

FSA Louisiana State Office  
For Immediate Release

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## **OCTOBER/NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2013 NEWSLETTER**

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Louisiana FSA Public Website address:

[www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/)

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### **2013 COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTIONS**

The election of agricultural producers to the Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to all farmers and ranchers. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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County Committee (COC) members are a critical component of FSA operations. The intent is to have the COC reflect the makeup of the producers and represent all constituents. This means that minorities, women or lower income producers need to be on the committee to speak for underrepresented groups.

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County Committee election ballots will be mailed to eligible voters on November 4, 2013. The last day to return completed ballots to the USDA Service Center is December 2, 2013.

### **NONINSURED CROP DISASTER ASSISTANCE (NAP) APPLICATION CLOSING DATE - NOVEMBER 20, 2013**

Producers are reminded that for the 2014 crop year that November 20, 2013 is the final date to apply NAP coverage on Fruit and Nut Crops which include blueberries, cane berries, grapefruit, grapes, may haws, nectarines, peaches, pears, pecans (Native and Improved), persimmons, and plums.

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The NAP program provides protection from catastrophic natural disasters up to 50 percent of an established yield and 55 percent of established price. Application fees are paid in each parish that a producer has an interest in a crop. There are no provisions for late filed applications. Interested Producers should contact their local FSA Office for eligibility and application details before the application closing date.

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### **2013 ACREAGE REPORTING DEADLINE FOR FALL SEEDED CROPS - DECEMBER 15, 2013**

All producers are reminded that the acreage reporting deadline for 2014 fall seeded crops is Dec. 15, 2013. This applies to all fall seeded small grain crops such as wheat and oats. Also NAP participants are reminded that the planted acreage certification should be the earlier of fifteen days before harvest or the published certification deadline for the specific crop. Please call for an appointment to certify your wheat crop.

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### **ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME**

USDA and the Internal Revenue Service have established an electronic information exchange process for verifying compliance with the adjusted gross income (AGI) provisions for farm programs. No actual tax or income data is included in the report that IRS sends to FSA. For the tax review process, written consent for the IRS to provide information is required from each producer who received benefits. "Producer" includes any entity and its members, and "benefits" includes payments and/or approval of a conservation contract.

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This review process ensures that payments are not issued to producers whose AGI exceeds certain limits. The limits set in the 2008 Farm Bill are \$500,000 nonfarm average AGI for commodity and disaster programs; \$750,000 farm average AGI for direct payments; and \$1 million nonfarm average AGI for conservation programs; and beginning with 2012, \$1 million total average AGI for direct payments.

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Participants in 2013 CCC programs subject to average AGI rules must submit form CCC-933 to their local FSA County Office to avoid interruption of program benefits. This form may be obtained from local FSA and NRCS offices or online at: [www.fsa.usda.gov/ccc931](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ccc931) and/or <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ccc933>.

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### **FOREIGN LANDOWNER NOTIFICATION**

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires any foreign person or entity who acquires, transfers or holds any interest, other than a security interest, in agricultural land in the United States to report the transaction to the Secretary of Agriculture no later than 90 days after the date of the transaction. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA. Such transactions must be reported to FSA on Form FSA-153, Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act Report. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property.

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For AFIDA purposes, agricultural land is defined as any land used for farming, ranching or timber production, if the tracts total 10 acres or more.

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For more information regarding AFIDA and FSA programs, contact the FSA office near you or visit the USDA Web site at <http://www.usda.gov>.

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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.

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

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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.

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

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### **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.

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FSA offers applicants a Microloan 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).

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Eligible applicants can apply for a maximum amount of \$35,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses to extend the growing season, 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.

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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.

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### **YOUTH LOANS**

The Farm Service Agency 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 \$5000.

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For more information you can stop by your FSA  
county office. Our staff can help with preparing  
and processing the application forms.

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