



# NEWSLETTER



June 2011

## 2011 FSA County Committee Elections

### Merrimack-Belknap Hillsborough County FSA Office

The Concord Center  
10 Ferry Street  
Box/Suite 212  
Concord, NH 03301

603-223-6003 phone  
603-223-6030 fax  
www.fsa.usda.gov/NH

#### Hours

Monday - Friday  
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

#### County Committee Members

Charles Price, Chair  
Martha Crete, Vice-Chair  
Keith Bachelder, Member  
William Hall Jr., Member  
Eric Tenney, Member

#### County Farm Program Staff

Donna Juneau,  
County Executive Director  
Susan Sargent,  
Program Technician  
Melinda Marston,  
Program Technician  
Kelly Greenbacker,  
County Operations Trainee

#### NH Farm Loan Staff

Sherrill Harris,  
Farm Loan Manager  
Lorna Wakefield,  
Farm Loan Officer  
Rebecca Davis,  
Farm Loan Officer  
William Wilson,  
Farm Loan Officer  
Sandra Carter,  
Program Technician  
Mary Kim Lavery,  
Program Technician  
Eric Evans,  
Farm Loan Officer Trainee

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to all farmers and ranchers, whether beginning or long-established, large or small operation. 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.

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 to represent all constituents. This means wherever possible, minorities, women or lower income producers need to be on the committee to speak for these underrepresented groups.

County committees provide local input on:

- Commodity price support loans and payments
- Conservation programs
- Incentive, indemnity and disaster payments for some commodities
- Emergency programs
- Payment eligibility

FSA county committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws. County committee members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions.

#### Election Period

June 15, 2011 - The nomination period begins.  
Aug. 1, 2011 - Last day to file nomination forms (FSA-669A) at the local USDA Service Center  
Nov. 4, 2011 - Ballots mailed to eligible voters  
Dec. 5, 2011 - Last day to return voted ballots to the USDA Service Center

#### Who Can Hold Office

To hold office as a county committee member, a person must meet the basic eligibility criteria

- Participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA
- Be eligible to vote in a county committee election
- Reside in the Local Administrative Area (LAA) in which the person is a candidate

Not have been:

- Removed or disqualified from the office of county committee member, alternate or employee
- Removed for cause from any public office or have been convicted of fraud, larceny, embezzlement or any other felony
- Dishonorably discharged from any branch of the armed services

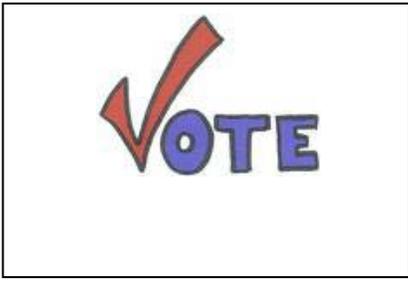
#### Nominations

To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign nomination form FSA-669A. The form includes a statement that the nominee agrees to serve if elected. This form is available at USDA Service Centers and online at [http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA\\_File/fsa0669a\\_commiteelectform.pdf](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/fsa0669a_commiteelectform.pdf)

Nomination forms for the 2011 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business Aug. 1, 2011.

Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in an FSA program may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee. Individuals may nominate themselves or others as a candidate.

Additionally, organizations representing minority and women farmers or ranchers may nominate candidates. Nomination forms are filed for the county committee of the office that administers a producer's farm records.



## Local Administrative Areas (LAA) Changes and Elections for Merrimack, Belknap and Hillsborough Counties

Local Administrative Areas (LAAs) are elective areas for the farmer-elected FSA County Committee. This year county committee elections will be held in all five Local Administrative Areas (LAAs) for the FSA'S Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough County Office. A realignment of our LAAs was required to ensure that there is no more than ten percent deviation between voter totals for each LAA. The following LAAs have been established by the FSA County Committee:

**LAA 1** Alton, Barnstead, Center Harbor, Gilford, Gilmanton, Laconia, Meredith, New Hampton, Sanbornton

**LAA 2** Andover, Boscawen, Bradford, Danbury, Dunbarton, Franklin, Henniker, Hill, Hopkinton, Newbury, New London, Salisbury, Sutton, Tilton, Warner, Webster, Wilmot

