



NEWSLETTER



October 2012

Georgia State FSA Office

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2012 Dates and Deadlines

Acreage Reporting Deadlines: NEW REPORTING DATES ARE IN EFFECT

<u>Oct 15</u>	<u>Cabbage (Planted 7/16 – 9/30)</u>
<u>Nov15</u>	<u>Apiculture, PRF (Pasture, Range, and Forage – Crop Insurance Program)</u>
<u>Dec 15</u>	<u>Onions (Planted 09/20 - 10/20)</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 3, 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>
<u>Apr 29, 2013</u>	<u>Designation S3360 in 3 counties due to drought</u>
<u>May 20, 2013</u>	<u>Designation S3397 in 6 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.

Another Successful Year with the Feds Feed Families Food Drive

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) once again partnered with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the Chief Human Capital Officers, and other federal agencies in the 4th annual Feds Feed Families Food Drive. Feds Feed Families is a voluntary effort undertaken by Federal employees around the country to collect and donate perishable and non-perishable goods to food pantries and banks in their communities.

The challenge, which began in early June and ended in August, encouraged USDA employees to "beat our best" and donate more than 1.8 million pounds of food, topping last summer's donation by USDA of 1.79 million pounds of perishable and non-perishable food.

The FSA State Office contributed a grand total of 6,351 lbs. of food, of which 2,051 lbs. were donated by State Executive Director, Hobby Stripling. Hobby worked with his peanut contacts throughout the state and was able to pull together 2,051 lbs. of jarred peanut butter. The State Office donations were delivered to the Northeast Georgia Food Bank in Athens, GA. A big THANK YOU goes out to all employees, COC members and producers who graciously gave to this summer's Feds Feed Families Food Drive.



A truck load of peanut butter and several State Office Staff pictured from left: Clark Weaver, David Laster, Jennifer Carter, Dean Lewis, Jeannia Satcher, Claude McKenzie, Millie Gardener, Hobby Stripling, Kyle Mansfield, Chuck Tyson, Dianne Westmoreland, Felecia Fincher, Brett Martin and Marcia Vaughn.

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

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.

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.

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.

Commodity Commissions for Cotton and Tobacco Now Accepting Nominations for 2013 Board Members

Georgia Agriculture Commissioner Gary W. Black announced that the Cotton and Tobacco Georgia Agricultural Commodity Commissions are both accepting nominations to fill several positions on each board. In order to be nominated, a person must be a Georgia producer of that commodity.

Nominations can be made by filling out a Nominee Information Form available at Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices. Send completed applications to the Georgia Department of Agriculture, Room 328, 19 MLK Jr. Drive, SW, Atlanta, GA 30334 or via fax to 404-656-9380 (please note, this is a change from how the nominating procedure was done in the past). Nominees will be certified to ensure they are an

active cotton or tobacco producer in Georgia. Geographic representation will be considered when making appointments.

Agricultural commodity commissions are farmer-funded, self-help programs to enhance research, promotion and education. They are authorized by Georgia law under the Commodity Promotions Act. Farmers vote every three years to determine whether they wish to continue a commission (i.e., peach farmers vote on whether they wish to continue the peach commission).

The Georgia Department of Agriculture administers 12 state agricultural commodity commissions for the following products: apples, blueberries, corn, cotton, eggs, equine, milk, peaches, pecans, soybeans, tobacco and vegetables. Georgia growers who wish to create a commodity commission for their crop should contact the Georgia Department of Agriculture.

The deadline for submitting nominations is Oct. 31. Producers with questions may contact the Georgia Department of Agriculture at 404-656-3678.

Recent Changes to USDA Secretarial Disaster Designations

In the past, Secretarial Disaster Designations had to be initiated by an Indian Tribal Council or State Governor. Although an Indian Tribal Council or State Governor can still initiate the process, this is no longer a requirement. Local County Offices can now receive requests from the following:

- farm operator
- local or State agricultural official
- State government official
- County Executive Director (CED) or State Executive Director (SED)
- County Emergency Board (CEB) or State Emergency Board (SEB)

Upon receiving a request, the County Office should complete a FSA-937, Acknowledgement of Report of Secretarial Disaster / Disaster Designation Request.

An expedited process has been developed for USDA's Secretarial disaster designations in severe drought situations.

The designations will be initiated and completed by the National Office. The fast track approval applies to counties that meet the drought intensity value of D2 (severe drought) for at least 8 consecutive weeks, D3 (extreme drought), or D4 (exceptional drought). Drought for fast track purposes includes the following:

- excessive heat
- high winds
- wildfires associated to the drought
- insects associated to the drought.

Additional information on Secretarial Disaster Designations can be found online at: http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=DISASTER_ASSISTANCE&parentnav=DISASTER_SAFETY

Milk Income Loss Contract Program Closeout

The signup for the Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC) began December 22, 2008 as authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill. The MILC program compensates dairy producers when domestic milk prices fall below a specified level. As of October 1, 2012, legislation has not authorized the extension of the program beyond September 30, 2012. The signup deadline for all new dairy applications and modified applications must be submitted by close of business September 30, 2012. Dairy operations must submit their final production evidence by close of business November 1, 2012 for all eligible months.

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

Loans Available To Rural Youths

FSA makes operating loans to eligible individual rural youths to establish and operate income-producing agriculture-related projects. The project must be of modest size, educational, and initiated, developed, and carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H clubs, Future Farmers of America, or similar organizations.

