/5)

July 15 --- Cabbage (Planted between 2/21-5/31), Corn, Cotton, Grain, Sorghum, Peanuts, Soybeans, and any other crops planted by this date and not already reported.

August 15 --- Cabbage (Planted between 6/1-7/15), Fresh Market Tomatoes (Planted between 7/1-8/15)

September 15 --- Fresh Market Sweet Corn (Planted between 7/15-8/25)

October 15 --- Cabbage (Planted between 7/16-9/30)

November 15 --- Apiculture and Pasture, Range, Forage (PRF) – **NOTE: Apiculture is NOT the same as NAP/Honey coverage and PRF is not the same a NAP-covered grazing and forage; these are 2 separate crop insurance programs**

December 15 --- Onions (Planted between 9/20-10/20).

### **The BIG changes are:**

- (1) Winter-seeded small grains were moved forward from March 1, to January 15
- (2) Grass and forage crops with NAP coverage moved up to January 15 from March 1 to coincide with small grain acreage reports, the same as in prior years.
- (3) Tobacco was moved back from May 1, to May 15
- (4) Specific dates were implemented for FSA acreage reporting purposes for numerous fruit and vegetable crops, depending on the planting date.

Producers are advised to contact their local FSA offices for more information on the revised crop acreage reporting deadlines and to obtain a copy of the new crop reporting deadlines.

### **Foreign Land Owners Reporting Requirements**

Foreign investors who hold agricultural land need to be aware of the requirements of the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) of 1978. This law requires foreign

investors who buy, sell or hold a direct or indirect interest in U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings and transactions to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. Agricultural land is defined as land used for forestry production, farming, and ranching or timber production. Failure to meet the filing requirements can result in a penalty with fines up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the agricultural land. All individuals who are not U.S. citizens or citizens of the Northern Mariana Islands or the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands must report. Also, individuals who are not lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence or who are not paroled into the United States under the Immigration and Nationality Act must report. Organizations created under the laws of a foreign government or which has its principal place of business outside the United States must also report. In addition, any U.S. organization in which a significant interest or substantial control is directly or indirectly held by foreign individuals, organizations or governments must report. Significant interest or substantial control is defined as 10 percent or more. All foreign Governments must report their holdings and transactions.

The USDA Farm Service Agency has been designated to collect the AFIDA reports (Form FSA-153). Completed forms must be returned to the FSA County Office where the land is located or where the programs are administered. For more details on reporting requirements, contact your local Farm Service Agency County Office.

### ***Farm Loan Programs***

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers loans for farmers and ranchers to purchase farmland and finance agricultural operations. FSA loan programs are designed to help producers who are temporarily unable to obtain private or commercial credit. In many cases, applicants are beginning farmers who have insufficient net worth to qualify for financing through a commercial lender. In other instances, borrowers might have suffered setbacks from natural disasters or might be persons with limited resources

Farm Ownership loans or Farm Operating loans may be obtained as direct loans for a maximum of up to \$300,000. Currently guaranteed loans can reach a maximum indebtedness of \$1,214,000. Emergency loans are always direct loans for farmers who may have suffered physical or production losses in disaster areas designated by a Presidential or Secretarial disaster declaration. Rural Youth Loans, Loans to Beginning Farmers and loans for socially disadvantaged applicants are also available through FSA.

For detailed information, contact your county office staff for an appointment with a farm loan officer.

### ***FSA Farm Ownership Loans Available To Beginning Farmers or Ranchers***

Beginning farmers or ranchers may obtain a Farm Ownership loan by using funds set aside especially for them by the Farm Service Agency. These loans can be financed up to the \$300,000 loan limit, and the term of the loan can be up to 40 years.

The interest rate is set the first of each month. The rate for "limited resource producers" is set at 5.0 percent.

Farm ownership loan funds may also be used in joint financing where FSA lends up to 50 percent of the amount financed and another lender provides 50 percent or more. Repayment schedules are based on the applicant's repayment ability and the useful life of the collateral. Terms may not exceed the useful life of security or 40 years, whichever is less.

