

September 2013



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Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough County FSA Updates

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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
donna.juneau@nh.usda.gov

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.

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.

Elections will be held to fill County Committee positions in Local Administrative Area (LAA) 2 and 4. LAA-2 includes the towns of: Andover, Boscawen, Bradford, Danbury, Dunbarton, Franklin, Henniker, Hill, Hopkinton, Newbury, New London, Salisbury, Sutton, Tilton, Warner, Webster and Wilmont. LAA-4 includes the towns of: Antrim, Bennington,

603-223-6003

Deering, Frankestown, Greenfield, Goffstown, Hancock, Hillsborough, Manchester, Mont Vernon, New Boston, Weare and Windsor.

Program Technicians:

Melinda Marston
melinda.marston@nh.usda.gov

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

Anne Helmers
anne.helmers@nh.usda.gov

NH Acting Farm Loan Manager:

Brian Kuper
brian.kuper@vt.usda.gov
603-223-6003

NH Farm Loan Officers:

Lorna Wakefield
Rebecca Davis
William Wilson

NH Farm Loan Program Technician:

Sandra Carter

County Committee Members:

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

Next County Committee Meeting:

September 20, 2013
at 10:00 AM - USDA
Conference
Room 211

Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Deadlines

The Non-Insured 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. Benefits are only available for crops for which the catastrophic level of crop insurance is not available. NAP is a voluntary program that reduces risk of financial loss when natural disasters cause losses or prevented planting of an eligible crop or agricultural commodity. An eligible natural disaster may include:

- Damaging weather, such as drought, freeze, hail, excessive moisture, excessive wind or hurricanes;
- An adverse natural occurrence, such as: earthquake or flood;
- A condition related to damaging weather or an adverse natural occurrence, such as: excessive heat, plant disease, insect infestation; or
- Any combination of these conditions.

The natural disaster must occur during the coverage period, before or during harvest and must directly affect the eligible crop.

To participate in NAP producers pay an annual service fee of \$250 per crop per county or a maximum of \$750 per producer per county per crop year. The fee for multi-county producers cannot exceed \$1875 per crop year. Limited resource producers may request a waiver of service fees. Eligibility for NAP coverage is based on a proven history of crop production or on an expected yield for the county. Each unit has an actual production history (APH). A loss greater than 50 percent of the established APH will be covered. Payments are made at 55% of the average market price for the crop. The average market price is set by the NH State FSA Committee.

NAP application closing dates are:

September 1 – Fall Seeded Garlic, Ornamental Nursery, Christmas Trees, Floriculture

September 30 – All Forage Crops

November 20 – Perennial Crops (including blueberries, strawberries, cherries, etc.)

December 1 – Maple Sap and Honey

March 15 – Annual Spring Seeded Crops

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 a Notice of Loss 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 (Notice of Loss) 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.

Crop Acreage Reporting

Thank you to all of our producers for your cooperation during the 2013 Crop Acreage Reporting period! There were new Crop Acreage Reporting Deadlines effective July 1, 2012 for all 2013 Crop Reporting, which was a big change for 2013. In addition, the federal budget crunch has also continued to significantly impact our ability to make farm visits. We appreciate the efforts made by all of our producers to report your crop acreage by visiting the office and/or corresponding with the office via phone, fax, and e-mail.

Moving forward - 2014 Crop Acreage Reporting will begin soon. The deadline for report 2014 perennial forage, fall forage seeding and fall-seeded small grains is November 15, 2013. Please contact the office to report crop acreage for these 2014 crops.

Acreage reports are required for many of our Farm Service Agency programs. 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 has established the following acreage reporting deadlines for the 2014 Crop Year:

November 15, 2013 – Perennial Forage, Fall Forage Seeding, Fall-Seeded Small Grains

January 2, 2014 – Honey

January 15, 2014 - Apples, Peaches, Nectarines

February 15, 2014 - Maple Sap

May 31, 2014 – Ornamental Nursery

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

For more information on crop acreage reporting and acreage reporting deadlines contact the FSA Office. You can contact the Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough County FSA Office 24 hours a day by sending us a fax, an e-mail, or leaving a voice mail message. Our office phone number is 223-6003; our fax number is 223-6030; and our office e-mail is MBHCOUNTYFSA@nh.usda.gov