**LAA 3** Allenstown, Belmont, Bow, Canterbury, Chichester, Concord, Epsom, Hooksett, Loudon, Northfield, Pembroke, Pittsfield

**LAA 4** Antrim, Bennington, Deering, Francestown, Greenfield, Goffstown, Hancock, Hillsborough, Manchester, Mont Vernon, New Boston, Weare, Windsor

**LAA 5** Amherst, Bedford, Brookline, Greenville, Hollis, Hudson, Litchfield, Lyndeborough, Mason, Merrimack, Milford, Nashua, New Ipswich, Pelham, Peterborough, Sharon, Temple, Wilton

Each LAA will have one representative on the county committee.

## Acreage / Crop Reporting

The annual requirement of reporting to the FSA office can be referred to as crop reporting, acreage reporting, or crop certification. Filing an accurate and timely report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of benefits for a variety of Farm Service Agency programs. All cropland on the farm must be reported to receive benefits from the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, marketing assistance loans and Loan Deficiency Payments.

The certification form FSA-578, Report of Acreage, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. The producer certification deadline is July 15, 2011.

### CRP & NAP Certification

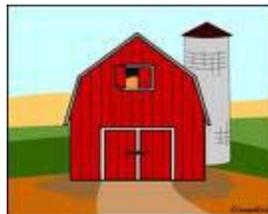
Conservation Reserve Program acreage must be reported to receive annual rental payments. And, crop acreage for Non insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) must also be reported.

### Prevented Planting:

Prevented planting is to be reported no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date. Failure to report prevented planting acreage could result in loss of benefits for the SURE program or possibly other disaster assistance programs.

### Failed Acreage:

Reports of failed acreage must be filed before disposition of the crop, and producers must be able to establish to the satisfaction of the county committee that the crop failed and was prevented from being replanted through the normal planting period because of natural disaster conditions.



## FSA County Office Budget Crunch

The FSA County Office's budgets are extremely limited this year, including our budgets for travel and postage. This has greatly impacted our ability to make farm visits. As such, we are encouraging all of our Producers to visit the office in Concord to conduct business, and/or to correspond with us via phone, fax, or E-mail. We need your help to keep our County farm records accurate and up to date. Our office hours are 8:00 am to 4:30 pm - Monday through Friday or you can contact us at your convenience by sending us a fax, an E-mail, or voice mail 24 hours a day. Our office phone number is 223-6003; our fax number is 223-6030; and you can contact us for our individual E-mail addresses. Please stop by the office in Concord or contact us after planting your crops to complete your 2011 Acreage / Crop Reports.

## Hispanic and Women Farmers

A process to resolve the claims of Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who believe they were discriminated against when seeking USDA farm loans has been established.

If you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic, or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation.

For additional information on this and other settlement issues contact:

- **Hispanic and Women Farmer Claims Process, please visit:**  
[www.farmerclaims.gov](http://www.farmerclaims.gov) or call 1-888-508-4429
- **Pigford – The Black Farmers Discrimination Litigation, please visit:**  
[www.blackfarmcase.com](http://www.blackfarmcase.com) or call 1-866-950-5547
- **Keepseagle - The Native American Farmers Class Action Settlement please visit:**  
[www.IndianFarmClass.com](http://www.IndianFarmClass.com) or call 1-888-233-5506

## SURE Program

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters that occurred in the crop years 2008 through Sept. 30, 2011. To be eligible for SURE payments, a producer is required to obtain crop insurance on all crops in all counties. If crop insurance is not available the producer must participate in the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP.) However, crop insurance or NAP coverage is no longer required for crops that are not of economic significance or those where the administrative fee required to buy NAP coverage exceeds 10 percent of the value of the coverage.

Eligible farmers and ranchers who meet the definition of socially disadvantaged, limited resource, or beginning farmer or rancher are exempt from the risk management purchase requirement.

The following are the conditions that trigger SURE payments:

- At least one crop of economic significance must suffer a 10 percent production loss due to an eligible disaster condition
- Crop of economic significance is a crop that has contributed or would have contributed at least 5 percent or more of the total expected revenue from all crops on the farm
- Producers in counties declared disaster counties by the Secretary of Agriculture, or in contiguous counties, or those who show proof of an individual loss of at least 50 percent are eligible to receive SURE payments for crop producer or crop quality losses.

