



NEWSLETTER



September 2012

**Georgia State
FSA Office**

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2012 Dates and Deadlines

Acreage Reporting Deadlines: NEW REPORTING DATES ARE IN EFFECT

<u>Sep 15</u>	<u>Sweet Corn (Planted 7/15 – 8/25)</u>
<u>Oct 15</u>	<u>Cabbage (Planted 7/16 – 9/30)</u>
<u>Nov 15</u>	<u>Apiculture, PRF (Pasture, Range, and Forage – Crop Insurance Program)</u>

Note: Crops with NAP Coverage:

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>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>Jan 31, 2013</u>	<u>Final date to request a Marketing Assistance Loan or Loan Deficiency Payment on 2012 CY Peanuts and Wool.</u>
<u>Jan 31, 2013</u>	<u>NAP Application Closing Date for Annually Planted Crops</u>
<u>Mar 31, 2013</u>	<u>Final date to request a Marketing Assistance Loan or Loan Deficiency Payment on 2012 CY Barley, Canola, Honey, Oats, and Wheat.</u>
<u>May 31, 2013</u>	<u>Final date to request a Marketing Assistance Loan or Loan Deficiency Payment on 2012 CY Corn, Grain Sorghum, Cotton and Soybeans.</u>
<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>
<u>Mar 4, 2013</u>	<u>Designation M4068 in 4 counties due to losses caused by Tropical Storm Debby</u>
<u>Mar 11, 2013</u>	<u>Designation S3262 in 15 counties due to frosts and freezes</u>
<u>Mar 11, 2013</u>	<u>Designation S3263 in 15 counties due to hail and high winds</u>
<u>Mar 12, 2013</u>	<u>Designation S3265 in 13 counties due to drought</u>
<u>Mar 12, 2013</u>	<u>Designation S3271 in 11 counties due to drought</u>
<u>Mar 12, 2013</u>	<u>Designation S3272 in 140 counties due to drought</u>
<u>Mar 12, 2013</u>	<u>Designation S3286 in 13 counties due to drought</u>
<u>Mar 18, 2013</u>	<u>Designation S3292 in 5 counties due to drought</u>
<u>Apr 1, 2013</u>	<u>Designation S3309 in 14 counties due to drought</u>
<u>Apr 13, 2013</u>	<u>Designation S3321 in 5 counties due to losses caused by Tropical Storm Debby</u>
<u>Apr 22, 2013</u>	<u>Designation S3352 in 12 counties due to drought</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.

Hobby Stripling, State Executive Director, Announces the Appointment of Mr. Reese Thompson to the State Committee for USDA's Georgia Farm Service Agency

Hobby Stripling, Executive Director of USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) in Georgia, announced the appointment of Mr. Reese Thompson of Vidalia, Georgia, to the Georgia State Committee. The Georgia FSA State Committee is responsible for the oversight of farm programs, county committee operations, appeals, federal farm policy determinations and provides FSA program information to the general public and other Agency stakeholders.

"I am grateful that Reese Thompson is appointed and can begin his involvement with Georgia FSA," said Stripling. "His contribution to the Agency will have a positive impact on our programs, producers and employees, and I am certain that we will have another successful year of delivering federal farm programs," he said.

Reese Jordan Thompson of Vidalia, Georgia is a sixth generation Georgian with farming and forestry background consisting of row crops, egg production, cattle, and turpentine operation. After graduating from the University of Georgia with a BBA in Finance, he worked on the floor of the Chicago Board of Trade, and then as a cash grain merchant in Indiana. Later he returned to the CBT as an independent local floor trader. He is a small businessman and a tree farmer, planting pines in Wheeler and Telfair Counties for forty years. It has been his privilege to serve on the Board of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Toombs County Development Authority, Vidalia Rotary Club, and various conservation organizations. He and his wife, Pam have a son and daughter attending college.

"In Georgia, the State Committee has a tremendous responsibility to be accountable for the use of taxpayer dollars," said Stripling. "These appointed individuals have proven they can be both fair and effective in their service to Georgia farmers and ranchers," he said.

Through the efficient and equitable administration of price support, conservation, disaster assistance and farm credit programs, FSA promotes and protects

agricultural practices to ensure a safe, affordable, abundant and nutritious food supply for all consumers.

