

April 2013



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Rockingham-Strafford 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.

Rockingham-Strafford County FSA Office

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Judith Merrill, Vice-Chair
Mary Current, Member
Wayne Elwood, Member
Glenn Pierce, Member

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The Concord Center
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Suite 212, Box 212
Concord, NH 03301
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Fax: 603-223-6030

Website:
www.fsa.usda.gov

Microloans Are Cultivating Big Dreams on a Small Scale

Microloans are helping small, niche and beginning farmers and ranchers meet their goals. The less burdensome and more simplified loan process allows producers to apply for a maximum of \$35,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses, essential tools, irrigation, delivery vehicles and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing and distribution expenses. Producers interested in applying for a microloan should contact their FSA county office.

Land Contract (LC) Guarantees

The Land Contract (LC) Guarantee Program is a valuable tool to transfer farm real estate to the next generation of farmers and ranchers. Guarantees will be offered to the owner of a farm who wishes to sell real estate through a land contract to a beginning or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher. The guarantee reduces the financial risk to the seller.

FSA offers two types of guarantees:

* Prompt Payment Guarantee - A guarantee up to the amount of three amortized annual installments plus the cost of any related real estate taxes and insurance.

* Standard Guarantee - A guarantee of 90 percent of the outstanding principal balance under the land contract.

The guarantee period is 10 years and the contract payments must be amortized for a minimum of 20 years. The purchase price of the farm cannot exceed the lesser of \$500,000 or the market value of the property.

For additional information about the Land Contract Guarantee Program and other FSA loans you can read the Fact Sheet at http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/farm_loan_chart2013.pdf

Hispanic and Women Farmers and Ranchers Claims Process Extended

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has announced the extension of the voluntary claims process for Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA in past decades. All claims must now be filed by May 1, 2013.

USDA urges potential claimants to contact the Claims Administrator for information and mail their claim packages on or before May 1, 2013.

The process offers a voluntary alternative to litigation for each Hispanic or female farmer and rancher who can prove that USDA denied his or her application 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.

Claimants may register for a claims package by calling the telephone number below Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time or by downloading the forms from the website.

Website: www.farmerclaims.gov

Phone: 1-888-508-4429

Fax: (855) 626-8343

Email: claims@hwfr.org

Claims Period: September 24, 2012 – May 1, 2013.

Claim packages and other documentation may be mailed to Hispanic and Women Farmers and Ranchers Claims Administrator, PO Box 4540, Portland, OR 97208-4540. Claim packages and other documentation may also be emailed to claims@hwfr.org. Claimants may also fax claims packages and other documentation to (855) 626-8343. Completed forms and documentation must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. PDT on May 1, 2013.

Farm Record Changes

June 1, 2013 is the deadline to provide changes to your farm records at the local FSA office for the current crop year. If you are changing your operation entity type, adding or dropping cropland or farms, or adding entities to your operation, contact the FSA county office by June 1.

Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) Certification

USDA and the Internal Revenue Service have established an electronic information exchange process for verifying compliance with the adjusted gross income (AGI) provisions for farm programs. Written consent is required from each producer or payment recipient for the tax review process. No actual tax data will be included in the report that IRS sends to FSA.

This ensures that payments are not issued to producers whose AGI exceeds certain limits. The limits set in the 2008 Farm Bill are \$500,000 nonfarm average AGI for commodity and disaster programs; \$750,000 farm

average AGI for direct payments; and \$1 million nonfarm average AGI for conservation programs.

Participants in 2013 CCC programs subject to average AGI rules must submit form CCC-933 to their local FSA County Office to avoid interruption of program benefits. This form may be obtained from local FSA and NRCS offices or online at: <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eforms/mainervlet>.

Dates to Remember

May 1 - Hispanic and Women Farmers and Ranchers Claims Deadline
May 20 to June 14 - CRP Sign-up
May 27 - Memorial Day, Office Closed
June 3 - ACRE Sign-up Ends
June 7 - SURE Application Deadline for 2011 Losses
June 17 to August 1 - Nomination Period for County Committee Elections
July 4 - Independence Day, Office Closed
July 15 - Acreage Reports Due for Corn, Sweet Corn, Spring Forage Seedings and All Other Crops

Risk Management Agency (RMA) 2013 Apple Program Review

The Risk Management Agency (RMA), Eastern Regional Compliance Office (ERCO), is reviewing a number of insurance policies issued for fresh apple crops in multiple counties across New Hampshire and several other states, for the 2013 crop year. The purpose of the review is to ensure Approved Insurance Providers (AIP) are verifying fresh apple production history as a prerequisite for establishing fresh apple insurability in 2013.

The RMA's 2013 apple crop provisions require insureds to report and designate all acreage by type, and further stipulates: "if you designate fresh apple acreage on the acreage report, you are certifying at least 50 percent of the production from acreage reported as fresh apple acreage, by unit, was sold as fresh apples in one or more of the four most recent crop years in accordance with the definition of "fresh apple production" and that you have the records to support such production." The apple provisions also state "acreage with production not meeting all the requirements above must be designated on the acreage report as processing apple production."

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9450, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay).