



South Carolina State FSA Newsletter



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W. Riley Odum,

Acting State Executive Director's Comments

It is an honor to serve as acting State Executive Director during this interim period and serve with such dedicated FSA employees as we have in South Carolina. Working nearly thirty years now, I am very proud to be associated with a team of men and women who are dedicated to serving South Carolina farmers. The FSA team dedicates themselves to helping South Carolina farmers provide food, fiber, fuel and at the same time conserve our natural resources. The American farmer is the best and most efficient producer in the world. Yet with economic down turns, market fluctuations, high energy costs, and constant weather related issues, the American farmer faces more risk for each dollar of investment than any other industry. On top of all this; every American is dependent on the farmer's return to sustain our standard of living. The production made by South Carolina farmers affects each one of us. The following programs are how the FSA team helps with risks taken by so few for the benefit of so many. During the 2008 fiscal year the FSA team delivered commodity and program payments to South Carolina farmers' totaling \$148.9 million. Here is a break down by program.

\$29,827,615 earned by producers participating in Direct and Counter Cyclical Program. This program provides income support to producers of eligible commodities based on production history that is not dependent on the current production choices. Counter cyclical payments are made when the effective price for eligible commodities is less than the target price.

\$22,365,590 in commodity loans was offered in 2008 through Price Support and through Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) for eligible commodities. Assistance is offered two ways; Marketing Assistance Loans (MAL) and Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP). MAL's provide producers interim financing to meet cash flow needs without having to sell their commodities when market prices are typically at harvest-time lows. LDP's benefit producers who agree to forgo a commodity loan in return for a payment on the eligible commodity.

\$59,069,671 in payments was made to eligible quota holders and producers in the Tobacco Transition Payment Program. Payments began in 2005 and continue through 2014. Payments are funded by assessments of approximately \$10 billion on tobacco manufactures and importers.

FSA makes direct and guaranteed farm ownership (FO) and operating loans (OL) to family-sized farmers and reaches those who cannot obtain commercial credit from banks, Farm Credit System Institutions, or other lenders. FSA loans can be

used to purchase land, livestock, equipment, feed, seed, and supplies. They can also be used to construct buildings or make farm improvements.

In FY 2008, FSA obligated \$45,786,000 in guaranteed loans. FSA guaranteed loans were made by conventional agricultural lenders for up to 95% of the loan. In 2008, FSA in South Carolina guaranteed 86 farm ownership loans and 61 operating loans. This included 12 operating loans and 39 farm ownership for beginning farms, three operating and 13 farm ownership loans for Socially Disadvantaged (SDA) producers.

FSA provides assistance to those unable to obtain loans. In 2008, FSA funded 285 operating loans that included 5 youth loans, 135 direct operating loans to beginning farmers and 63 direct operating loans to SDA producers. There were seven direct farm ownership loans to SDA producers and 18 farm ownership loans to beginning farmers.

No production agricultural operation is immune to the effects of natural disaster. South Carolina FSA was financially responsive to producers who needed assistance in disasters brought on by drought, floods, freezing temperatures, tornados and fire; \$23,815,094 in crop disaster payments were made in 2008, for crop losses sustained in 2005, 2006, and 2007.

\$2,148,730 in Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program payments provided financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when low yield, loss of inventory, or prevented plantings occurred due to natural disasters.

\$2,201,527 in Livestock Compensation Program payments was distributed to owners of cattle, sheep, goats, and buffalo.

\$106,285 in Dairy Disaster Assistance payments were issued for producer losses that occurred between June 1, 2005 and December 31, 2007 due to natural disasters.

FSA made significant investments toward conserving and improving soil, water, and wildlife resources in South Carolina. Investments in 2008 include \$7,650,998 in Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) payments providing financial incentives to producers who convert high erodible crop land or environmentally sensitive acres to long term vegetative cover.

\$251,250 Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) payments providing emergency funds for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate farmland damage by natural disaster

and carry out emergency water conservation measures during periods of severe drought.

\$1,350,757 – Farm Storage Facility Loan Program. FSA made 28 loans to producers to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities.