### ***Down Payment Farm Ownership Program***

Purpose: To finance a down payment up to 45 percent of the purchase price of a farm. The Farm Service Agency financing cannot exceed 45 percent of the lesser of: the purchase price of the farm, the appraised value of the farm, or \$500,000. The maximum loan amount under this program cannot

exceed \$225,000. The applicant must put down 5 percent. The remainder of the purchase price can be financed on contract with the seller or a loan through a conventional lender. The lender can obtain a guarantee from FSA if the customer is eligible.

**Rates:** The FSA Downpayment Loan interest rate will be the regular direct Farm Ownership rate minus 4%, but in no case less than 1.5 percent.

**Terms:** Downpayment loans are scheduled in equal, annual installments over a period not to exceed 20 years. The non-Agency financing must have an amortization period of at least 30 years and cannot have a balloon payment due within the first 20 years of the loan.

**Qualification:** For the Down Payment Farm Ownership Program, applicants must either meet the definition of a “beginning farmer” or a “socially disadvantaged applicant”. Beginning farmer applicants must have three years of farm experience, must have farmed for less than 10 years, and cannot own real estate that exceeds 30 percent of the median farm acreage for the county. Socially disadvantaged applicants include women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders.

### **Present Emergency Loan Application Deadlines in Georgia**

**16 Nov-12** Designation M4060 in 6 counties due to severe storms, tornadoes, straight-line winds, and flooding

**20 Dec-12** Designation S3245 in 2 counties due to frost and freezing temperatures

All producers are encouraged to contact their local FSA office for information specific to the Emergency Loan Program and to determine whether their counties are declared under a certain designation.

### ***Sale of Land under CRP Contract***

This is a reminder for Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) participants who sell land under CRP contract to get a successor-in-interest to the contract. Failure to get the buyer to assume a contract will result in the original owner having to refund all CRP rental payments, cost share payments, incentive payments received on the contract, plus interest and liquidated damages. One way to prevent this from happening is to have a sales contract prepared that requires the new owner to assume the CRP contract.

Local county FSA committees have no authority but to terminate a CRP contract when the CRP participant loses control of the land and there is no successor-in-interest to the contract. Please call or visit your local County FSA Office before you sell land that is currently in a CRP contract.

### ***2012 County Committee Nomination and Election***

The election of responsible agricultural producers to FSA county committees is important to ALL farmers and ranchers with large or small operations. It is crucial that every eligible producer take part in this election because county committees are a direct link between the farm community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Committee members are a critical component of the day-to-day operations of FSA. They help deliver FSA farm programs at the local level. Farmers who serve on committees help decide the kind of programs their counties will offer. They work to make FSA agricultural programs serve the needs of local producers.

Nominations for candidates to run for the Farm Service Agency county committee election representing producers in various Local Administrative Areas (LAA's) will be accepted from June 15 through August 1, 2012. Producers who are eligible to vote in these LAA's and who participate or cooperate in an FSA program and are of legal

voting age may be nominated to serve on their county committee. Individuals may nominate themselves or others as candidates. Also, organizations representing socially disadvantaged minorities and women farmers or ranchers may also nominate candidates. A blank nomination form (FSA-669A) is enclosed in this newsletter and is also available at all local FSA offices and online at:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=newsroom&subject=landing&topic=cce>

LAA's are elective areas. Elections are held each year to replace a member whose three-year term will expire. All counties will be holding an election for a person to represent different LAA's.

Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters by November 5 and must be returned to the FSA county office or postmarked by December 3, 2012. All producers are encouraged to participate. The county committee provides a local input on commodity price support loans and payments; establishes allotments and yields; conservation programs; disaster assistance payments and programs.

More information on the elections is available at the county office or online at:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=newsroom&subject=landing&topic=cce>

FSA Counts on You: Nominate and Vote!

### **Important COC Election Dates**

#### **June 15, 2012:**

Nomination period begins. Nomination forms (FSA-669A) are available at your local FSA Office or online at

<http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/efcommon/eFileServices/eForms/FSA669-A.PDF>

#### **August 1, 2012:**

Last day to file nomination forms at the local FSA Office.

