

February 2013



Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough County FSA Updates

DEAR PRODUCERS: Welcome to the new GovDelivery bulletins and updates service from your Name County FSA office. Note that you are welcome to request to receive bulletins from more than one state and/or county and can add or remove individual subscriptions at any time.

Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough County FSA Office

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

Phone: 603-223-6003
Fax: 603-223-6030
www.fsa.usda.gov/NH

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

County Executive Director:

Donna Juneau

Program Technicians:

Melinda Marston
Anne Helmers

County Committee Election Results

Congratulations to Robert Potter Jr. of Gilmanton Iron Works! Robert has been elected to his first term on the Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough County Committee. Robert had previously served on the Merrimack-Belknap COC. FSA appreciates all of the voters who took the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works because of your participation.

FSA County Committee meetings are scheduled on a quarterly basis in accordance with the federal government fiscal year. The 2013 fiscal year began on October 1, 2012 and extends through September 30, 2013.

The Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough Quarterly County Committee meeting schedule for the remainder of fiscal year 2013 is as follows:

- April 17, 2013 at 10 am
- June 19, 2013 at 10 am
- August 21, 2013 at 10 am

Additional meetings may be scheduled on an as needed basis. County Committee meetings are held in the USDA Conference Room 211 located at 10 Ferry Street, Concord. The public is always welcome to attend County Committee meetings.

NEW MICROLOAN PROGRAM

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

The program will operate similar to the Operating Loan program but will include reduced requirements for managerial experience and loan security,

County Committee Members: as well as reduced paperwork.

Martha Crete, Chair
Eric Tenney, Vice-Chair
William Hall Jr., Member
Robert Potter Jr., Member

The microloan program can be used for such expenses as annual crop inputs, marketing and distribution expenses, purchase of livestock and equipment, and minor farm improvements such as wells and coolers.

NH Farm Loan Officers:

Lorna Wakefield
Rebecca Davis
William Wilson

Eligible applicants may obtain a microloan for up to \$35,000. The repayment term may vary and will not exceed seven years. Annual operating loans are normally repaid within 12 months or when the agricultural commodities produced are sold. Interest rates will be the same as the regular Direct Operating Loan rates.

The Microloan program Fact Sheet [can be found here](#).

NH Farm Loan Program Technician:

Sandra Carter

NEW AGI FORM FOR 2013

Under the 2008 Farm Bill extension, all payment eligibility and payment limitation provisions were extended, including AGI limitations for the 2013 crop year, program year and fiscal year.

All rules and requirements effective for 2012 program payments and benefits are applicable to eligible recipients of 2013 program payment and benefits. This includes the requirements of actively engaged in farming, cash-rent tenant, substantive change, minor child, and spousal provisions. Payments will continue to be limited by direct attribution to person and legal entity. All average AGI limitations for commodity, price support, disaster assistance, and conservation programs are also continued for 2013 including the \$1 million average AGI limitation for 2013 direct payments.

The average AGI for 2013 payment eligibility purposes will be based on the average of AGI amounts for the 3-year period of 2009, 2010, and 2011. Producers will be required to complete a new AGI compliance certification and written consent for disclosure for 2013 using form CCC-933, which is a new form for 2013 only. The CCC-933 must be completed by the person or legal entity earning USDA benefits either directly or indirectly in the 2013 program. Producers who fail to provide the certification and consent must refund all applicable program payments received from FSA and NRCS.

Producers may obtain CCC-933 at their local USDA Service Center or online at www.fsa.usda.gov/cc933. Specific detail about AGI [may be found here](#).

EMERGENCY CONSERVATION PROGRAM – MERRIMACK COUNTY

The Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) provides emergency funding and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters. An ECP for storm damage to farms in Merrimack County associated with the July 4, 2012 severe storm event has been approved. Funding of \$40,000 has been made available, and all producers who signed up for ECP during the October 1 through October 30 sign up period may be eligible for this program.

DCP/ACRE 2013 SIGN-UP

The Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program (DCP) and the Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) Program are being offered for the 2013 crop year under the 2008 Farm Bill Extension.

DCP and ACRE sign-up for 2013 crops will begin on February 19, 2013. The DCP sign-up period will end on August 2, 2013 and ACRE sign-up will end on June 3, 2013.

The only program change from 2012 to 2013 is that all eligible participants in 2013 may choose to enroll in either DCP or ACRE for the 2013 crop year. This means that eligible producers who were enrolled in ACRE in 2012 may elect to enroll in DCP in 2013 or may re-enroll in ACRE in 2013 (and vice versa).

The ACRE program Fact Sheet [can be found here](#). The DCP Fact Sheet [can be found here](#).