Although some of the above programs have been changed under the 2008 farm bill, program provisions are still available and the changes have been explained in prior newsletters. Please pay attention to sign-up closing dates. The FSA team looks forward to serving you.

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 of one of these offenses, 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 1 year upon the first conviction
- up to 5 years after a second or subsequent conviction.

DCP/ACRE Signup

August 14, 2009 is the final date to enroll in DCP or ACRE program. Congress was nine months late in drafting legislation and voting on the 2008 farm bill, leaving FSA no choice but to extend the final enrollment date for DCP and the election and enrollment period for the new ACRE program. Now FSA has the monumental task of collecting new payment limitation information, new Adjusted Gross Income information, acreage certification, and implement a new ACRE program with only four months remaining in the fiscal year. FSA is the “Can Do” agency and will get the job done.

Completing program certifications and filing requirements as soon as possible will be to each producer’s advantage. Contact your local county office for an appointment to review your farming operation for updates and changes that have taken place since last year.

Land Changes

If you have bought, sold or are renting different land from the previous year, make sure you report these changes to the Farm Service Agency office as soon as possible after they occur.

This can affect your DCP/ACRE contract eligibility, Payment Limitation eligibility, as well as other FSA program activities. It is up to the farm operator to review with FSA land changes before signing program contracts. Failure to maintain accurate farm records on all land you have an interest in can lead to possible program ineligibility as well as problems with Crop Insurance if FSA farm numbers and acreage reports, including producer shares, does not agree with Crop Insurance records.

Farm Operators Subleasing Cropland

All producers planting on DCP base acres must be identified on the DCP/ACRE contract and receive a proportionate share of DCP/ACRE payment for the farm. Producers who are enrolled in DCP/ACRE and sublease cropland to another producer must report this to the local FSA Office to ensure that each producer planting on DCP cropland acres share on the DCP/ACRE contract. Failure to report the new producer and revise the DCP/ACRE contract is a violation which will result in DCP/ACRE contract termination and loss of payment for all producers on the farm. To avoid DCP/ACRE contract violations, such changes in producers on the farm after enrolling in DCP/ACRE must be reported to your local FSA office to determine if new producer is planting on base acres. All producers who share on the DCP/ACRE contract must sign by August 14, 2009. The DCP/ACRE contract may be revised any time prior to September 30, 2009 (All other supporting documentation must be obtained by September 30, 2009). Contracts may also be terminated upon written agreement of all producers receiving payment under the contract, provided any advanced payments are repaid with interest.

2010 NAP Application Closing Dates

Producers in need of insurance coverage for the following 2010 crops for which catastrophic level of insurance is not available through FCIC may apply the under the Noninsured Crop Assistance Program (NAP) by the following dates:

August 1, 2009 - for Strawberries and bulb onions

September 1, 2009 - for Nursery Stock, Floriculture, Aquaculture, Turf Grass Sod, Christmas trees, mushrooms, Cilantro, and Parsley

September 30, 2009 – for small grains, canola, flax, garlic, and triticale.

NAP coverage requires a service fee of \$250 per crop, per producer with a \$750 cap per county. Out-of-pocket expenses will not exceed \$1875 for any producer, even if production occurs in more than three counties. Service fees may be waived for eligible limited resource producers.

To be eligible to participate in the Supplement Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) producers must obtain at least the catastrophic level (CAT) of Crop Insurance for all crops in all counties that they have an interest for which insurance is available. If the CAT level of insurance is unavailable, Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance (NAP) coverage must be obtained from FSA.

The Supplement Revenue Assistance Program is one of the permanent disaster programs authorized under the new farm bill.

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 Flue-Cured Tobacco, Cotton, Corn, Peanuts, Rice, Soybeans, Grain Sorghum, Summer Seeded Grasses, CRP, Orchards, Vineyards, and all other NAP Crops is July 15, 2009.

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.

Sodbusting

The term "sodbusting" is used to identify the plowing up of erosion-prone grasslands for use as cropland. Sodbuster violations are unauthorized tillage practices on highly erodible lands that converted native vegetation such as rangeland or woodland, to crop production after Dec. 23, 1985.

