

May 2014



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Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough County FSA Updates

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
603-223-6003

GOVDELIVERY CUSTOMERS ARE NOT IMPACTED BY THE HEARTBLEED BUG

GovDelivery customer subscriptions are not affected by the heartbleed bug.

This bug has caused major security concerns among users of cloud technology. The Heartbleed bug refers to a flaw in an encryption tool used on the Internet that can expose data that is meant to be hidden.

Your GovDelivery account and information is safe. Nothing in the GovDelivery network architecture is affected by this bug.

You can find out more about the Heartbleed bug at <http://heartbleed.com/>

2014 ACREAGE REPORTING DATES

Program Technicians:

Melinda Marston

melinda.marston@nh.usda.gov

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit the Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough County FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline.

Anne Helmers

anne.helmerts@nh.usda.gov

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for Merrimack, Belknap and Hillsborough Counties for 2014 Crops:

NH Acting Farm Loan Manager:

Brian Kuper

brian.kuper@vt.usda.gov

603-223-6003

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

NH Farm Loan Officers:

Lorna Wakefield

Rebecca Davis

William Wilson

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

NH Farm Loan Program

Technician:

Sandra Carter

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.

County Committee Members:

Martha Crete, Chair

Robert Potter Jr., Vice-Chair

William Hall Jr., Member

Eric Tenney, Member

Jane Presby, Member

- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, 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.

Next County Committee

Meeting: June 17, 2014

at 7 pm - USDA Conference

Room 211

- 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.

A late file fee will not be assessed for any 2014 crops with a final reporting date on or after October 1, 2013. The late file fee will be waived until December 31, 2014.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please 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

USDA FARM SERVICE AGENCY ANNOUNCES TREE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP) SIGN-UP

As of Tuesday, April 15, 2014, orchardists and nursery tree growers who experienced losses from natural disasters that occurred on or after Oct. 1, 2011, can sign up for the Tree Assistance Program (TAP). TAP was authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014 as a permanent disaster program. TAP provides financial assistance

to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters.

Eligible tree types include trees, bushes or vines that produce an annual crop for commercial purposes. Nursery trees include ornamental, fruit, nut and Christmas trees that are produced for commercial sale. Trees used for pulp or timber are ineligible.

To qualify for TAP, orchardists must suffer a qualifying tree, bush or vine loss in excess of 15 percent mortality from an eligible natural disaster. The eligible trees, bushes or vines must have been owned when the natural disaster occurred; however, eligible growers are not required to own the land on which the eligible trees, bushes and vines were planted.

If the TAP application is approved, the eligible trees, bushes and vines must be replaced within 12 months from the date the application is approved. The cumulative total quantity of acres planted to trees, bushes or vines, for which a producer can receive TAP payments, cannot exceed 500 acres annually.

LIVESTOCK DISASTER ASSISTANCE SIGN-UP UNDERWAY

Livestock disaster program enrollment opened on April 15, 2014. These disaster programs are authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill as permanent programs and provide retroactive authority to cover losses that occurred on or after Oct. 1, 2011.

To expedite applications, all producers who experienced losses are encouraged to bring records documenting those losses to their local FSA Office. Producers should record all pertinent information of natural disaster consequences, including:

- Documentation of the number and kind of livestock that have died, supplemented if possible by photographs or video records of ownership and losses
- Dates of death supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts
- Costs of transporting livestock to safer grounds or to move animals to new pastures
- Feed purchases if supplies or grazing pastures are destroyed
- Crop records, including seed and fertilizer purchases, planting and production records

Eligible producers can sign-up for the following livestock disaster assistance programs:

Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP):

- LIP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that have suffered livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law. Producers who suffered livestock death losses should submit a notice of loss and an application for payment to their local FSA office by January 30, 2015.

Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP):

- ELAP provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish that have losses due to disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires. ELAP assistance is provided for losses not covered by LFP and LIP. Producers who suffered eligible livestock, honeybee or farm-raised fish losses during 2012 and 2013 program years must submit a notice of loss and application for payment to their local FSA office by August 1, 2014. For 2014 program year losses, the notice of loss and an application for payment must be submitted by November 1, 2014.

For more information, producers can review the LFP, LIP and ELAP Fact Sheets on the [Farm Bill webpage](#). Producers are encouraged to make an appointment with their local FSA office to apply for these programs.

SUPPLEMENTAL REVENUE ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS PROGRAM SIGN-UP PERIOD FOR 2012 CROP LOSSES BEGINS

Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced that sign-up begins May 5, 2014 for 2012 crop losses under the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments (SURE) program. The program, established by the 2008 Farm Bill, provides for one final period of eligibility for producers suffering crop losses caused by natural disasters occurring through Sept. 30, 2011, for crops intended for 2012 harvest.

To be eligible for SURE, a farm or ranch must have:

- At least a 10 percent production loss on a crop of economic significance resulting from a disaster occurring on or before Sept. 30, 2011. A crop of economic significance contributes at least five percent of the expected revenue for a producer's farm. Additionally, the crop must also meet the following eligibility criteria:
- The crop must be considered a 2012 crop which means, in general, that the crop was intended for harvest in 2012;
- For insured crops, the coverage period must have begun on or before Sept. 30, 2011;
- For crops covered by the Non-Insured Crop Assistance Program, the coverage period must have begun on or before Sept. 30, 2011;
- The final planting date, according to the specific coverage for the crop, must have been on or before Sept. 30, 2011.

