



NEWSLETTER



****Producers Alert****

Please provide an email address to your County Office for future Program Updates.

SOUTH CAROLINA STATE FSA OFFICE

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Please visit our website at
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/sc>

Attention

**Due to budget constraints,
this newsletter is mailed to
one recipient per
address. Please share with
others concerned in your
household.**



HARRY L. OTT, JR.
STATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Change is constant. As farmers and ranchers we adapt to these ongoing changes, whether they are commodity prices, technology, weather, equipment, or labor-just to name a few. We embrace these changes and make them work for our survival.

The new Farm Bill will give us yet another opportunity to embrace change so that we can move forward. Over the next few months we will begin to implement the new Farm Bill passed recently by Congress. Many decisions will need to be made. We will have to learn new terminology such as ARC/Individual, ARC/County, PLC, Generic Acres, Transition Payments, SCO, as well as others. The Farm Service Agency, along with our Land Grant Universities and other agriculture partners, are all preparing now, so that we can answer your questions about the new provisions in the 2014 Farm Bill. Our job is to provide you with timely, concise, and accurate information, so that you can plan, implement, and produce effectively and efficiently. These initial contract decisions are very important and will be in effect for the next five years. It is essential we get it right.

I am confident that as we move forward together into the educational and signup phases of the Farm Bill, we will not only adapt to the oncoming changes, but we will use them to insure we maintain successful, productive, and lasting farming and ranching operations.

Thank you for placing your trust in the Farm Service Agency. We are here to serve you.

ARC/PLC BASE REALLOCATION AND YIELD UPDATE

On February 7, 2014, the President signed the Agricultural Act of 2014 (the Act), which provides owners with an option to reallocate base acres and update yields on each farm for "covered commodities". Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium grain rice (includes short grain rice and temperate japonica rice), safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed, and wheat. **Note:** Upland cotton is no longer a covered commodity.

Owners of farms will have a one-time opportunity to:
(1) maintain the farm's 2013 base acres of covered commodities through 2018; or (2) reallocate base acres among those covered commodities planted on the farm at any time during the 2009 - 2012 crop years (excluding upland cotton bases).

Owners will also have an opportunity to update the program payment yield for each covered commodity based on 90 percent of the farm's 2008-2012 average yield per planted acre, excluding any year when no acreage was planted to the covered commodity.

In early August you will receive by mail a Summary Acreage History Report which shows the acreage of covered commodities reported to the Farm Service Agency for each farm you are on record as the owner and/or operator for the 2014 crop year for any county in the United States. The acreage includes planted acres or acres prevented from being planted for 2008 through 2012 with any eligible subsequent acreage.

Once you receive this letter, please review the information and carefully examine the acreage data for each crop, year, and farm. If you determine the information is both complete and accurate, **do not take any action at that time.**

If you determine that any of the data is incorrect, incomplete, or missing, you must contact the county office where the farm is administratively located to provide verifiable documentation of your acreage as soon as possible.

Early submission of this information will result in a timelier update of base and yield history.

Projected timeline for decisions by producers relative to implementation of ARCPLC:

STEP	EVENT	TIMEFRAME
1	All owners and operators receive their Notification of Covered Commodity Acreage History letter that includes all farms in all counties. Owners and operators are provided an opportunity to correct acreage history for years 2009 through 2012.	August 2014
2	Owners make final base reallocation and yield update decision for the farm.	Late Summer/Fall 2014
3	Official 2014 Notice of Base and Yield (FSA-476) report mailed to all owners and operators on the farm, with appeal rights.	Winter 2014/2015
4	2014 Operators on the farm make program election for the farm.	Winter 2014/2015
5	Annual enrollment into PLC, ARC-CO, or ARC-IC program for 2014 and 2015.	Early 2015

Texas A&M has also released preliminary farm bill decision aid tools on its Agricultural and Food Policy Center (AFPC) website. <http://decisionaid.afpc.tamu.edu/title/>. The tools are preliminary as USDA is still in the process of developing the regulations that will govern the farm program process for ARC, PLC and more.

AUGUST 3-9 NATIONAL FARMERS MARKET WEEK

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack has declared August 3 through 9, 2014, "National Farmers Market Week". Throughout the week, USDA will celebrate our nation's thousands of farmers markets, farmers who make them possible and the communities that host them.

