



Your Farm Service Agency Online Monthly Newsletter Covering the Latest Topics

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Farm Service Agency Website:

www.fsa.usda.gov/hi

Reimbursement Transportation Cost Payment Program (RTCP) Deadline Extension

The deadline to submit eligible expense documentation for 2013 RTCP applicants has been extended from November 04 to **November 22, 2013**. Please review the following information on required expense documentation and clarification of eligible and ineligible expenses.

Required Expense Documentation

Verifiable records supporting eligible costs include, but are not limited to:

- account statements
- bill of lading
- contractual agreements
- financial statements
- invoices
- retail sales receipts.

Verifiable records must show:

- name of producers, except on retail sales receipts
- commodity, quantity, and unit of measure, or unit price
- type of inputs
- date of service/sale
- name of person or entity providing the service/sale, as applicable.

Eligible Costs

Transportation costs; such as air freight, ocean freight, and land freight are eligible if such transportation method was used to produce an agricultural commodity, including, but not limited to:

- Chemicals and fertilizer
- Equipment parts—repair parts
- Materials and supplies—Irrigation, etc.
- Feed
- Fuel

- Plants
- Seed
- Tractors and other farm implements used in producing agricultural commodities
- Green house material
- Hydroponics hardware
- Fruit trees to establish an orchard
- Other inputs as determined by FSA

Transportation of raw products such as cattle, coffee beans, fruits and vegetables.

Ineligible Costs

Home office items including:

- Computers, printers, and ink
- Paper and office supplies

Machinery and equipment for the purpose of post processing agricultural commodities (value added measures) such as:

- Coffee roasters
- Slaughter house equipment
- Fruit and Vegetable Dehydrators
- Cooking equipment and supplies

Transporting post processed (value added) food and products such as:

- Roasted coffee
- Dried meat
- Processed fruits

2013 County Committee Election Ballots



Watch your mailbox for your official county committee election ballot starting early next month. Ballots will be mailed to all eligible voters on November 4, 2013. If for some reason you don't receive a ballot, feel free to notify your county Farm Service Agency office.

Completed and signed ballots must be returned to the county office by close of business on December 2, 2013.

Hawaii State & Pacific Basin Farm Service Agency Office	
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Hawaii County Farm Service Agency Hilo Office	
154 Waiuanue Ave, Room 219 Hilo, HI 96720 Ph: (808)933-8381 x 1 Fax: (808)933-8345	Lester Ueda County Executive Director Miki Miyasato Farm Loan Manager
Honolulu County Farm Service Agency Office	
99-193 Aiea Heights Dr, Room 114 Aiea, HI 96701 Ph: (808)483-8600 x 2 Fax: (808)483-8615	Jason Shitanishi County Executive Director Melissa Rodrigues Farm Loan Manager
Kauai County Farm Service Agency Office	
4334 Rice St, Suite 103 Lihue, HI 96766 Ph: (808)245-9014 x 2 Fax: (808)246-4639	Robert Ishikawa County Executive Director Melissa Rodrigues Farm Loan Manager
Maui County Farm Service Agency Office	
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Guam Farm Service Agency Office	
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Pago Plaza Building, Room 213 Pago Pago, AS 96799 Ph: (684)633-1031 x121 Fax: (684)633-7614	Josephine Lealasola Agricultural Specialist Letisha Gaoa Farm Loan Technician
Office Hours: Monday—Friday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm	
Next County Committee Meeting Dates:	
<u>Hawaii County</u> - Friday, November 08 at 8:30 a.m.	
<u>Honolulu County</u> - Wednesday, November 06 at 3:00 p.m.	
<u>Kauai County</u> - Wednesday, November 20 at 8:30 a.m.	
<u>Maui County</u> - Thursday, November 21 at 9:00 a.m.	
<u>Guam County</u> - Monday, October 28 at 9:00 a.m.	
<u>CNMI County</u> - Monday, October 28 at 9:00 a.m.	
Contact the County Office to confirm the meeting date and time, as budget constraints may limit the County Committee's ability to meet each month. A list of County Offices, contact numbers and addresses may be found at: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/hi_cof_staff.pdf	

