

December 2013



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Cheshire-Sullivan County FSA Updates

Cheshire-Sullivan County FSA Office

11 Industrial Park Drive
Walpole, NH 03608

Phone: 603-756-2970 ext 2
Fax: 603-756-2978
www.fsa.usda.gov/NH
Monday - Friday
8:00 AM - 4:30 PM

County Executive Director:
Kelly Greenbacker
kelly.greenbacker@nh.usda.gov

County Committee:
Timothy Gowen, Chair
Leo Hunter, Vice Chair
Chris Bartlett, Member
Hank Kenney, Member
Linda Rice, Member

**Next County Committee
Meeting:** January 21, 2013 at
6:00 PM

**NH-Acting Farm Loan
Manager:**
Brian Kuper
brian.kuper@vt.usda.gov

Farm Loans:
The Concord Center
10 Ferry St, Suite 212
Concord, NH 03301

Topics for December

- [New County Committee Election Ballots](#)
- [Upcoming 2014 Acreage Reporting Deadlines](#)
- [FSA Advises Producers to Anticipate Payment Reductions Due to Mandated Sequester](#)
- [Farm Storage Facility Loan Program](#)
- [Marketing Assistance Loans \(MAL\)](#)
- [LDP's for Unshorn Lamb Pelts](#)
- [FSA Signature Policy](#)
- [Dates to Remember](#)
- [Interest Rates](#)

New County Committee Election Ballots

The County Committee Election ballots that were mailed to producers on Nov. 4 were incorrectly printed with the producer's name and address on the back of the ballot. County committee elections must use a secret ballot so the misprinted ballots cannot be used. Please destroy or recycle the misprinted ballot. If you have already voted, your ballot will be destroyed unopened.

New ballots will be mailed to producers on December 20, 2013. These ballots will indicate that they are the corrected ballot in several places, including on the outside of the mailing, on the ballot and on the outside of the return envelope.

The corrected ballot must be returned to the Cheshire-Sullivan County FSA Office or postmarked by January 17, 2014. All newly elected county committee members will take office February 18, 2014. All county committee members whose term expires on Dec. 31, 2013, will have their term extended to January 31, 2014.

County committee members are an important component of the operations

Phone: 603-223-6003

of FSA and provide a link between the agricultural community and USDA. Farmers and ranchers elected to county committees help deliver FSA programs at the local level, applying their knowledge and judgement to make decisions on commodity price support programs; conservation programs; incentive indemnity and disaster programs for some commodities; emergency programs and eligibility. FSA committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws.

To be an eligible voter, farmers and ranchers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm may also be eligible to vote.

The candidates in this year's election are:

Leo Hunter from Claremont is nominated in Local Administrative Area (LAA) 2, Sullivan County, to serve as a committee member. LAA 2 represents Claremont, Charlestown, Unity, Newport, Goshen, and Sunapee.

More information on county committees, such as the new 2013 fact sheet and brochures, can be found on the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov/elections or at a local USDA Service Center.

Upcoming 2014 Acreage Reporting Deadlines

Producers now have until January 15, 2014, to report crops that have a November 15, 2013 reporting deadline without paying a late-file fee. Crops under this waiver for New Hampshire include **Perennial Forage, Fall Forage Seeding, and Fall-Seeded Small Grains**. The Risk Management Agency (RMA) did not grant a waiver so producers need to consult their crop insurance agent for deadlines for insured crops.

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit the Cheshire-Sullivan County FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline. Please be sure to call ahead and make an appointment to ensure that an FSA employee will be available to assist you.

The NH Farm Service Agency has established the following acreage reporting deadlines for the 2014 crop year:

Nov. 15, 2013 - Perennial Forage, Fall Forage Seeding, and Fall-Seeded Small Grains

Jan. 2, 2014 - Honey

Jan. 15, 2014 - Apples, Peaches, and Nectarines

Feb. 15, 2014 - Maple Sap

May 31, 2014 - Ornamental Nursery

July 15, 2014 - Corn, Fresh Market Sweet Corn, Spring Forage Seeding, and All Other Crops

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting deadline, then the acreage must be reporting no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting deadline, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.
- If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of "cover only," "green manure," "left standing," or "seed," then the acreage must be reported by July 15th.

Late file fees will be assessed for 2013 crops reported after September 15, 2013, and 2014 crops reported after

January 15, 2014.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact the Cheshire-Sullivan County FSA office at 603-756-2970 extension 2.

FSA Advises Producers to Anticipate Payment Reductions Due to Mandated Sequester

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is reminding farmers and ranchers who participate in FSA programs to plan accordingly in FY2014 for automatic spending reductions known as sequestration. The Budget Control Act of 2011 (BCA) mandates that federal agencies implement automatic, annual reductions to discretionary and mandatory spending limits. For mandatory programs, the sequestration rate for FY2014 is 7.2%. Accordingly, FSA is implementing sequestration for the following programs:

- Dairy Indemnity Payment Program;
- Marketing Assistance Loans;
- Loan Deficiency Payments;
- Sugar Loans;
- Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program;
- Tobacco Transition Payment Program;
- 2013 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payments;
- 2013 Average Crop Revenue Election Program;
- 2011 and 2012 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program;
- Storage, handling; and Economic Adjustment Assistance for upland cotton

Conservation Reserve Program payments are specifically exempt by statute from sequestration, thus these payments will not be reduced.

