



# Vance County Farm Service Agency Newsletter

June 7, 2010

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**USDA Service Center**  
Vance County FSA  
853 S. Beckford Dr., Suite B  
Henderson, NC 27536  
(252) 438-3134

### Office Hours

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

### County Committee

Thomas Shaw - Chairperson  
Dale Reese - Vice Chairperson  
Joel Harris - Regular Member  
Doris Norwood - Advisor  
Harold Thompson - Advisor

### Office Staff

Denise Hight, CED  
Lisa Furlow, PT  
Hattie Jordan, PT  
Melissa Seaman, PT  
Debbie Houston, FLM

### Reminders:

- COC Meeting: 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month at 8:30 a.m.
- June 30**-Crop reports due for all other crops & land uses
- July 5**-Office closed for Independence Day
- August 2**-Last day to receive COC nominations for LAA 3

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## County Committee Elections

Since COC elections happen only once a year, here is an election refresher. For election purposes, counties are divided into *local administrative areas*, or LAAs. Each LAA selects one producer to serve a three-year term on the Farm Service Agency county committee. Each year, an election is held in an LAA to replace the committee member whose three-year term is expiring. In counties with three LAAs, one seat is up for election. In combined counties in some years, two seats may be up for election.

### *Nominations*

Candidate nominations for the FSA county committee election will be accepted June 15 through August 2, 2010. Producers who are residents in the LAA holding the election and who participate or cooperate in an FSA program and are of legal voting age may be nominated to serve on the county committee. Individuals may nominate themselves or others as candidates. Also, organizations representing socially disadvantaged minorities and women farmers or ranchers may also nominate candidates. The nomination form, FSA-669A, is available at the Vance County office or may be downloaded from <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=newsroom&subject=landing&topic=cce>.

To be valid, the nomination form must be signed by the person being nominated, indicating agreement to serve if elected. The completed nomination form must be returned to the Vance County office by the close of business on August 2, or postmarked by midnight August 2, 2010. LAA 3, which consists of Middleburg and Sandy Creek Townships, will hold the election this year.

### *Voting*

Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters beginning November 5, and must be returned to the Vance County office by the close of business on December 6, or postmarked by midnight December 6, 2010.

Agricultural producers of legal voting age can vote if they participate or cooperate in any FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the farming operations on an entire farm can also vote. No one can be denied the right to vote because of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or family status.

### *Candidate Eligibility*

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 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.

For additional clarification about county committee elections, contact the Vance County FSA office. Included in this newsletter is a FSA-669A, "Nomination Form for County FSA Committee Election."

## Crop Reporting

The annual requirement of reporting to the FSA office can be referred to as crop reporting, acreage reporting, or crop certification. Filing an accurate and timely report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of benefits for a variety of Farm Service Agency programs. All cropland on the farm must be reported to receive benefits from the Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, marketing assistance loans and Loan Deficiency Payments. The certification form FSA-578, Report of Acreage, must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. The producer certification deadline for all crops, with the exception of small grains, is **June 30**.

### **CRP & NAP Certification**

Conservation Reserve Program acreage must be reported to receive annual rental payments. And, crop acreage for Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) must also be reported.

### **Prevented Planting:**

Prevented planting is to be reported no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date.

### **Failed Acreage:**

Reports of failed acreage must be filed before disposition of the crop, and producers must be able to establish to the satisfaction of the county committee that the crop failed and was prevented from being replanted through the normal planting period because of natural disaster conditions.

## Double-Cropping Practices

FSA determines double crop combinations by county and all producers in the county are eligible for double cropping consideration if that combination is followed. Crop insurance may determine a double crop combination by county; however, insurance may not be available to a producer if a producer does not have history of double-cropping. The crops approved for double-cropping by FSA in Vance County are soybeans or grain sorghum planted behind either wheat, barley, or oats.

## Emergency Loans Available

On March 18, 2010, Secretary Vilsack declared 13 counties a natural disaster in the State of North Carolina based on losses caused by excessive rain and flooding that occurred from November 1, 2009 through December 31, 2009. Vance County was named as a contiguous county where eligible family farmers may qualify for FSA EM loan assistance in accordance with Section 321 (a) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act. The deadline to complete an EM application is November 18, 2010. For further information, please contact David Bonnett, Farm Loan Officer, at 919-693-7345 or the Vance County FSA Office at 252-438-3134.

**Production Losses:** Eligible farmers can use emergency loan funds to recover a portion of losses on growing crops that were destroyed due to the declared disaster. Production must have been reduced by at least 30 percent of normal and be unable to get credit from their normal source of credit.

## Controlled Substance

Any person who is convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting, or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium, poppies, and other drug producing plants.

## FCIC/RMA Program Spot-Checks

The Vance County Farm Service Agency continues to assist the Risk Management Agency (RMA) with crop inspections for FY 2010. Farm Service Agency representatives will make required spot-checks and report any fraud, waste, and abuse of the Federal Crop Insurance Program (FCIC) to the Risk Management Agency. USDA has a hotline to report suspected cases of crop insurance fraud: 1-800-424-9121 or contact your local Farm Service Agency Office.

## Maintaining CRP Cover

CRP cover maintenance is the participant's responsibility and must be done according to the conservation plan. All CRP maintenance activity, such as mowing, burning, disking, and spraying, must be conducted outside the primary nesting season for wildlife and in accordance with the conservation plan. Spot treatment of the acreage may be allowed during the primary nesting season if certain criteria are met. The primary nesting period in Vance County is April 15 through September 15.

CRP participants with expiring contract acres in the final year of the CRP-1, who intend to destroy cover for preparation for spring or fall-seeded crops, need pre-authorization from FSA to avoid penalty. Authorization can only be granted after a completed CRP-1G, Modification to Allow Early Land Preparation, is reviewed and approved by the County Committee.

## Transition Incentives Program

Retired or retiring landowners who are willing to sell or lease, for at least five years, their expired Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres to beginning or socially disadvantaged (SDA) farmers may receive two additional annual payments with the Transition Incentives Program (TIP). The transition may not be a family member of the landowner. The beginning or SDA farmer must return the expired CRP acreage to sustainable grazing or crop production. Contracts that will expire on September 30, 2010 are eligible. For this year only, contracts that expired on September 30, 2008 and September 30, 2009 may also be eligible if all program requirements are met. Signup began May 17<sup>th</sup>. Please contact the Vance County Farm Service Agency at 252-438-3134, Ext. 2 for more details.

Visit FSA online at  
[www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)