#### **November 5, 2012:**

Ballots mailed to eligible voters.

#### **December 3, 2012:**

Last day to return voted ballots to the local FSA Office.

#### **January 1, 2013:**

Elected committee members and alternates take office.

#### **For More Information**

For more information about FSA county committees, visit a local FSA or USDA Service Center or the Web site at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections>.

### ***2012 Feds Feed Families Food Drive at USDA***

The 4<sup>th</sup> annual Feds Feed Families Food Drive is underway and runs through August 31, 2012. The Feds Feed Families Food Drive is a voluntary effort allowing federal employees the opportunity to help feed communities across our nation. In FY 2011 USDA employees collected 1.79 million pounds of food. The national goal for FY 2012 is 1.8 million pounds of food. USDA service centers may once again join in by sponsoring local food drives to help meet the national goal. Please visit the website at [www.fedsfeedfamilies.gov](http://www.fedsfeedfamilies.gov) for more information.



***Decatur County Service Center - New Location***

The Decatur County Service Center moved into their new location on May 31, 2012. FSA and NRCS are both housed at the new location at 101 Ag Lane, Bainbridge, Georgia. All phone numbers remain the same.



### ***FSA near You! - Worth County***

Mr. Taylor Sumner comes from a long line of farmers in Worth County. He is the seventh generation of farmers that he can trace back. Mr. Sumner was raised on a farm in Worth County with his grandparents, aunts and uncles who all live within two miles of each other. Mr. Sumner started driving a tractor and feeding cows at the early age of 10 but didn't really decide he wanted to farm until he was in college at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in Tifton, GA. Mr. Sumner and his brothers, Henry and Evan, farm about 500 acres in Worth and Tift counties. They grow cotton, peanuts, and wheat. Mr. Sumner received direct operating loans from FSA for several years before graduating to other credit this year. In 2011, he was able to purchase his own farm with financing from the local FSA office. Mr. Sumner says "The loan program is a good thing to help you get started and holds you to a higher standard than other lenders." He appreciates the assistance he has received from FSA and knows he would not have been able to purchase his farm or start farming on his own without the help of FSA. The local FSA office was also able to assist

Mr. Sumner's father in purchasing his first farm 23 years ago and hopes to continue their relationship with this family for generations to come.



**FSA-669A**  
(02-22-12)U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Farm Service Agency**NOMINATION FORM FOR COUNTY FSA COMMITTEE ELECTION**

This form allows individuals to nominate themselves or any other person as a candidate. If additional forms are needed, this one may be copied or may be obtained at the County FSA Office or obtained electronically at <http://www.sc.egov.usda.gov>. Each form submitted must be:

- A. Limited to one nominee.
  - B. Signed and dated by the nominee in Item 3. Nominee must sign if willing to have his/her name placed on the ballot and agrees to serve if elected.
- Note:** Name shown on ballot will appear exactly the same as in Agency records.
- C. Delivered to the County FSA Office or postmarked no later than August 1, 2012.
  - D. Signed and dated as a write-in candidate if elected as a member and willing to serve on the COC.

The County FSA Committee is responsible for reviewing each form to determine the eligibility of nominees. A person who is nominated on this form and is found ineligible will be so notified and have an opportunity to file a challenge.

Persons nominated should actively participate in the operation of a farm or ranch and be well qualified for committee work. A producer is eligible to be a County FSA committee member if the producer resides in the Local Administrative Area (LAA) in which the election is to be held and is eligible to vote.

This is a non-salary public service position. A small stipend is provided to offset expenses.

Federal regulations may prohibit County FSA Committee members from holding certain positions in some farm, commodity, and political organizations if such positions pose a conflict of interest with FSA duties. The positions include functional offices such as president, vice president, secretary, or treasurer; and positions on boards or executive committees. Conflict of interest restrictions also apply to employees, operators, managers, and majority owners of tobacco warehouses. Questions concerning eligibility should be directed to the County FSA Office.

A candidate has the option to request that all voted ballots for an individual county committee election be returned to the respective State Office in lieu of being returned to the county office. This request must be in writing and submitted to the local County Executive Director prior to the announced end of the nomination period.