Note: A producer who only plants fall seeded or spring seeded crops with a final planting date on Oct. 1, 2011 or later) cannot meet the above eligibility criteria and will not be eligible for the 2012 SURE program.

- A policy or plan of insurance under the Federal Crop Insurance Act or the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program for all economically significant crops;
- Been physically located in a county that was declared a primary disaster county or contiguous county by the Secretary of Agriculture under a Secretarial Disaster Designation. Without a Secretarial Disaster Designation, individual producers may be eligible if the actual production on the farm is less than 50 percent of the normal production on the farm due to a natural disaster. A "farm" for SURE purposes means the entirety of all crop acreage in all counties that a producer planted or intended to be planted for harvest for normal commercial sale or on-farm livestock feeding, including native and improved grassland intended for haying.

Producers considered socially disadvantaged, a beginning farmer or rancher, or a limited resource farmer may be eligible for SURE without a policy or plan of insurance or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program coverage.

Farmers and ranchers interested in signing up must do so before the Aug. 29, 2014 deadline.

For more information on the 2012 SURE program, visit any USDA Service Center or online at www.fsa.usda.gov/sure.

HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND AND WETLAND COMPLIANCE

Landowners and operators are reminded that in order to receive payments from USDA, they must be compliant

with Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions. Farmers with HEL determined soils must apply tillage, crop residue and rotation requirements as specified in their conservation plan.

Producers should notify FSA prior to conducting land clearing or drainage projects to ensure compliance. If you intend to clear any trees to create new cropland, these areas will need to be reviewed to ensure any work will not jeopardize your eligibility for benefits.

Landowners and operators can complete form AD-1026 Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification to determine whether a referral to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is necessary.

For more information on Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation provisions, contact a FSA County Office or visit the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov.

COUNTY COMMITTEE (COC) ELECTIONS LAA 3 & LAA 5: NOMINATIONS OPEN JUNE 15, 2014

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 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 are elected to a three year term. They apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions.

The COC nomination period runs from June 15, 2014 through August 1, 2014. 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. 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 www.fsa.usda.gov/elections.

This year, COC elections will be taking place for two Local Administrative Areas: LAA 3 and LAA 5. Towns within LAA 3 include: Allenstown, Belmont, Bow, Canterbury, Chichester, Concord, Epsom, Hooksett, Loudon, Northfield, Pembroke, Pittsfield. Towns included in LAA 5 are: Amherst, Bedford, Brookline, Greenville, Hollis, Hudson, Litchfield, Lyndeborough, Mason, Merrimack, Milford, Nashua, New Ipswich, Pelham, Peterborough, Sharon, Temple, Wilton.

For more information contact your local FSA office.

2014 FARM BILL MODIFICATIONS TO MICROLOANS FOR VETERANS

Microloans are direct farm operating loans with a shortened application process and reduced paperwork designed to meet the needs of smaller, non-traditional, and niche type operations. Apprentice and mentorship programs, non-farm business experience, and farm labor experience are acceptable alternative solutions for helping to meet farm experience and managerial requirements. Operating loans may be used to purchase items such as: livestock and feed; farm equipment; fuel, farm chemicals, insurance and other operating costs, including family living expenses; minor improvements or repairs to buildings; and to refinance certain farm-

related debts, excluding real estate. Operating loan funds cannot be used to finance nonfarm enterprises, including earthworms, exotic birds, tropical fish, dogs or horses used for non-farm purposes (racing, pleasure, show and boarding).

There is no minimum loan amount. The maximum loan amount for a Microloan is \$35,000. The maximum loan amount for a Direct Farm Operating Loan is \$300,000. There is no down payment requirement.

Microloans made to military **veterans** and to beginning farmers or ranchers are exempt from direct term limits. A limited resource rate is available to beginning farmers and to military **veterans** who receive a Microloan. Borrowers will be given a choice to accept the limited resource rate or a regular operating loan rate.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

April 15, 2014 - Sign-up period opens for LIP, LFP, ELAP, and TAP disaster programs

May 5, 2012 - SURE sign-up begins (for 2012 crop losses)

May 20, 2014 - COC meeting at 7 pm in the USDA Conference Room 211

May 26, 2014 - Memorial Day Federal Holiday (Office Closed)

May 31, 2014 - Acreage Reporting deadline for ornamental nursery

June 15, 2014 - Nomination Period opens for COC Elections in LAA 3 & LAA 5

June 17, 2014 - COC meeting at 7 pm in the USDA Conference Room 211

July 15, 2014 - Acreage Reporting deadline for Corn, Fresh Market Sweet Corn, Spring Forage Seeding, Other Crops* (see article)

SELECTED INTEREST RATES FOR MAY 2014:

Farm Operating Loans (including microloans) - Direct 2.125%

Farm Ownership Loans - Direct 4.00%

Farm Ownership- Direct, Joint Financing - 2.50%

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

Emergency Loan - 3.125%

Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years) - 2.25%

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).