Farmers and ranchers should be aware that if they use highly erodible land for crop production without proper conservation measures, they risk losing eligibility to participate in Farm Service Agency programs.

Before producers clear, plow or otherwise prepare areas not presently under crop production for planting, they are required to file an AD-1026, indicating the area to be brought into production.

If Natural Resources Conservation Service indicates on a CPA-026 that the area will be highly erodible land, the producer will be required to develop and implement a conservation plan on the affected acreage, before bringing land into production. In addition, producers and the producer's affiliates have to file an AD-1026 with the staff in

the administrative or control county office before any farm program payments can be made. The AD-1026 is the producer's signed certification that HELC, as well as wetland conservation, provisions will not be violated.

2009 Compliance

Compliance and spot checks will once again be utilized during the 2009 crop year. Instead of locally selecting farms, contracts, deficiency loans, etc. for spot check and review, a nationwide selection of producers is used to achieve a statistical sampling of participating producers. Spot check selections are to be conducted based on a producer's participation in Conservation Reserve Program, Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, Loan Deficiency Program, etc.

State and County Offices shall view and print their producer spot check lists as posted on the designated web site. If an entity is selected from the national database that is no longer farming or participating in the 2009 crop year, a notation shall be made on the spot check list. For more information about the new spot check selection procedure, feel free to contact your local Farm Service Agency office for additional clarification.

Economic Performance and Longleaf Pine

By: Scott Phillips, Stewardship Coordinator, SC Forestry Commission Charles Stiff, Biometrician, FORSight Resources, LLC. Steven Mills, Forest Planning Analyst, FORSight Resources, LLC.

In recent years, various organizations have begun encouraging longleaf plantation establishment with much of their effort directed at private landowners whose objectives include factors such as wildlife habitat and aesthetics in addition to economics. Little work has been done examining the economic viability of longleaf pine management where financial return is a primary objective. This can be attributed to the commonly-held belief that returns from longleaf management cannot compare to those from loblolly pine plantations. To address this issue an analysis was recently conducted to determine if longleaf pine plantations can show returns comparable to those from intensive loblolly pine management.

To perform the analysis longleaf and loblolly stands were simulated using growth and yield models. Longleaf pine stands were simulated using FORSim Longleaf Pine Growth Simulator (www.FORSightResources.com) and loblolly stands were simulated using LobDSS (www.forestnutrition.org) which uses the FASTLOB2 whole stand growth and yield model (www.fw.vt.edu/g&y_coop/). The financial performance of loblolly and longleaf pine plantations were compared for four cases, each evaluated at varying levels of site productivity and with varying discount rates. Management regimes were selected for comparison from a reduced set of acceptable alternatives, which were constrained by management intensity and treatment timing. Longleaf pine management regimes were evaluated with and without the harvest of pine straw. The regimes that maximized Land Expectation Value (LEV) for each site/discount rate combination were chosen for analysis. LEV is the present value per acre of the projected costs and

revenues from an infinite series of identical rotations starting from bare ground and is frequently used to evaluate the financial performance of forestry investments. Results indicate that longleaf pine regimes that do not incorporate pine straw raking yield financial results that are inferior to those from intensive loblolly management from a pure economic perspective. However, with the addition of pine straw revenues, longleaf management can yield economic returns that are comparable to typical loblolly regimes. This analysis suggests that timberland owners managing their lands with a financial objective should re-evaluate longleaf pine as a viable alternative to loblolly plantations under certain situations. The tradeoffs for managing for longleaf pine, a species often considered to have higher amenity values than loblolly pine, are not nearly as substantial as often believed, and longleaf pine can financially outperform loblolly pine in some circumstances.

This is a summary of a detailed paper prepared by the staff of FORSight Resources. Please visit FORSight Resources to download a copy of the complete white paper (www.FORSightResources.com/library.htm).

Farms Not Eligible for Payment

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Farm Bill) provided that producers on farms with DCP base acres that total 10.0 acres or less would not receive a direct or counter-cyclical program payment or ACRE payments, unless the farm is wholly owned by a socially disadvantaged or a limited resource farmer or rancher. DCP/ACRE program provisions have been changed to allow payment on farms whose ownership is at least 50 percent socially disadvantaged or limited resource farmer or rancher. In South Carolina 36 percent of the total DCP/ACRE farms are in this category. This change can significantly impact producers that may have been told they were ineligible for payment earlier this year.