REVISED Crop Acreage Reporting Dates for FSA and Crop Insurance Are NOW Effective

Please review the 2012 Dates and Deadlines section of this month's newsletter for the new August 15 Acreage Reporting Deadlines for Cabbage and Tomatoes.

Beginning July 1, there was a big change in many of the Crop Acreage Reporting Dates (CARD) for several of the crops planted in Georgia, particularly vegetables. As stated in previous newsletters, 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 for producers by standardizing the acreage reporting deadline for crops for both FSA and crop insurance purposes.

As a result, there were a few 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 and fresh 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.

REVISED 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,

March 15 --- Cabbage (Planted between 10/1-2/20), Onions (Planted 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 2/21-5/31), Corn, Cotton, Grain Sorghum, Peanuts, Soybeans, and all other crops and land uses not listed

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) Crop Insurance Program

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

The BIG changes in Acreage Reporting Dates are:

- (1) Winter-seeded small grains were moved forward from March 1, to January 15
- (2) Tobacco was moved back from May 1, to May 15
- (3) Specific dates were implemented for FSA compliance 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 reporting deadlines.

Farm Storage Facility Loan Program

The Farm Storage Facility Loan Program offers producers the opportunity to apply for a low interest loan to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities. Loan terms are offered for 7-year, 10-year and 12-year terms from the date the Note and Security Agreement are approved and depending on the amount of the loan. Applicants will be charged a \$100 nonrefundable application fee. The maximum loan amount through the Farm Storage facility Loan program is \$500,000 per loan. All loans require a 15 percent cash down payment.

An applicant must be a person who is a landowner, landlord, leaseholder, tenant or sharecropper who: produces an eligible facility loan commodity, has a satisfactory credit rating, demonstrates the ability to repay the debt, does not have a delinquent non-tax federal lien, demonstrates the need for additional storage, provides proof of multi-peril crop insurance, proof of all peril insurance, is HELC/WC compliant, compliant with local zoning and has not been convicted of a controlled substance violation.

Eligible commodities for storage under the FSFL program are: corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley, or minor oilseeds harvested other than grain, lentils, chickpeas, dry peas, hay, renewable biomass, fruits and vegetables, including nuts.

Eligible storage facilities and upgrades include: new conventional cribs and bins; new oxygen-limiting structures and remanufactured oxygen-limiting structures; new flat-type storage; new electrical equipment; new safety equipment to improve or maintain or monitor the quality of the grain; new concrete foundations; aprons, pits and pads; renovation of existing facilities; new grain and handling equipment, bunker type horizontal or open silo structures; new structures for storing hay; new structure suitable for storing renewable biomass; and new cold storage buildings.

For additional information, please contact your local FSA Office or visit the web at www.fsa.usda.gov.

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 and 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.

Violations under CRP Contract Period

This is a reminder for Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) participants that land enrolled in the CRP program must follow the terms and conditions that were signed under the CRP-1 at the beginning of the contract period. Any violations such as harvesting trees, selling of land without county notification, enrolling into other Federal conservation programs, and so forth will result in termination of the CRP contract and the owner having to refund all CRP rental payments, cost share payments, plus interest and liquidated damages.

If you have any issues with your CRP land, please call or visit your local FSA office first so that they are made aware of the situation and can act accordingly.

Emergency Loans Available

Emergency loans continue to be available for eligible family farmers in Georgia due to disaster types ranging from severe storms and flooding to

record cold weather, frost and freezes. If you experienced a loss due to the disasters, please contact your local FSA office for applications and additional information. Both Presidential and Secretarial declared counties are eligible for FSA Emergency Loans. At the time of this writing, applications are being accepted under 13 declarations.

The deadline for applying for emergency loan assistance is dependent on the date a county was designated. Applications must be received within 8 months of the designation date. Please see the "Important Dates for FSA Programs Calendar" in this newsletter for application deadlines. All producers are encouraged to contact their local FSA Service Center for specific information concerning the application deadlines applicable to their county or counties.

Emergency Loan Assistance (EM) Questions and Answers

What is an emergency loan?