Direct & Counter-Cyclical Payment Program (DCP)

Signup for the Direct and Countercyclical Payment Program (DCP) occurs annually with a June 1 deadline. FSA computes DCP payments using base acres and payment yields established for each farm. Eligible producers receive direct payments at rates established by statute regardless of market prices. 2013 DCP payments are being processed and payments will be made in October using Direct Deposit. The description on your bank statement associated with the Direct Deposit will be: "FSATreas310"

AFIDA

Any foreign person who acquires transfers or holds any interest, other than a security interest, in agricultural land in the United States is required by law to report the transaction no later than 90 days after the date of the transaction. They must file Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) reports with the FSA county office that maintains reports for the county where the land is located.

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.

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>.

Guaranteed Loan Program

FSA guaranteed loans provide lenders (e.g., banks, Farm Credit System institutions, credit unions) with a guarantee of up to 95 percent of the loss of principal and interest on a loan. Farmers and ranchers apply to an agricultural lender, which then arranges for the guarantee. The FSA guarantee permits lenders to make agricultural credit available to farmers who do not meet the lender's normal underwriting criteria.

FSA guaranteed loans are for both Farm Ownership and Operating purposes. Like the Direct Loan Program, a percentage of Guaranteed Loan funds are targeted to beginning farmers and ranchers and minority applicants.

The Farm Service Agency loan limit for the Guaranteed Loan Program's new guaranteed loan limit for fiscal year 2014, effective October 1, 2013 will increase to \$1,355,000. The limit is adjusted annually based on data compiled by the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

The lending limit increases every year according to an inflation index. The maximum combined guaranteed and direct farm loan indebtedness has increased to \$1,602,000.

As a reminder, the one-time loan origination fee charged on FSA guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans is 1.5 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan.

Producers should contact their local FSA County Offices or the NH Farm Loan Team with questions about farm loans. The Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough County Office is co-located with the NH Farm Loan Team. If you have questions about the FSA's Farm Loan Programs, please stop by the office or call for more information at 223-6003.

Succession in Interest

If you have made any changes that affect your interest in base acres since you signed your last Direct and Counter-cyclical Program contract, you must report these successions-in-interest to the county committee by Sept. 30, so that a final determination can be made on who is eligible for the program on the farm.

Changes that qualify as a succession-in-interest include:

- ♣ A sale of land
- ♣ A change of operator or producer, including a an increase or decrease in the number of partners
- ♣ A foreclosure, bankruptcy or involuntary loss of the farm.
- ♣ A change in producer shares to reflect changes in the producer's share of the crop(s) that were originally approved on the contract.

If a succession-in-interest has taken place, you, as the "predecessor," are required to refund any advance DCP payments you received for the affected base acres before a payment can be made to the "successor."

Not reporting a succession-in-interest can result in contract termination and a loss of program benefits for all producers involved.

Disaster Assistance

The Farm Service Agency would like to remind crop and livestock producers that have recently experienced severe damage from flooding, wildfires and tornadoes that FSA programs exist to aid producers.

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

Fact sheets for all of these programs can be found at the disaster assistance program page <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=diap&topic=landing>.

Selected Interest Rates for September 2013:

Farm Operating Loans (including microloans)-Direct 1.875%

Farm Ownership Loans- Direct 4.00%

Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher 1.50 %

Emergency Loans- 2.875%

Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years)- 2.00%

Dates to Remember:

September 20, 2013 - County Committee Meeting (10:00 am in USDA Conference Room 211)

September 30, 2013 - NAP Sign Up Deadline for Forage Crops

Oct. 14, 2013 - Columbus Day (Office Closed)

Nov. 4, 2013 - Ballots for County Committee Election mailed to Producers

November 11, 2013 - Veterans Day (Office Closed)

November 15, 2013 - Crop Acreage Reporting Deadline for perennial forage, fall forage seeding, fall-seeded small grains

Nov. 20, 2013 - NAP Sign Up Deadline for Perennial Crops

Dec. 1, 2013 - NAP Sign Up Deadline for Honey and Maple Sap

Dec. 2, 2013 - Last day to return voted ballots to the USDA Service Center

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).