For this provision's purpose, a socially disadvantaged farmer is a person who is a member of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities. The USDA Farm Service Agency Fact Sheet identifies socially disadvantaged farmer, rancher, or agricultural producer as a Woman, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

Status as a limited resource farmer or rancher is one who directly or indirectly had gross farm sales of not more than \$100,000 in each of the previous two years (to be increased beginning in fiscal year 2004 to adjust for inflation using Prices paid by Farmer Index as compiled by the National Agricultural Statistic Service) and has a total household income at or below the national poverty level for a family of four, OR less than 50 percent of county median household income in each of the previous years (to be determined annually using Commerce Department data).

A limited resources farmer or rancher can be determined in an automated system using the Website for USDA Limited Resource Farmer and Rancher Online Self Determination Tool at <http://www.lrfstool.sc.gov.usda.gov/tool.asp>.

Combining Farms with 10.0 or less DCP Base Acres

Farms with 10.0 or less DCP base acres may be combined with other farms with DCP base acres to meet the payment requirements for DCP/ACRE. If the farms being combined meet all other combination requirements rules, a combination of farms to exceed the 10.0 acre DCP Base payment restriction can be made. Check with your local FSA County Office for details.

Continuous CRP

The Continuous Conservation Reserve Program is a private lands environmental improvement program that allows participants the opportunity to enroll environmentally sensitive acreages in conservation practices that will reduce soil erosion, improve water and soil quality and provide wildlife habitat and food sources.

The Continuous CRP program is a voluntary enrollment program. Eligible landowners enter into contracts that range from 10 to 15 years in length. In return, the landowners will receive annual rental and maintenance payments, incentive payments for certain activities, and cost share for establishment.

Practices available now are:

- **Restoration of longleaf pine plantations** that provide habitat for numerous species of plants and animals. Land must have 4 out of 6 year cropping history in years 1996 through 2001 and be longleaf suitable soils. Other eligibility requirements apply.
- **Establishment of bird buffers** that provide habitat for the bob-white quail and numerous other bird species. The bird buffer strips established under CCRP have been proven to increase quail populations in the State. Land must have 4 out of 6 year cropping history in years 1996 through 2001. Other eligibility requirements apply.
- **Establishment of riparian buffers** on marginal pastureland that protect water quality for all animals, including humans. This practice establishes a strip of trees next to an eligible permanent water body used for livestock drinking water. The livestock are fenced out of the protected water body and cost-share assistance is provided to **install wells as an alternate water source**. Livestock producers that have utilized this practice in the past have stated that providing reliable clean well water to their livestock has greatly improved herd health.

Important Dates to Remember

June 8, 2009 -Application deadline for Horry County to apply for FSA emergency loan assistance due to a NC disaster declaration for damages and losses caused by Tropical Storm Hanna, which occurred from September 4-15, 2008.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
 Farm Service Agency

NOMINATION FORM FOR COUNTY (FSA) COMMITTEE ELECTION

The County FSA Committee election will be held on the first Monday of December. Ballots will be mailed to voters not less than 4 weeks before the election.

This form allows individuals to nominate themselves or any other person as a candidate. If additional forms are needed, this one may be copied or may be obtained at the County FSA Office or obtained electronically at <http://forms.sc.gov.usda.gov>. Each form submitted must be:

- A. Limited to one nominee.
- B. Signed and dated by the nominee in Item 4. Nominee must sign if willing to have his/her name placed on the ballot and agrees to serve if elected.
- C. Note: Name shown on ballot will appear exactly the same as in Agency records.
- C. Delivered to the County FSA Office or postmarked no later than August 3.

The County FSA Committee is responsible for reviewing each form to determine the eligibility of nominees. A person who files this form and is found ineligible will be so notified and have an opportunity to file a challenge.