2014 NAP COVERAGE

The Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) was designed to reduce financial losses that occur when natural disasters cause a catastrophic loss of production or prevented planting of an eligible crop by providing coverage equivalent to catastrophic (CAT) insurance. Statute limits NAP to each commercial crop or agricultural commodity, except livestock, for which CAT is not available and is produced for food or fiber.

Producers who already have coverage on 2014 NAP crops may choose to continue coverage on the same crop or crops for 2015, if the applicable service fee is submitted by the application closing date. A new CCC-471, application for coverage is not required to be signed when applying for continuous coverage of the same crop or crops.

Producers who choose to add a new crop(s) or delete a crop(s) from previous year's coverage or changing crop shares must file a new CCC-471 with signature and pay the applicable service fee.

The NAP coverage fees are \$250.00 per crop, but not more than \$750.00 per producer per county, or not more than \$1875.00 total per producer for all counties. Service fees may be waived for eligible limited resource producers.

Producers with NAP coverage must remember to complete the following to qualify for benefits:

- timely file acreage reports
- maintain production records and report production to the county office for APH purposes
- file a "Notice of Loss" within 15 days of when a loss is apparent, due to drought, hail, etc.

Dates to Remember

Deadline Dates	Crops
July 15, 2014	Acreage Reporting Deadline for: Corn, Cotton, Flue-Cured Tobacco, Grain Sorghum, Peanuts, Soybeans, CRP, Trees, all other NAP crops and all other crops and land uses
August 15, 2014	Tomatoes (Planted 7/1-7/15)
November 15, 2014	PRF/Perennial Forage (All Perennial grasses intended for hay, grazing or sod) Apiculture
November 30, 2014	Clams
August 1, 2014	NAP Application Closing Date (Program Crop Year 2014): Onions and Strawberries
September 1, 2014	NAP Application Closing Date (Program Crop Year 2014): Christmas Trees, Crustacean, Fin Fish, Flowers, Grass for Sod, Mollusk, Mushrooms, and Floriculture
September 30, 2014	NAP Application Closing Date (Program Crop Year 2014): Small Grains, Canola, Flax, Garlic, Grass not covered by FCIC, Grain/Grass Interseeding and Triticale
November 20, 2014	NAP Application Closing Date (Program Crop Year 2014): Alfalfa, Apples, blueberries, Caneberries, Figs, Grapes, all perennial grasses for hay or grazing, Honey, Kiwifruit, Lespedeza, Nectarines, Peaches not covered by FCIC, Pears, Pecans, Perennial Peanuts, Persimmons, Plums
December 15, 2014	NAP Application Closing Date (Program Crop Year 2014): Artichokes, Asparagus, Beets, Broccoli, Brussel Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, All Greens, All Herbs, Kohlrabi, Leeks, Lettuce, Green Onions, All Peas including English and Field Varieties, Potatoes, Radishes, Rutabagas, Turnips

IMPORTANCE OF ACCURATE AND TIMELY ACREAGE REPORTS

Filing an accurate and timely acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of program benefits. Report of crops must be filed for the farm by the applicable final reporting date listed above. To be considered timely filed, acreage reports for:

- prevented planted acreage are required to be submitted no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date for the applicable crop
- failed acreage must be filed before the disposition of the crop.

FILING FOR NAP LOSSES

The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. Timely filing a Notice of Loss is required for all crops including grasses. For losses on crops covered by the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and crop insurance, you must file a CCC-576, Notice of Loss, in the FSA County Office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent.

If filing for prevented planting, an acreage report and CCC-576 must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

TREE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP) SIGN-UP

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 FORAGE DISASTER PROGRAM (LFP):

LFP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that have suffered grazing losses due to drought on privately owned or cash leased land or fire on federally managed land. Eligible producers must physically be located in a county affected by a qualifying drought during the normal grazing period for the county. Producers who suffered eligible grazing losses should submit a completed CCC-853 and supporting documentation by January 30, 2015.

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.

USDA ANNOUNCES THE EXTENSION OF THE MILK INCOME LOSS CONTRACT PROGRAM FOR 2014

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) recently announced the extension of the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program which protects dairy farmers against income loss through Sept. 1, 2014, or until a new Margin Protection Program for dairy producers (MPP) is operational.

Contracts for eligible producers enrolled in MILC on or before Sept. 30, 2013, are automatically extended until the termination date of the MILC program. Dairy operations with approved MILC contracts will continue to receive monthly payments if a payment rate is in effect.