The duties of County FSA Committee members include:

- A. Administering farm program activities conducted by the County FSA Office.
- B. Informing farmers of the purpose and provisions of the FSA programs.
- C. Keeping the State FSA Committee informed of LAA conditions.
- D. Monitoring changes in farm programs.
- E. Participating in county meetings as necessary.
- F. Performing other duties as assigned by the State FSA Committee

*The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).*

*To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

<b>FSA-669A</b> (02-22-12)	<b>U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE</b> Farm Service Agency
<h2 style="margin: 0;">NOMINATION FORM FOR COUNTY FSA COMMITTEE ELECTION</h2>	

1. NAME OF NOMINEE <i>(Type or Print Nominee's Full Name)</i>	<b>TO BE COMPLETED BY COUNTY FSA OFFICE</b>	
2. ADDRESS OF NOMINEE	4. INITIALS OF EMPLOYEE RECEIVING FORM AND DATE RECEIVED	
3. <b>NOMINEE'S CERTIFICATION:</b>  <i>I hereby agree to have my name placed on the ballot, that I will serve if elected, and if there is a conflict of interest, I will resign such position.</i>  <input type="checkbox"/> <i>I DO want to witness the settling of tied votes with another nominee.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>I DO NOT want to witness the settling of tied votes with another nominee.</i>	5. COUNTY  6. LAA <span style="float: right;">7. STATE</span>  8. <b>NOMINATOR'S CERTIFICATION:</b>  <i>If this nomination is by other than self, the following eligible voter or representative of a community based organization hereby nominates the afore-named person to be a candidate in the next County FSA Committee election for the county.</i>	
3A. SIGNATURE OF NOMINEE	3B. DATE	8A. SIGNATURE OF NOMINATOR  <i>(If the individual is self nominating, no signature is required).</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Check here if nominee is a write-in candidate.</b>		8B. DATE

**9. TO BE COMPLETED BY NOMINEE**

**VOLUNTARY INFORMATION FOR MONITORING PURPOSES:** The following information is requested by the Federal Government in order to monitor FSA's compliance with federal laws prohibiting discrimination against program participants on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, marital status, handicapped condition, or age. You are not required to furnish this information, but are encouraged to do so. This information will not be used in evaluating your nomination or to discriminate against you in any way.

<b>ETHNICITY</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Not Hispanic or Latino	<b>RACE (Choose as many boxes as applicable)</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African-American <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	<b>GENDER</b>  <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
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**INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THIS FORM**

- Complete the form as follows:
- ITEM 1** Type or Print the nominee's full name. The nominee must be:
    - A. Eligible to vote in the designated County FSA Committee election.
    - B. Eligible to hold the office of County FSA Committee member.
    - C. Willing to serve if elected.
  - ITEM 2** Enter the nominee's current address.
  - ITEM 3** The nominee must check one of the boxes to indicate a preference regarding the settling of tied votes.
  - ITEMS 3A & 3B** The nominee must sign and date.
  - ITEMS 8A & 8B** The nominator must sign and date. *(If the individual is self nominating, no signature is required.)*
  - ITEM 9** Completing this item is voluntary.
- ALL FORMS MUST BE RECEIVED IN THE COUNTY OFFICE OR POSTMARKED BY AUGUST 1, 2012.**

**NOTE:** *The following statement is made in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a - as amended). The authority for requesting the information identified on this form is the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Pub. L. 110-246). The information will be used to obtain nominees for election to the County FSA Committee. The information collected on this form may be disclosed to other Federal, State, Local government agencies, Tribal agencies, and nongovernmental entities that have been authorized access to the information by statute or regulation and/or as described in applicable Routine Uses identified in the System of Records Notice for County Personnel Records, USDA/FSA-6. Providing the requested information is voluntary. However, failure to furnish the requested information will result in a determination of ineligibility for nomination for election to the County FSA Committee.*

*According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0560-0229. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 10 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The provisions of appropriate criminal and civil fraud, privacy, and other statutes may be applicable to the information provided. **RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO YOUR COUNTY FSA OFFICE.***