

December 2013



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Rockingham-Strafford County FSA Updates

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Rockingham-Strafford County FSA Office

629 Calef Highway
Epping, NH 03042

Phone: 603-679-4656 x 2
Fax: 603-679-4658

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

County Executive Director:
Carol Sargent
carol.sargent@nh.usda.gov

County Committee:
Richard Babcock, Chair
Judith Merrill, Vice-Chair
Mary Current, Member
Wayne Elwood, Member
Glenn Pierce, Member

**Next County Committee
Meeting:** January 21,
2014 @12:30 p.m.

New County Committee Election Ballots to Be Mailed

The County Committee Election ballots that were mailed to producers on Nov. 4 were incorrectly printed with the producer's name and address on the back of the ballot. County committee elections must use a secret ballot so the misprinted ballots cannot be used. Please destroy or recycle the misprinted ballot. If you have already voted, your ballot will be destroyed unopened.

New ballots will be mailed to producers on December 20, 2013. These ballots will indicate that they are the corrected ballot in several places, including on the outside of the mailing, on the ballot and on the outside of the return envelope.

The corrected ballot must be returned to the Rockingham-Strafford County FSA Office or postmarked by January 17, 2014. All newly elected county committee members will take office February 18, 2014. All county committee members whose term expires on Dec. 31, 2013, will have their term extended to January 31, 2014.

County committee members are an important component of the operations of FSA and provide a link between the agricultural community and USDA. Farmers and ranchers elected to county committees help deliver FSA programs at the local level, applying their knowledge and judgment to make decisions on commodity price support programs; conservation programs;

to Confirm

Acting Farm Loan Manager:

Brian Kuper

Phone: 603-223-6003

brian.kuper@vt.usda.gov

Farm Loan Officers:

Rebecca Davis

Lorna Wakefield

William Wilson

Phone: 603-223-6003

incentive indemnity and disaster programs for some commodities; emergency programs and eligibility. FSA committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws.

To be an eligible voter, farmers and ranchers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm may also be eligible to vote.

The candidates in this year's election are Mary Current of Milton (LAA1) and Dan Hicks of Londonderry (LAA 4).

More information on county committees, such as the new 2013 fact sheet and brochures, can be found on the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov/elections or at a local USDA Service Center.

Farm Storage Facility Loan Program

The Farm Storage Facility Loan Program (FSFL) allows producers of eligible commodities to obtain low-interest financing to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities.

The maximum principal amount of a loan through an FSFL is \$500,000. Participants are required to provide a down payment of 15 percent, with CCC providing a loan for the remaining 85 percent of the net cost of the eligible storage facility and permanent drying and handling equipment. Additional security is required for poured-cement open-bunker silos, renewable biomass facilities, cold storage facilities, hay barns and for all loans exceeding \$50,000. Loan terms of 7, 10 or 12 years are available depending on the amount of the loan. Interest rates for each term rate may be different and are based on the rate which CCC borrows from the Treasury Department. The rate for December is 2.0% for a 7 year loan.

Partial disbursements in the amount of 50% of the projected loan amount are available when a portion of the construction has been completed. The final fund disbursement will be made when all construction is completed.

The following commodities are eligible for farm storage facility loans:

- Corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley or minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain
- Corn, grain sorghum, wheat, oats or barley harvested as other-than-whole grain
- Pulse crops - lentils, small chickpeas, dry beans and dry peas
- Hay
- Renewable biomass
- Fruits (including nuts) and vegetables - cold storage facilities
- Honey

For more information about the Farm Storage Facility Loan Program please visit the county office or www.fsa.usda.gov.

Acres Reporting Reminder

Producers now have until January 15, 2014, to report crops that have a November 15, 2013 (perennial forage, fall seeded small grains and forage) reporting deadline without paying a late-file fee.

In addition, producers are reminded of the following upcoming reporting dates:

Jan. 2, 2014 : Honey

Jan. 15, 2014: Apples, Peaches

Feb. 15, 2014: Maple Sap

If you haven't reported yet, please call the office and arrange to complete your reports.

FSA Advises Producers to Anticipate Payment Reductions Due to Mandated Sequestration

The Farm Service Agency is reminding farmers and ranchers who participate in FSA programs to plan accordingly in FY2014 for automatic spending reductions known as sequestration. The Budget Control Act of 2011 (BCA) mandates that federal agencies implement automatic, annual reductions to discretionary and mandatory spending limits. For mandatory programs, the sequestration rate for FY2014 is 7.2%. Accordingly, FSA is implementing sequestration for the following programs:

Dairy Indemnity Payment Program
Marketing Assistance Loans
Loan Deficiency Payments
Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program
2011 and 2012 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program

Conservation Reserve Program payments are specifically exempt by statute from sequestration, thus these payments will not be reduced.

These sequester percentages reflect current law estimates; however with the continuing budget uncertainty, Congress still may adjust the exact percentage reduction. Today's announcement intends to help producers plan for the impact of sequestration cuts in FY2014.

At this time, FSA is required to implement the sequester reductions. Due to the expiration of the Farm Bill on September 30, FSA does not have the flexibility to cover these payment reductions in the same manner as in FY13. FSA will provide notification as early as practicable on the specific payment reductions.

Rural Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency makes loans to rural youths to establish and operate income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5000.

Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

- Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien
- Be 10 years to 20 years of age
- Comply with FSA's general eligibility requirements
- Reside in a rural area, city or town with a population of 50,000 or fewer people
- Be unable to get a loan from other sources
- Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above
- Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the project and the loan, along with providing adequate supervision.

Controlled Substances

Program participants convicted under federal or state law of any planting, cultivating, growing, producing, harvesting or storing a controlled substance are ineligible for program payments and benefits.

If convicted, the program participant shall be ineligible during that crop year and the four succeeding crop years for Direct and Counter-Cyclical payments, price support loans, loan deficiency payments, market loan gains, storage payments, farm facility loans, Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program payments or disaster payments.

Program participants convicted of any federal or state offense consisting of the distribution (trafficking) of a controlled substance shall, at the discretion of the court, be ineligible for any or all program payments and benefits:

- For up to 5 years after the first conviction
- For up to 10 years after the second conviction
- Permanently for a third or subsequent conviction.

Program participants convicted of federal or state offense for the possession of a controlled substance shall be ineligible, at the discretion of the court, for any or all program benefits as follows:

- Up to one year upon the first conviction
- Up to five years after a second or subsequent conviction.

December Interest Rates

- Farm Operating Loans, Direct and Microloans 1.875%
- Farm Ownership Loans, Direct 4.125%
- Farm Ownership Loans, Direct, Joint Financing 5.00%
- Farm Ownership, Down Payment 1.50%
- Emergency Loans 2.875%
- Farm Storage Facility Loans, 7 year 2.00%

Dates to Remember

- Dec. 20 - Corrected COC Election Ballots to be Mailed
- Dec. 25 - Christmas Holiday: Office Closed
- Jan. 1 - New Year's Day Holiday: Office Closed
- Jan. 2 - Acreage reports Due for 2014 Honey
- Jan. 15 - Acreage Reports Due for 2014 Perennial Forage, Fall Seeded Forage, Small Grains
(Deadline Extension)
- Jan. 15 - Acreage Reports Due for 2014 Apples, Peaches
- Jan. 17 - Last Day to Return Corrected Ballots
- Jan. 20 - Birthday of Martin Luther King Holiday: Office Closed
- Jan. 21 - COC Meeting and Election

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).