Mutual Collaboration in Addressing Serious Concerns Yields Benefits for All

The recent Federal government shutdown is an illustration of what can happen when decision makers refuse to collaborate even though parties involved may have the best of intentions. The ability to navigate complex challenges that arise when government agencies, universities, organizations, and constituents collaborate with each other is an increasingly important characteristic in addressing serious issues. The ongoing collaboration between Federal and State agencies, the University of Hawaii College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (UH-CTAHR), and local farmers to address farm food safety and pesticide misuse problems is an example of how all stakeholders can benefit through mutual collaboration.

In May, 2012 an emergency meeting was convened by the Hawaii State Department of Health and Hawaii State Department of Agriculture to address pesticide misuse problems after illegal pesticides were found on crops grown on a number of farm operations on Oahu. “Working together, our agencies can reach out and educate farm workers more quickly to ensure the safety of produce grown in Hawaii,” said Gary Gill, Deputy Director of the Hawaii State Department of Health.

State and Federal health and agricultural agencies agreed to share resources and expertise to expand established educational programs in order to reach a broader segment of the farming community. “Educating farmers on the proper use of pesticides is key to increasing compliance,” said Russell S. Kokubun, Chairperson of the Hawaii Board of Agriculture. “While the state takes seriously its responsibility to regulate the industry, we are here to help Hawaii farmers succeed and thrive.”

Initial efforts involved contacting and educating farmers in areas on Oahu with crops found to have pesticide misuse problems by holding on farm pesticide and food safety training sessions. This proved to be effective; however, staffing and funding limitations necessitated finding alternative measures to educate farmers across the state, especially underserved immigrant farmers in rural areas with limited understanding of English.

Frontline officials with the Hawaii State Department of Agriculture, Hawaii State Department of Health, University of Hawaii-CTAHR, and the USDA Farm Service Agency worked together to plan and coordinate an economically feasible and practical comprehensive outreach plan, which included training sessions for groups of immigrant farmers speaking a particular

Mutual Collaboration (continued...)

language with pesticide and food safety educational materials translated into their language. The plan included a joint interagency workshop to be held on Oahu at a rural location convenient for farmers in a grass roots effort to reach a larger audience of farmers at a single event. It was a win-win proposition. Government agencies would have the opportunity to meet with a large group of farmers to provide presentations on farm food safety and proper use of pesticide, along with other programs and services. Farmers in turn would be able to learn about a wide variety of agricultural programs and services. If the event was successful, similar workshops would be held across the state.

The first joint workshop was held on April 06, 2013. Pesticide education officials requested having the workshop in the rural community of Kahuku on East Oahu due to a large number of immigrant vegetable farmers in the area who had yet to receive pesticide educational assistance. Mr. You Soukaseum, a well known leader in the immigrant farming community offered his farm warehouse for the workshop and assisted with outreach efforts.



**Joint Interagency Agricultural Workshop
You's Farm in Kahuku, Oahu, April 2013**

Organizers were concerned that attendance would be low due to initial tepid interest from local farmers with less than 20 farmers submitting RSVP's for the event. The concerns proved to be unfounded as the turnout was much greater than expected with over 80 farmers attending the workshop.

A second joint workshop was held on August 22, 2013 in Kunia, Oahu to reach out to farmers in West Oahu. Once again, turnout was greater than expected with more farmers in attendance, and an overflowing parking lot. Encouraged by the results, joint workshops were then planned for Maui, Kauai, and the Big Island.



**Joint Interagency Agricultural Workshop
Kunia, Oahu, August 22, 2013**

Results from the workshops have been favorable with positive reviews from farmers. Partner agencies have reported noticeable increases in inquiries and participation in programs and services, most notably pesticide use and on-farm food safety. The Honolulu County Farm Service Agency Office received a 49% increase in applications for the Reimbursement Transportation Cost Payment (RTCP) Program from the previous year, due in large part to joint outreach efforts.