Each project must be part of an organized and supervised program of work. The project must be planned and operated with the help of the organization adviser, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience in agriculture-related skills.

Each year, many young entrepreneurs take advantage of these loans and gain valuable business experience in the process.

To qualify for a loan, an applicant must meet the following criteria:

- be a U.S. citizen (or permanent resident).
- be between 10 and 20 years old.
- live in a town of less than 50,000 people.
- be unable to obtain a loan from other sources.
- conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised work program.

These loans may be used to finance many kinds of income-producing agricultural projects. The loan funds may be used to buy livestock, seed, equipment, and supplies; buy, rent, or repair needed tools and equipment; and pay operating expenses for the project. To apply, the applicant must submit completed plans and budgets signed by the project

advisor and parent or guardian along with the FSA application for loan assistance.

These loans have a maximum loan amount of \$5,000 (total principal balance owed at any one time cannot exceed \$5,000); have an interest rate which is determined periodically, based on the cost of money to the federal government. The loans will be secured, in addition to promissory notes, by liens on the products produced for sale and on chattel property, including livestock, equipment, and fixtures purchased with loan funds. The youth loans will have a repayment schedule which varies depending on the type project for which the loan is made.

For more information, interested persons may contact any of the Farm Service Agency offices located in local USDA Service Centers throughout Georgia.

FSA Land Contract Guarantee Program

It is not often that major changes occur to the regulations governing the Farm Loan Programs, let alone having a new loan program entirely. However, in January 2012, a new loan program was announced. Some have described it as a guaranteed loan without the conventional lender. Others have said it is like a hybrid loan that incorporates aspects of the direct loan program as well as the guaranteed loan program. What is it?

It is called the Land Contract Guarantee Program. The Land Contract Guarantee Program provides a valuable tool designed to transfer farm real estate to the next generation of farmers and ranchers. Guarantees will be offered to the owner of a farm who wishes to sell farm real estate through a land contract to a beginning farmer/rancher or to a farmer/rancher who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group. The guarantee provides an incentive to sell to individuals in these groups as it reduces the financial risk to the seller due to buyer default on the contract payments.

A land contract is an installment contract between a buyer and a seller for the sale of real property, in which complete ownership of the property is not transferred until all payments under the contract have been made.

Under this new program, guarantees can be used for financing the purchase of a farm with a purchase price up to \$500,000 on a new land contract. The program will consist of two types of guarantees. The seller may request either of the following:

Prompt Payment Guarantee: A guarantee of up to the amount of three amortized annual installments plus the cost of any related real estate taxes and insurance.

Standard Guarantee: A guarantee of 90 percent of the outstanding principal balance under the land contract.

To qualify for assistance, buyers must meet eligibility requirements similar to those for the Guaranteed and Direct Farm Ownership Programs. Buyers must be owner/operators of the land contract farm at the time the contract is complete. Buyers must have a feasible business plan of operation.

The guarantee period is for up to 10 years for either type of guarantee, regardless of the term of the land contract. The interest rate during the term of the guarantee must be fixed at a rate not to exceed the Agency's direct farm ownership loan interest rate in effect at the time the guarantee is issued, plus three percentage points. The contract payments must be amortized for a minimum of 20 years and payments on the contract must be equal amounts during the term of the guarantee.

Buyers will be required to provide a minimum down payment of five percent of the purchase price, plan to operate the farm, and be able to make the land contract payments.

For more information and eligibility criteria, additional information may be obtained at any of the Farm Service Agency offices located in local USDA Service Centers throughout Georgia. Additional program information, loan applications, and other

materials are available on the FSA Web site at www.fsa.usda.gov, or by contacting your local FSA county office.

FSA County Committee Elections – Voting to Begin Soon!

Now that the COC nomination period has ended, ballots will be mailed to eligible voters by November 5. Ballots must be returned to the FSA county office or postmarked by December 3, 2012. All producers are encouraged to participate.

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.

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.

FSA near You! -- Jefferson County, Georgia

Mr. Hubert Flonnory, Jr. is a full-time farmer that lives and operates in Jefferson County. Mr. Flonnory has been farming for over 40 years. His current operation consists of approximately 1900 acres where he produces corn, cotton, peanuts, soybeans, grain sorghum, wheat, rye and oats. His other farming interests include raising cattle and custom harvesting. He also recently added irrigation to his operation. Mr. Flonnory has supported his community and USDA by serving on the Jefferson County FSA committee. For 24 years, since 1987, Mr. Flonnory has served as a minority advisor, COC chairperson, and currently as the COC advisor.

Mr. Flonnory, like many other farmers, has seen and experienced the highs and lows of being a farmer. Some of his experiences over the last 40 years include the inflation of fertilizer and numerous droughts in the '70s, the heat wave in 1980 and a disaster in 1988. The '90s brought about disaster years including a drought and flood in 1990. So far, the 2012 crop year is going well for Mr. Flonnory. He continues to persevere as a model farmer and citizen of Jefferson County. One of Mr. Flonnory's favorite sayings is "love the tractor, love the crop, and love the farm."



Pictured from left: Alan York, County Executive Director, Georgia FSA, Mr. Hubert Flonnory, Producer, Jefferson County and Brian Stuckev. District Director. Georgia FSA.