These sequester percentages reflect current law estimates; however with the continuing budget uncertainty, Congress still may adjust the exact percentage reduction. Today's announcement intends to help producers plan for the impact of sequestration cuts in FY2014.

At this time, FSA is required to implement the sequester reductions. Due to the expiration of the Farm Bill on September 30, 2013, FSA does not have the flexibility to cover these payment reductions in the same manner for FY14 as in FY13. FSA will provide notification as early as practicable on the specific payment reductions.

For information about FSA programs, visit your county USDA Service Center or go to www.fsa.usda.gov/.

Farm Storage Facility Loan Program

The Farm Storage Facility Loan Program (FSFL) allows producers of eligible commodities to obtain low-interest financing to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities.

The new maximum principal amount of a loan through FSFL is \$500,000. Participants are now required to provide a down payment of 15 percent, with Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) providing a loan for the remaining 85 percent of the net cost of the eligible storage facility and permanent drying and handling equipment. Additional security is required for poured-cement open-bunker silos, renewable biomass facilities, cold storage facilities, hay barns and for all loans exceeding \$50,000. New loan terms of 7, 10 or 12 years are available depending on the amount of the loan. Interest rates for each term rate may be different and are based on the rate which CCC borrows from the Treasury Department.

Payments are available in the form of a partial disbursement and the remaining final disbursement. The partial disbursement will be available after a portion of the construction has been completed. The final fund disbursement will be made when all construction is completed. The maximum amount of the partial disbursement will be 50 percent of the projected and approved total loan amount.

The following commodities are eligible for farm storage facility loans:

- Corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley or minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain
- Corn, grain sorghum, wheat, oats or barley harvested as other-than-whole grain
- Pulse crops - lentils, small chickpeas, dry beans and dry peas
- Hay
- Renewable biomass
- Fruits (including nuts) and vegetables - cold storage facilities
- Honey

For more information about FSFL, please visit your FSA county office or www.fsa.usda.gov.

Marketing Assistance Loans (MAL)

Short-term financing is available by obtaining low interest commodity loans for eligible harvested production. A nine-month Marketing Assistance Loan provides financing that allows producers to store production for later marketing. The crop may be stored on the farm or in the warehouse.

Loans are available for producers who share in the risk of producing the eligible commodity and maintain beneficial interest in the crop through the duration of the loan. Beneficial interest means retaining the ability to make decisions about the commodity, responsibility for loss because of damage to the commodity and title to the commodity. Once beneficial interest in a commodity is lost, it is ineligible for a loan, even if you regain beneficial interest.

LDP's for Unshorn Lamb Pelts

Eligible producers have until **Jan. 31, 2014**, to apply for Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP) for unshorn pelts produced during the 2013 crop year.

Eligible producers must have beneficial interest in the pelts, owned the lamb for at least 30 calendar days before the date of slaughter and sell the unshorn lamb for immediate slaughter. Producers must also comply with wetland conservation and highly erodible land conservation provisions on all lands they operate or have interest in.

To qualify for payment, pelts must have been produced by an eligible producer from live unshorn lambs of domestic origin in the United States.

FSA Signature Policy

Using the correct signature when doing business with FSA can save time and prevent a delay in program benefits. The following are FSA signature guidelines:

- Spouses may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and CCC programs in which either has an interest, unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county

office.

- Spouses shall not sign on behalf of each other as an authorized signatory for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations, or other similar entities.

For additional clarification on proper signatures contact your local FSA office.

Dates to Remember

Dec 20 - Corrected COC Election Ballots to be mailed to eligible voters

Dec 25 - Christmas Holiday (Office Closed)

Jan 1 - New Year's Day Holiday (Office Closed)

Jan 2 - Acreage Reporting Deadline for 2014 crop year - Honey

Jan 15 - Acreage Reporting Deadline for 2014 crop year - Apples, Peaches, Nectarines

Jan 15 - Last day to report 2014 Perennial Forage, Fall Forage Seeding, and Fall-Seeded Small Grains without paying a late-file fee

Jan 17 - Last day to return corrected COC voter ballots to the USDA Service Center

Jan 20 - Birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday (Office Closed)

Jan 21 - Cheshire-Sullivan FSA County Committee Meeting and Election

Interest Rates

Selected Interest Rates for December 2013

Farm Operating Loans (including Microloans) - 1.875%

Farm Ownership Loans - Direct 4.125%

Farm Ownership Loans - Direct, Joint Financing 5.00%

Emergency Loans - 2.875%

Farm Storage Facility Loans - (7 years) 2.00%

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).