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides emergency loans to help producers recover from production and physical losses due to flooding, drought, other natural disasters, or quarantine.

What can I use emergency loan funds for?

Emergency loan funds may be used to:

- Restore or replace essential property;
- Pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year;
- Pay essential family living expenses;
- Reorganize the farming operation; and
- Refinance certain debts.

Who is eligible for emergency loans?

Emergency loans may be made to farmers and ranchers who:

- Own or operate land located in a county declared by the President as a disaster area or designated by the Secretary of Agriculture as a disaster area or quarantine area, or counties contiguous to the declared or designated primary county;
- Are established family farm operators and have sufficient farming or ranching experience;
- Are citizens or permanent residents of the United States;
- Have suffered at least a 30-percent loss in crop production or a physical loss to livestock, livestock products, real estate, or chattel property;
- Have an acceptable credit history;
- Are unable to receive credit from commercial sources;
- Can provide collateral to secure the loan; and
- Have repayment ability.

What requirements must I meet?

FSA loan requirements are different from those of other lenders. Some of the more significant differences are the following:

- Borrowers must keep acceptable farm records;
- Borrowers must operate in accordance with a farm plan they develop and agree to with local FSA staff; and
- Borrowers may be required to participate in a financial management training program and obtain crop insurance.

Do I need collateral?

All emergency loans must be fully collateralized. The specific type of collateral may vary depending

on the loan purpose, repayment ability, and the individual circumstances of the applicant. If applicants cannot provide adequate collateral, their repayment ability may be considered as collateral to secure the loan. A first lien is required on property or products acquired, produced, or refinanced with loan funds.

What is the loan limit?

Producers can borrow up to 100% of actual production or physical losses, to a maximum amount of \$500,000.

What are the terms of an emergency loan?

Loans for crop, livestock, and non-real estate losses are normally repaid in 1 – 7 years; depending on the loan purpose, repayment ability, and collateral available as loan security. In special circumstances, terms of up to 20 years may be authorized. Loans for physical losses to real estate are normally repaid within 30 years. In certain circumstances, repayment may be made over a maximum of 40 years.

What is the interest rate?

As of September 1, 2012, the interest rate for actual loss emergency loans is 2.125%.

What about application deadlines?

Applications for emergency loans must be received within 8 months of the county's designation date.

What do you mean by temporary assistance?

Borrowers who receive temporary assistance are expected to return to conventional credit sources. Emergency loans are a temporary source of credit, and borrowers are reviewed periodically to determine whether they can return to commercial credit.

How do I obtain more information?

Further information on the emergency loan program is available from your local USDA Service Center.

FSA County Committee Elections – Voting to Begin This Fall

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.

The nomination period closed August 1, 2012.

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.

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>

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.

Georgia FSA Office Consolidations

Over the past three years, FSA has faced a variety of budget-related challenges. Through a targeted office

consolidation effort that included 125 offices nationwide, FSA is striving to balance significant budget cuts, staff reductions and increasing workloads while focusing the efforts of our staff on high-quality service. There are 2,119 offices remaining in the FSA network to do just that.

As a federal agency, FSA has been affected by widespread budget reductions made by Congress. Since 2011, the agency has lost 1,230 permanent employees through voluntary early separation and normal retirement. In addition, FSA has been forced to reduce discretionary administrative expenses by over 30 percent in the last fiscal year alone.

Three Georgia FSA Offices will be consolidated as follows, however, a producer may elect to transfer his/her records to another county of his/her choice:

- The Candler County FSA Office was officially consolidated on August 14, 2012. From this date forward, all FSA program services will be provided by the Bulloch County FSA Office located at 151 Langston Chapel Road, Suite 300, Statesboro, GA 30458 and the telephone is 912-871-2600.
- The Morgan-Greene-Jasper-Newton County FSA Office was officially consolidated on August 16, 2012. From this date forward, all FSA program services will be provided as follows:
 - Morgan and Greene County's services will be provided by the Oconee County FSA Office located at 1291 Greensboro Highway, Suite A-104, Watkinsville, GA 30677 and the telephone is 706-769-3987.
 - Jasper County services will be provided by the Putnam County FSA Office located at 130 Sparta Highway, Eatonton, GA 31024 and the telephone number is 706-485-2341.