Persons nominated should actively participate in the operation of a farm or ranch and be well qualified for committee work. A producer is eligible to be a County FSA committee member if the producer resides in the Local Administrative Area (LAA) in which the election is to be held and is eligible to vote.

Federal regulations may prohibit County FSA Committee members from holding certain positions in some farm, commodity, and political organizations if such positions pose a conflict of interest with FSA duties. The positions include functional offices such as president, vice president, secretary, or treasurer; and positions on boards or executive committees. Conflict of interest restrictions also apply to employees, operators, managers, and majority owners of tobacco warehouses. Questions concerning eligibility should be directed to the County FSA Office.

A candidate has the option to request that all voted ballots for an individual county committee election be returned to the respective State Office in lieu of being returned to the county office. This request must be in writing and submitted to the local County Executive Director prior to the announced end of the nomination period.

The duties of County FSA Committee members include:

- A. Administering farm program activities conducted by the County FSA Office.
- B. Informing farmers of the purpose and provisions of the FSA programs.
- C. Keeping the State FSA Committee informed of LAA conditions.
- D. Monitoring changes in farm programs.
- E. Participating in county meetings as necessary.
- F. Performing other duties as assigned by the State FSA Committee

South Carolina Local Administrative Area (LAA) 2 Up for Election Unless Otherwise Indicated
 (Maps delineating the LAAs established in your County are available in the local FSA Office)

County	LAA Description
Abbeville	Greenwood/McCormick - LAA2
Abbeville	Greenwood/McCormick - LAA5
Aiken	
Anderson	
Bamberg	
Barnwell	
Calhoun	Richland - LAA2
Calhoun	Richland - LAA4
Charleston	Berkeley
Chester	Fairfield - LAA2
Chester	Fairfield - LAA4
Chesterfield	
Clarendon	
Colleton	
Darlington	
Dillon	
Dorchester	
Edgefield	
Florence	
Georgetown	
Greenville	Pickens
Hampton	
Horry	
Jasper	Beaufort
Kershaw	Lancaster - LAA2
Kershaw	Lancaster - LAA4
Laurens	
Lee	
Lexington	
Marion	
Marlboro	
Newberry	
Oconee	
Orangeburg	
Saluda	
Spartanburg	Cherokee/Union
Sumter	
Williamsburg	
York	
Abbeville	Greenwood/McCormick
Aiken	
Alendale	
Anderson	
Bamberg	
Barnwell	
Calhoun	Richland - LAA2
Calhoun	Richland - LAA4
Charleston	Berkeley
Chester	Fairfield - LAA2
Chester	Fairfield - LAA4
Chesterfield	
Clarendon	
Colleton	
Darlington	
Dillon	
Dorchester	
Edgefield	
Florence	
Georgetown	
Greenville	Pickens
Hampton	
Horry	
Jasper	Beaufort
Kershaw	Lancaster - LAA2
Kershaw	Lancaster - LAA4
Laurens	
Lee	
Lexington	
Marion	
Marlboro	
Newberry	
Oconee	
Orangeburg	
Saluda	
Spartanburg	Cherokee/Union
Sumter	
Williamsburg	
York	
Abbeville	Greenwood/McCormick
Aiken	
Alendale	
Anderson	
Bamberg	
Barnwell	
Calhoun	Richland - LAA2
Calhoun	Richland - LAA4
Charleston	Berkeley
Chester	Fairfield - LAA2
Chester	Fairfield - LAA4
Chesterfield	
Clarendon	
Colleton	
Darlington	
Dillon	
Dorchester	
Edgefield	
Florence	
Georgetown	
Greenville	Pickens
Hampton	
Horry	
Jasper	Beaufort
Kershaw	Lancaster - LAA2
Kershaw	Lancaster - LAA4
Laurens	
Lee	
Lexington	
Marion	
Marlboro	
Newberry	
Oconee	
Orangeburg	
Saluda	
Spartanburg	Cherokee/Union
Sumter	
Williamsburg	
York	
Abbeville	Greenwood/McCormick
Aiken	
Alendale	
Anderson	
Bamberg	
Barnwell	
Calhoun	Richland - LAA2
Calhoun	Richland - LAA4
Charleston	Berkeley
Chester	Fairfield - LAA2
Chester	Fairfield - LAA4
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Jasper	Beaufort
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Kershaw	Lancaster - LAA4
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Marion	
Marlboro	
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Orangeburg	
Saluda	
Spartanburg	Cherokee/Union
Sumter	
Williamsburg	
York	
Abbeville	Greenwood/McCormick
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Chester	Fairfield - LAA4
Chesterfield	
Clarendon	
Colleton	
Darlington	
Dillon	
Dorchester	
Edgefield	
Florence	
Georgetown	
Greenville	Pickens
Hampton	
Horry	
Jasper	Beaufort
Kershaw	Lancaster - LAA2
Kershaw	Lancaster - LAA4
Laurens	
Lee	
Lexington	
Marion	
Marlboro	
Newberry	
Oconee	
Orangeburg	
Saluda	
Spartanburg	Cherokee/Union
Sumter	
Williamsburg	
York	
Abbeville	Greenwood/McCormick
Aiken	
Alendale	
Anderson	
Bamberg	
Barnwell	
Calhoun	Richland - LAA2
Calhoun	Richland - LAA4
Charleston	Berkeley
Chester	Fairfield - LAA2
Chester	Fairfield - LAA4
Chesterfield	
Clarendon	
Colleton	
Darlington	
Dillon	
Dorchester	
Edgefield	
Florence	
Georgetown	
Greenville	Pickens
Hampton	
Horry	
Jasper	Beaufort
Kershaw	Lancaster - LAA2
Kershaw	Lancaster - LAA4
Laurens	
Lee	
Lexington	
Marion	
Marlboro	
Newberry	
Oconee	
Orangeburg	
Saluda	
Spartanburg	Cherokee/Union
Sumter	
Williamsburg	
York	
Abbeville	Greenwood/McCormick
Aiken	
Alendale	
Anderson	
Bamberg	
Barnwell	