MILC compensates enrolled dairy producers when the Boston Class I milk price falls below \$16.94 per hundredweight (cwt), after adjustment for the cost of dairy feed rations. MILC payments are calculated each month using the latest milk price and feed cost, just as in the 2008 Farm Bill. The payment rate for October 2013 through January 2014 marketings is zero. Payment rates during the months after January 2014 until the termination of the MILC program will be determined as the appropriate data becomes available.

FSA will provide producers with information on program requirements, updates and sign-ups as the information becomes available.

FOREIGN BUYERS NOTIFICATION

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA.

All individuals who are not U.S. citizens, and have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form (FSA-153) could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, Realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

STRIKEFORCE FOR RURAL GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY

In 2010, Agricultural Secretary Vilsack launched the StrikeForce Initiative in a USDA coordinated effort to increase economic opportunity and address the needs of rural communities suffering from persistent poverty.

Unfortunately, 85% of America's persistent poverty counties are in rural areas.

Since the first 3-state StrikeForce Initiative in 2010, the Initiative has grown to include 20 states. These states include South Carolina.

South Carolina became a StrikeForce state in 2013. Twenty-seven counties are presently listed as StrikeForce counties. They include Abbeville, Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Beaufort, Calhoun, Cherokee, Chester, Chesterfield, Clarendon, Colleton, Darlington, Dillon, Dorchester, Fairfield, Florence, Georgetown, Hampton, Jasper, Lancaster, Lee, Marion, Marlboro, Orangeburg, Sumter, Union, and Williamsburg counties.

Since 2010, USDA has partnered with more than 400 community organizations, businesses, foundations, Universities and other groups to support 80,300 projects with total investments of more than 9.7 billion into rural America.

The Farm Service Agency provided nearly 10 million to fund Microloans in StrikeForce counties Nationwide.

The State Food and Agricultural Council (SFAC), chaired by SED Harry Ott working in conjunction with other agencies, increased the number of summer feeding sites for the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). 11 additional feeding sites were secured and agreed to serve as sites for the USDA Summer Feeding Program.

In addition, the SFAC continues to stress the importance of the feeding programs to purchase locally grown food.

COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

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 apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions.

For election purposes, counties are divided into Local Administrative Areas, or LAAs. Most counties are divided into three LAA's, and combined counties may have up to five LAA's. For most counties, this year's election is for LAA 1. For Abbeville/Greenwood/McCormick the election is for LAA 1 and LAA 4 and for Anderson, the election is for LAA 1 and LAA 3.

ELECTION TIMETABLE

June 15, 2014	Nomination period begins
August 1, 2014	Deadline to submit nomination forms
November 3, 2014	Ballots are mailed to eligible voters
December 1, 2014	Deadline to return completed ballots to the FSA County Office
January 1, 2015	Newly elected COC members take office

For more information on the election, who can vote, who can hold office, or other general COC election information, please contact your local FSA County Office or you can visit us at the following website: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/sc>. You can also visit the FSA elections website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections>.

MICRO-LOAN ASSISTANCE FOR VETERAN FARMERS

The 2014 Farm Bill specifically excludes Micro-loans that are used by veterans from the term limits applied to other USDA Direct Operating Loans.

Microloans also have a simpler application process and less stringent requirements regarding farm management experience. These loans may be used for:

- Initial start-up expenses;
- Annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents;
- Marketing and distribution expenses;
- Family living expenses;
- Purchase of livestock, equipment, and other materials essential to farm operations;
- Minor farm improvements such as wells and coolers;
- Hoop houses to extend the growing season
- Essential tools;
- Irrigation; and
- Delivery vehicles

Eligible applicants may obtain a Microloan for up to \$35,000. All applications will be processed with the applicable regular OL rate.

For more information, please visit a nearby USDA Service Center or FSA's website at www.fsa.usda.gov.