Despite having limited resources and differing programs and services, public and private stakeholders can mutually collaborate to address serious and complicated issues with favorable results and success.

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/ 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.

Increased Guaranteed Loan Limit

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) has announced that the loan limit for the Guaranteed Loan Program increased to \$1,355,000 on October 1, 2013. The limit is adjusted annually based on an inflation index compiled by the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

The maximum combined guaranteed and direct farm loan indebtedness now increases 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.

Rural Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes loans to rural youths to establish and operate 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 \$5,000.

For more information call your FSA county office for an appointment.

Beginning and Limited Resource Loans

Farm Service Agency (FSA) assists beginning farmers and/or minorities and women to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. Farm Service Agency defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years;
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm;
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA; and
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's median size.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

Microloan Program

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) developed the Microloan program to better serve the unique financial operating needs of beginning, niche and small family farm operations.

Farm Service Agency offers applicants microloans designed to help farmers with credit needs of \$35,000 or less. The loan features a streamlined application process built to fit the needs of new and smaller producers. This loan program will also be useful to specialty crop producers and operators of community supported agriculture (CSA).

Eligible applicants can apply for a maximum amount of \$35,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses, essential tools, irrigation and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing, and distribution expenses. As financing needs increase, applicants can apply for a regular operating loan up to the maximum amount of \$300,000 or obtain financing from a commercial lender under FSA's Guaranteed Loan Program.

Individuals interested in applying for a microloan or would like to discuss other farm loan programs available, should contact the local FSA office to setup an appointment with a loan approval official.



Farm Loan Programs Interest Rates

Farm Operating - Direct	1.875%
Farm Ownership - Direct	4.125%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency	2.875%
Microloan	1.875%



According to the National Safety Council, farming is one of America’s most hazardous jobs.

Take a look around any farm and you will see many different types of equipment. The mechanical aspects of any equipment presents a real danger. 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 up, maneuvering or using farm machinery. Ensure everyone is visibly clear and accounted for before machinery is engaged.

Other tips to remember around equipment:

- Never ride in the back of a pickup truck or on the fender of a tractor.
- Never get on a tractor as an extra rider.
- Stay out of the path of moving equipment.
- Always use protective equipment like goggles to protect vision and earplugs to protect hearing.
- Wear appropriate clothes, including sturdy work boots. Don’t wear baggy or loose clothing around machinery where it can get caught.
- Long hair should be tied back or kept under a hat.

The pesticides and chemicals that are used on farms can be extremely dangerous. These materials should be kept locked away in marked containers with warning labels. Use caution when using these chemicals. In the event that someone is exposed to dangerous chemicals, call your local poison control center or the toll-free poison control number at 800-222-1222.

Be productive year round, and that begins with putting safety first.

Land Contract (LC) Guarantees

The Land Contract (LC) Guarantee Program is a valuable tool 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 real estate through a land contract to a beginning, minority or women producers. The guarantee reduces the financial risk to the seller.

Farm Service Agency offers two (2) types of guarantees:

- Prompt Payment Guarantee - A guarantee up to the amount of three (3) 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.

The guarantee period is 10 years and the contract payments must be amortized for a minimum of 20 years. The purchase price of the farm cannot exceed the lesser of \$500,000 or the market value of the property.

For additional information you can read the [Land Contract Guarantee Program Fact Sheet](#).

Dates to Remember	
Nov. 4	COC Ballots Mailed to Eligible Voters
Nov. 28	Thanksgiving Federal Holiday
Dec. 1	Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Application for Coverage Deadline for Fruits, Vegetables, and Grazing Grass for the 2014 Crop Year
Dec. 2	Last Day to Return COC Ballots
Continues	Hawaii Conservation Reserve Program

Need Information

The Hawaii and Pacific Basin Farm Service Agency (FSA) internet site contains news and information on FSA programs, an FSA calendar, and hot links to other agriculture related sites.

Find the information you are looking for at:

www.fsa.usda.gov/hi

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