- Newton County services will be provided by the Walton County FSA Office located at 111 East Spring Street, Suite C, Monroe, GA 30655 and the telephone number is 770-267-8363.
- The Baker County FSA Office will be officially consolidated on September 4, 2012. From this date forward, all FSA program services will be provided by the Miller County FSA Office located at 150 West Street, Colquitt, GA 39837 and the telephone number is 229-758-5219.

FSA places the utmost priority on ensuring that our services to producers remain throughout this process.

Although we recognize that change is never easy, we strongly believe that taking this action now is critical to ensuring FSA can continue to serve its customers as it adjusts to budget constraints. FSA can only achieve the high level of service expected through consolidation of our human, financial and technical resources.

Meeting the Challenges for Forest Landowners - Seminar Announcement

The Georgia Forestry Commission is organizing and hosting two (2) one-day training seminars targeting private landowners, foresters, loggers, certified arborists, and others involved in the management, status, and risks of our natural resources in Georgia.

These workshops will be held in Statesboro, Georgia on October 25 at the Georgia Southern University Nessmith-Lane Conference Center and in Athens, Georgia on November 27 at the University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education.

Continuing education credits will be issued for Registered Foresters (6 Hours – CFE Category 1), Logger (3 Hours Business Management, 3 Hours Environmental CLE), Certified Arborist (6 Hours - Certified Arborist, Municipal Specialist, and BCMA

- Management), and Commercial Pesticide Applicators (1 Hour – category 23 (Forestry) and 27 (Right of Way) and 1 hour private applicators).

These training sessions will contain information on “The Challenges Faced by Landowners in Today’s Economy”. A variety of topics such as forest health updates, cost-share programs, how to sell your timber, timber theft, alternative revenue sources, plus much more will be covered. We hope you can attend one of these workshops and that the information will be useful and timely.

Pre-registration is encouraged prior to October 18, 2012 for Statesboro and November 20, 2012 for Athens. Space is limited and registration fees will increase after these dates. Lunch and breaks are included with your registration fee and will be provided on site. You may register for the Statesboro session online at the following link:

<http://ceps.georgiasouthern.edu/conted/forestry.html>

Registration for the Athens session is not yet available online.

If you have any questions or for more information, please contact Annie Moncrief by email to: amoncrief@gfc.state.ga.us or by phone at (478-751-3485) or Chip Bates by email to: cbates@gfc.state.ga.us or by phone at (912-681-0490) or Buford Sanders by email to: bsanders@gfc.state.ga.us or by phone at (706-552-4443).

FSA near You! -- Crisp County, Georgia

With some help from the Farm Service Agency, young minority farmers and/or beginning farmers like Maximino Angel and his family have the opportunity to achieve their dreams.

Native to Mexico, Mr. Angel has lived in the Atlanta area for 28 years. Mr. Angel and his wife own and operate their own restaurant in Smyrna, Georgia. They enjoy the restaurant business but also wanted to pass on the tradition of farming to their children.

Mr. Angel said he and his wife searched for a few years before finding the land nestled here in Cordele, Georgia that fit their farming needs.

Mr. Angel's wife, Iris, was a native of Cuba and lived in Miami. Her family home was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina and they too moved to the Atlanta area. Mrs. Angel came from a long line of family farming and her father, Teodoro Gonzalez, has extended his knowledge of farming to the Angel's and their family and given his support with passing on the family farming tradition.

Mr and Mrs. Angel are excited about passing the love for agriculture down to their children and grandchildren. Angel is a fourth generation farmer and recalls his father's passion about cultivating the land. Farming has been past down from generation to generation on both his and his wife's side of the family.

Mr. Angel currently has his farm enrolled in the Direct and Counter Cyclical Program in Cordele, Georgia. He and his family are also interested in other FSA and NRCS Programs that would help them with their future plans for the family farm which include a small cattle operation and green houses. Mr. Angel is confident that the Crisp County FSA Staff will provide information and assistance needed when the time comes for him to build on to his operation.



The Angel family poses for a picture in their Cuban Pumpkin Patch. Pictured in front: Brody Angel. Pictured in back from left to right: Iris Angel, Maximino Angel, and Teodoro Gonzalez