Losses are measured with consideration to the whole farm revenue, which includes crop insurance indemnities and commodity program payments, so that producers are not paid more than once for the same loss.

A SURE calculator is available at [http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?are\\_a=home&subject=diap&topic=sure](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?are_a=home&subject=diap&topic=sure). The calculator is not official, but is intended for educational use. A fact sheet and background are also available online.

## Payment Limitations

Anyone that plans to participate in 2011 programs is required to submit a completed CCC-902, CCC-926, and CCC-901, if applicable, for payment eligibility and payment limitation purposes.

## Contributions

All partners, stockholders, or members with an ownership interest in the legal entity must make a contribution, whether compensated or **not** compensated, for active--\*

- personal labor,
- active personal management,
- or a combination of active personal labor and active personal management to the farming operation;

\*Note: there are exceptions for spouses.

Additional information on payment limitations is available at FSA county offices or on line at: [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)

## Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information

Any person or legal entity requesting program payments is subject to average adjusted gross (AGI) income provisions. The USDA and IRS have developed an electronic average AGI verification process. IRS requires written consent from the producer to provide USDA verification of average AGI. All producers who request program payments are required to complete the "Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information" and mail it to the IRS to avoid interruption of payments. A recent report indicates that many of our producers have not submitted the form to the IRS. If you have not completed your CCC-927 or CCC-928 "Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information", please visit or contact the County office to obtain a copy of the form.

## NAP Records

Production records for individual crops need to be filed at the FSA office to establish an approved NAP yield. If this is the first year you participated in NAP, you can provide production and acreage information from prior years to establish your yield. If you participated in NAP in previous years, you must report your production and acreage on a yearly basis to keep your yield up-to-date. Records submitted must be reliable or verifiable. Records need to show crop disposition. We recommend producers submit production records as soon as harvest is complete. **All production records must be submitted by the subsequent crop year's final acreage reporting date.**

## NAP Loss Filing

The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. Timely filing the CCC-576 is required for all crops including grasses. For losses on crops covered by the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and crop insurance, you must file a CCC-576 in the FSA County Office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent.

If filing for prevented planting, an acreage report and CCC-576 must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

## Disaster Assistance

The Farm Service Agency would like to remind crop and livestock producers to contact the FSA Office if they experience severe damage to their crops and/or livestock from a natural disaster including events such as floods, hurricanes, tornadoes, high winds (including micro-bursts), storms including ice storms, severe snow storms, drought, lightning strike, and other naturally caused disaster events. There may be an FSA program available to assist with the recovery process.

FSA administers several important programs that help producers recover from disaster damage and livestock deaths. Among the key programs available to address impacts from disasters are the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP), the Noninsured Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) Program.

Fact sheets for all of these programs can be found at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov); click on Newsroom, then Fact Sheets.

We encourage all who have suffered a disaster due to the recent severe weather conditions to read the fact sheets and visit the local FSA county office so they get a quick start in the recovery process.

Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough  
 County FSA  
 10 Ferry Street  
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 Concord, NH 03301



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**OR CURRENT RESIDENT**

**Would You Like to be Removed from our Newsletter Mailing List?**

If you would like to be removed from our newsletter mailing list, please call the FSA County Office at (603) 223-6003, or fax us at (603) 223-6030, or write to us at Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough County FSA Office, The Concord Center, 10 Ferry Street, Box 212, Concord, NH 03301.

<b>Selected Interest Rates for June 2011</b>	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating – Direct Loan	2.75%
Farm Ownership – Direct Loan	5.0%
Limited Resource Loan	5.0%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher Loans	1.50%
Emergency Loan	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility Loan	2.625% to 3.75%

<b>Dates to Remember</b>	
<b>July 15</b>	<b>Crop/Acreage Reporting Deadline</b>
<b>July 29</b>	<b>Sign-Up for 2009 SURE Deadline</b>
<b>August 1</b>	<b>Last Day to file County Committee Nomination Forms</b>
<b>November 4</b>	<b>Ballots Mailed to Eligible Voters</b>
<b>December 5</b>	<b>Last Day to Return Ballots to USDA Service Center</b>

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