

June 2013



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Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough County FSA Updates

June 2013

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
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603-223-6003

Program Technicians:
Melinda Marston
melinda.marston@nh.usda.gov

Anne Helmers
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County Committee Members:
Martha Crete, Chair
Eric Tenney, Vice-Chair
William Hall Jr., Member
Robert Potter Jr., Member

FSA County Committee Nominations: LAA 2 and LAA 4

County Committee (COC) nominations will be taking place for two Local Administrative Areas: LAA 2 and LAA 4. Towns within LAA 2 include: Andover, Boscawen, Bradford, Danbury, Dunbarton, Franklin, Henniker, Hill, Hopkinton, Newbury, New London, Salisbury, Sutton, Tilton, Warner, Webster, and Wilmot. Towns included in LAA 4 are: Antrim, Bennington, Deering, Frankestown, Greenfield, Goffstown, Hancock, Hillsborough, Manchester, Mont Vernon, New Boston, Weare, and Windsor.

The COC nomination period runs from June 17, 2013 through Aug. 1, 2013. Nomination forms for the 2013 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on Aug. 1, 2013. LAA Maps and County Committee Nomination forms are available at the Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough County Office or nomination forms can be accessed in Spanish or English versions on the internet through the following web links:

- o For English:
http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/fsa0669a_english_form.pdf
- o For Spanish:
http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/fsa0669a_es_130405v01.pdf

The election of agricultural producers to 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 (USDA).

County committee members are a critical component of the operations of FSA. They help deliver FSA farm programs at the local level. Farmers and ranchers who serve on county committees help with the decisions necessary

Jane Presby, Member

NH Acting Farm Loan Manager:

Brian Kuper

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Phone: 603-223-6003

NH Farm Loan Officers:

Lorna Wakefield

Rebecca Davis

William Wilson

NH Farm Loan Program Technician:

Sandra Carter

to administer the programs in their counties. They work to ensure FSA agricultural programs serve the needs of local producers. 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.

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

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 at the office that administers a producer's farm records.

For more information on county committee elections, visit <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections> on the web or contact your local FSA office.

Disaster Assistance Programs Available

The Farm Service Agency would like to remind both crop and livestock producers and owners of nonindustrial private forest land that programs are available to assist with disaster related recovery. If your agricultural operation or nonindustrial private forest land has recently experienced severe damage from a storm, flooding, wind, or other natural disaster there may be a FSA program available to provide you with financial and/or technical assistance.

The key disaster programs include the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), the Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP), and the Noninsured Disaster Assistance Program (NAP).

ECP provides emergency funding and technical assistance to farmers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters. EFRP provides funding to restore forestland damaged by natural disaster. NAP provides financial assistance for crop losses due to natural disaster.

Fact sheets for all of these programs can be found at www.fsa.usda.gov; click on Newsroom, then Fact Sheets.

We encourage all who have suffered a disaster due to any recent severe

weather conditions to contact the FSA county office at 223-6003 or via e-mail at: MBHCOUNTYFSA@nh.usda.gov.

Payment Limitations

All payment eligibility and payment limitation provisions, including AGI limitations, are extended 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.

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,
- 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 online at www.fsa.usda.gov.

Reminder of Acreage Reporting Deadlines for New Hampshire Producers

Acreage reports are required for many Farm Service Agency programs. After spring planting, producers should certify their 2013 acreage. Filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs.

The New Hampshire Farm Service Agency would like to remind producers of the new acreage reporting deadlines. New deadlines became effective July 1, 2012 and are as follows:

January 2 - Honey

January 15 - Apples, Peaches, Nectarines

February 15 - Maple Sap

May 31 - Ornamental Nursery

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

November 15 - Perennial Forage, Fall Forage Seeding, Fall-Seeded Small Grains

For more information on acreage reporting and acreage reporting deadlines contact your local FSA Office. To find an FSA County Office or the USDA Service Center closest to you, click on the State Office link on the NH FSA website, www.fsa.usda.gov/nh, to access the county office locator.

Contacting Your Local FSA Office

The Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough County Farm Service Agency can be contacted by voice mail or email, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you have need to contact the FSA outside of regular office hours, please call 603-223-6003 and leave a message with your name and phone contact information or email our office at MBHCOUNTYFSA@nh.usda.gov. A representative of FSA will contact you as soon as possible during the next regular business hours.

Sodbusting

Farmers and ranchers should be aware that if they use highly erodible land for crop production without proper conservation measures, they risk losing eligibility to participate in Farm Service Agency programs.

Before producers clear, plow or otherwise prepare areas not presently under crop production for planting, they are required to file an AD-1026, indicating the area to be brought into production.

If Natural Resources Conservation Service indicates that the area will be highly erodible land, the producer will be required to develop and implement a conservation plan on the affected acreage before bringing land into production.

Farm Reconstitutions

For FSA program purposes, tracts having the same owner and the same operator are grouped under one farm serial number. When changes in ownership or operation take place, a farm reconstitution is necessary. The reconstitution—or recon—is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation. Remember, to be effective for the current year, recons must be requested by Aug. 1 for farms enrolled in specific programs.

The following are the different methods used when doing a farm recon:

Estate Method — The division of bases, allotments and quotas for a parent farm among heirs in settling an estate

Designation of Landowner Method — May be used when (1) part of a farm is sold or ownership is transferred; (2) an entire farm is sold to two or more persons; (3) farm ownership is transferred to two or more persons; (4) part of a tract is sold or ownership is transferred; (5) a tract is sold to two or more persons; or (6) tract ownership is transferred to two or more persons. In order to use this method the land sold must have been owned for at least three years, or a waiver granted, and the buyer and seller must sign a Memorandum of Understanding

DCP Cropland Method — The division of bases in the same proportion that the DCP cropland for each resulting tract relates to the DCP cropland on the parent tract

Default Method — The division of bases for a parent farm with each tract maintaining the bases attributed to the tract level when the reconstitution is initiated in the system.

FSA Signature Policy

Husbands and wives may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and Commodity Credit Corporation programs in which either has an interest. This option is automatically available unless a written request for exclusion is made to the county office staff by either spouse.

There are exceptions to the rule, where spouses may not sign on behalf of each other for partnerships, joint

ventures, corporations or other similar entities.

Individual signatures are also required on certain Farm Loan Program and Farm Storage Facility Loan documents.

For more clarification on spousal signature authority, feel free to contact your local FSA office.

Special Accommodations

Reasonable accommodations will be made, upon request, for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment, or hearing impairment to attend or participate in meetings or events sponsored by the Farm Service Agency. If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in one of our events, please call the FSA county office and we will be happy to make any needed arrangements.

Selected Interest Rates for June 2013:

Farm Operating Loans (including microloans) - Direct 1.25%

Farm Ownership Loans - Direct 3.375%

Emergency Loans - 2.25%

Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years) - 1.25%

Dates to Remember:

June 14 - CRP Sign-up deadline

June 17 - COC nomination period opens

July 15 - Acreage Reporting Deadline for corn, fresh market sweet corn, spring forage seeding, other crops (excluding apples, peaches, nectarines, fall seeded and perennial forage)- see listing in article above

August 1 - COC nomination period closes

August 2 - DCP sign-up deadline

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).