FSA-669A
(04-17-09)

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Farm Service Agency

NOMINATION FORM FOR COUNTY FSA COMMITTEE ELECTION

1. NAME OF NOMINEE <i>(Type or print Nominee's Full Name)</i>		TO BE COMPLETED BY COUNTY FSA OFFICE
2. ADDRESS OF NOMINEE		
3. NOMINEE'S CERTIFICATION <i>I hereby agree to have my name placed on the ballot, that I will serve if elected, and if there is a conflict of interest, I will resign such position.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>I DO want to witness the settling of tied votes with another nominee.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>I DO NOT want to witness the settling of tied votes with another nominee.</i>		5. INITIALS OF EMPLOYEE RECEIVING FORM AND DATE <i>(MM-DD-YYYY)</i>
4A. SIGNATURE OF NOMINEE		6A. COUNTY
4B. DATE <i>(MM-DD-YYYY)</i>		6B. LAA NO.
		7. STATE
		DATE OF ELECTION IS 1st MONDAY OF DECEMBER OF EACH CALENDAR YEAR

8. TO BE COMPLETED BY NOMINEE

VOLUNTARY INFORMATION FOR MONITORING PURPOSES: The following information is requested by the Federal Government in order to monitor FSA's compliance with federal laws prohibiting discrimination against program participants on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, marital status, handicapped condition, or age. You are not required to furnish this information, but are encouraged to do so. This information will not be used in evaluating your nomination or to discriminate against you in any way.

ETHNICITY <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Not Hispanic or Latino	RACE (Choose as many boxes as applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> America Indian or Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African-American <input type="checkbox"/> Asian <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> White	GENDER <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
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INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THIS FORM

Complete the form as follows:

ITEM 1 Type or Print the nominee's full name. The nominee must be:

- A. Eligible to vote in the designated County FSA Committee election.
- B. Eligible to hold the office of County FSA Committee member.
- C. Willing to serve if elected.

ITEM 2 Enter the nominee's current address.

ITEM 3 The nominee must check one of the boxes to indicate a preference regarding the settling of tied votes.

ITEM 4 The nominee must sign and date.

ITEM 8 Completing this item is voluntary.