MILC PROGRAM EXTENDED

As a result of the 2008 Farm Bill Extension, all Milk Income Loss Contracts are automatically extended to September 30, 2013. Eligible producers do not have to re-enroll in MILC.

MILC payments are triggered when the Boston Class I milk price falls below \$16.94 per hundredweight, after adjustment for the cost of dairy feed rations. MILC payments are calculated each month using the latest milk price and feed cost.

The payment rate for September 2012 is approximately \$0.59 per hundredweight. The payment rate for October 2012 marketings is approximately \$0.02 per hundredweight. The payment rate for November 2012 marketings is zero.

Before the October MILC payment can be issued, dairy farmers must complete a new Average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) form for 2013. The new form, CCC-933 Average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) Certification and Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information, must be completed by producers before they can receive payments for a variety of programs administered by FSA and USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. Producers may obtain CCC-933 at their local USDA Service Center or online at www.fsa.usda.gov/ccc933. Specific detail about AGI [may be found here](#).

Dairy operations may select a production start month other than October 2012. Producers who want to select a production start month other than October 2012 must visit their local FSA office between Feb. 1 and Feb. 28, 2013, also known as a relief period.

FSA will provide producers with information on program requirements, updates and signups as the information becomes available. For more information on MILC, contact a local FSA county office or visit the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov.

HISPANIC AND WOMEN FARMER AND RANCHER CLAIMS

USDA has announced that Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA in past decades can file claims between Sept. 24, 2012 and March 25, 2013.

The process offers a voluntary alternative to litigation for each Hispanic or female farmer and rancher who can prove that USDA denied their applications for loan or loan servicing assistance for discriminatory reasons for certain time periods between 1981 and 2000.

As announced in February 2011, the voluntary claims process will make available at least \$1.33 billion for cash

awards and tax relief payments, plus up to \$160 million in farm debt relief, to eligible Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers. There are no filing fees to participate in the program.

The department will continue reaching out to potential Hispanic and female claimants, around the country to get the word out to individuals who may be eligible for this program so they have the opportunity to participate.

Call center representatives can be reached at 1-888-508-4429. Claimants must register for a claims package (by calling the number or visiting the website) and the claims package will be mailed to claimants. All those interested in learning more or receiving information about the claims process and claims packages are encouraged to attend meetings in their communities about the claims process and contact the website or claims telephone number.

Website: www.farmerclaims.gov

Phone: 1-888-508-4429

Claims Period: Sept. 24, 2012 - March 25, 2013.

Independent legal services companies will administer the claims process and adjudicate the claims. Although there are no filing fees to participate and a lawyer is not required to participate in the claims process, people seeking legal advice may contact a lawyer or other legal services provider.

To read Secretary Tom Vilsack's news release click on the following link:

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2012/09/0309.xml&contentidonly=true>

NONINSURED CROP DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (NAP)

The noninsured crop disaster assistance program (NAP) is a federally funded program that helps producers reduce their risk when growing food and fiber crops, specialty crops and crops for livestock feed. These benefits are only available for crops for which the catastrophic level of crop insurance is not available. Application for coverage must be filed by the applicable crop's application closing date.

Production records for all crops must be reported to FSA no later than the acreage reporting date for the crop for the following year. FSA requires that any production reported in a loss year be verifiable according to Agency specifications. NAP Losses must be reported within 15 days of the date the loss became apparent.

All applications for NAP payment must be signed by the subsequent crop year's acreage reporting date in order to be considered timely. There are no late-file provisions for NAP applications for payment.

The following crops have a NAP application closing date of March 15, 2013:

Annual crops (spring seeded) – beans, beets, broccoli, cabbage, cantaloupe, carrots, corn*, fresh market sweet corn*, cucumbers, greens (spinach), lettuce, peas, peppers, potatoes, pumpkins, spring forage seeding**, squash, tomatoes, watermelon.

*If a crop is insurable through USDA RMA, NAP is not available.

**First year seedings for alfalfa/alfalfa mixtures are insurable through USDA RMA in Merrimack County.

**First year seedings are not insurable through NAP.

Dates to Remember:

Feb 15 - Crop Reporting Deadline for Maple Sap

Feb 18 - Washington's Birthday, Federal Offices Closed
March 25 - Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers claims deadline March 25, 2013.

Selected Interest Rates for

February 2013:

Farm Operating Loans (including Microloans) — Direct 1.125%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct 3.125%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher 1.50%
Emergency Loans -- 2.125%
Farm Storage Facility Loans -- (7 years) 1.25%

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If you have questions about FSA activities, please view our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page or you may also [Search](#) our web site. These features are designed to assist you in obtaining the information you are seeking.

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