SELECTED INTEREST RATES FOR JULY 2014

90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	2.125%
Farm Operating Loans - Limited Resource	5.000%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	3.875%
Farm Ownership Loans - Limited Resource	5.000%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency Loans	3.125%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years)	2.125%
Commodity Loans	1.125%

SOUTH CAROLINA COUNTY OFFICE PHONE LISTING

ABBEVILLE/GREENWOOD/MCCORMICK	(864) 459-5418
AIKEN	(803) 649-4221
ANDERSON	(864) 224-2126
BAMBERG	(803) 245-4311
BARNWELL	(803) 259-7143
CALHOUN/RICHLAND	(803) 874-3379
CHARLESTON/BERKELEY	(843) 727-4160
CHESTER/FAIRFIELD	(803) 581-1906
CHESTERFIELD	(843) 623-2185
CLARENDON	(803) 435-2201
COLLETON	(843) 549-1821
DARLINGTON	(843) 395-1407
DILLON	(843) 774-5122
DORCHESTER	(843) 563-3218
FLORENCE	(843) 669-9686
GEORGETOWN	(843) 546-7616
GREENVILLE/PICKENS	(864) 467-2775
HAMPTON	(803) 943-2586
HORRY	(843) 365-8732
JASPER/BEAUFORT	(843) 726-5313
KERSHAW/LANCASTER	(803) 432-4174
LAURENS	(864) 984-7741
LEE	(803) 484-5388
LEXINGTON	(803) 359-3205
MARION	(843) 423-1341
MARLBORO	(843) 479-2441
NEWBERRY	(803) 276-0000
OCONEE	(864) 638-2213
ORANGEBURG	(803) 534-2409
SALUDA	(864) 445-8118
SPARTANBURG/UNION/CHEROKEE	(864) 814-2471
SUMTER	(803) 905-7650
WILLIAMSBURG	(843) 354-9621
YORK	(803) 684-3136
Toll Free number for combined counties	(800) 735-2796

(For Abbeville, Barnwell, Chester, Greenville, Jasper, Kershaw, Saluda, Spartanburg, Charleston, Calhoun)

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To file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax at (202) 690-7442 or e-mail at program.intake@usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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SOUTH CAROLINA LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE AREA (LAA) 1 UP FOR ELECTION UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED

(Maps delineating the LAAs established in your County are available in the local FSA Office)

<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>LAA DESCRIPTION</u>
Abbeville/Greenwood/McCormick - LAA1	Calhoun Falls/Lowndesville/Antreville/West Abbeville
Abbeville/Greenwood/McCormick - LAA4	Ware Shoals/Hodges/Ninety Six/Coronaca
Aiken	Beech Island/Eureka/Jackson, New Ellenton
Anderson	Lebanon/Piedmont/Pelzer/Williamston
Bamberg	North Bamberg/South Bamberg
Barnwell/Allendale	Williston, Elko, Blackville
Calhoun/Richland	Sunny Plain/Sandy Run
Charleston/Berkeley	Charleston County
Chester/Fairfield	Lowrys/Carlisle/Chester/Wilksburg
Chesterfield	Cheraw/McBee/Jefferson
Clarendon	Manning/Alcolu/Bloomville/Jordan/Wilson/Home Branch/Cypress Fork/South Davis Station/South Paxville
Colleton	Bells/Lower Broxton/Upper Broxton
Darlington	Carters Crossroads/High Hill/Lamar/Wilson Crossroads/Lake Swamp
Dillon	Fork/Lake View/Gaddy's Crossroads
Dorchester	Reevesville/Grover
Florence	Florence/Timmonsville/Mars Bluff/Sardis/Glenwood/Effingham/Claussen
Georgetown	Andrews/Georgetown
Greenville/Pickens	Greenville/Simpsonville/Mauldin
Hampton	Brunson/Crocketville/Hampton/Early Branch/Yemassee
Horry	Conway/Dogwood Neck/Socastee/Bucks/Little River
Jasper/Beaufort	Coosawhatchee/Grays/Pineland
Kershaw/Lancaster	Indian Land/Washaw/Cane Creek/Gillis Creek
Laurens	Princeton/Waterloo/Cross Hill/Sullivan
Lee	Ashwood/Bishopville
Lexington	Gilbert/Chapin/Hollow Creek/Batesburg/Leesville
Marion	Rains/Centenary/Brittons Neck
Marlboro	Bennettsville/Wallace
Newberry	Chappells/Silverstreet/all area west of Belfast Rd & Hwy SC395
Oconee	Walhalla/Salem/Keowee
Orangeburg	Springfield/North/Wolfton/Neeses/Norway/Bolentown/Pine Hill/Cordova
Saluda/Edgefield	Upper Saluda County – North of Hwy 378 on the West and Hwy 178 on the East
Spartanburg/Cherokee/Union	Cherokee County
Sumter	Sumter/Mayesville/Shiloh townships
Williamsburg	Earle/Gourdin/Greeleyville/Lane/Salters/Suttons/Trio
York	Bethel/York/Ebenezer/LakeWylie