ALL FORMS MUST BE RECEIVED IN THE COUNTY OFFICE OR POSTMARKED BY AUGUST 3.

NOTE: *The following statement is made in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552a) and the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, as amended. The authority for requesting the following information is 7 CFR Part 7. The information will be used to obtain nominees for County FSA Committee.*

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0560-0229. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 10 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO YOUR COUNTY FSA OFFICE.

July 1, 2009 - Application deadline for Cherokee, Dillon, Greenville, Horry, Lancaster, Marlboro, Oconee, Pickens, Spartanburg and York Counties to apply for FSA emergency loan assistance due to a NC disaster declaration for damages and losses caused by drought and extreme heat that occurred from January 1, 2008, and continuing.

August 12, 2009 - Application deadline for Abbeville, Aiken, Allendale, Anderson, Barnwell, Edgefield, Hampton, Jasper, McCormick and Oconee Counties to apply for FSA emergency loan assistance due to a GA disaster declaration for losses caused by drought that occurred from January 1, 2008, and continuing.

January 11, 2010 - Application deadline for Anderson and Oconee Counties to apply for FSA emergency physical loss loan assistance due to a GA disaster declaration for losses caused by a severe snowstorm that occurred on March 1, 2009.

For more information, please contact your local FSA office.

Beginning and Limited Resource Farmers & Ranchers

FSA has a program to assist beginning farmers and members of socially disadvantaged groups to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's average size.

Each member of an entity must meet the eligibility requirements. Loan approval is not guaranteed.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

Rural Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) makes operating loans to individual rural youths age 10 through 20 to establish and operate income producing projects. These projects must be of modest size and be initiated, developed, carried out by rural youths participating in 4-H Clubs, FFA, or a similar organization or with a vocational teacher or county extension agent. The project must be an organized and supervised program of work. It must be planned and operated with the assistance of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan, and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. Contact your local FSA office for more details.

Direct and Guaranteed Loans

South Carolina's Farm Service Agency is committed to providing family farmers with loans to meet their farm credit needs. If you are having trouble getting the credit you need for your farm, or regularly borrow from FSA, direct and guaranteed loans are available now.

Ask your lender about an FSA loan guarantee if you've had a setback and your lender is reluctant to extend or renew your loan. Loan funds can be made available. Producers are encouraged to apply early so that a loan can be processed and funded in a timely manner.

Most of our loan programs have special funding available for minority, female and beginning farmers. FSA employees will help you complete the necessary application and other forms, and help you understand what information is required, where to find it or who to contact to get it. To find out more about FSA loan programs, contact the county office staff.

2009 Boll Weevil Eradication Program

The SC Boll Weevil Eradication Act of 1976 requires all South Carolina cotton producers to identify and pay an assessment on their planted acres of cotton. Final reports of planted cotton acres must be filed by July 15. The 2009 assessment fee of \$1.25 per acre of planted cotton is also due on July 15.

COC ELECTIONS - NOMINATE AND VOTE

Farmer and rancher candidate nominations began June 15, 2009, for local Farm Service Agency county committees. The nomination period continues through August 3, 2009, with elections taking place this fall. Nomination forms, FSA-669A, are available at your local FSA Office and on the web at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections>.

The election of responsible agricultural producers to FSA county committees is important to ALL farmers and ranchers with large or small operations. It is important for every eligible producer to take part in this election because the county committees are an important link between the farming community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

FSA county committee members make decisions on disaster and conservation programs, emergency programs, commodity price support loan programs and other important agricultural issues. Committee members are a crucial component of the day-to-day operations of FSA as they help deliver FSA programs at the local level.

FSA will mail ballots to eligible voters beginning Nov. 6. The voted ballots are due back to the local county office either via mail or in person by Dec. 7. Newly elected committee members and alternates take office January 1, 2010

Dates to Remember	
Continuous	Continuous Conservation Reserve Program
June 15, 2009	COC nominations period opened
April 27 to August 14, 2009	ACRE program signup runs
Aug. 14, 2009	DCP Signup Deadline
July 15	Report planted cotton acres Assessment fee \$1.25 per acre

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

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