



# NEWSLETTER



May 2013

## TENNESSEE FSA Office

Gene Davidson  
State Executive  
Director

579 Federal Building  
Nashville, TN 37203

615-277-2600 phone  
615-277-2659 fax  
www.fsa.usda.gov/tn

Hours  
Monday - Friday  
7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

### State Staff

Frank Rodgers  
Chief, Farm Loans

David Sweany  
Chief, Farm Programs

Tyeisha Samples  
Administrative Office

## COC Election Nominations

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to ALL farmers and ranchers. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

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. Members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions.

The COC nomination period runs from June 17, 2013 through August 1, 2013. The nomination form is available at USDA Service Centers and [online](#).

Contact your local FSA office for details.

## Deadline Rapidly Approaching for Crop Reporting

Producers should be completing their appointments to certify their 2013 acreage by **July 15th**. Failure to file an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can result in the loss of benefits for a variety of programs. Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date.

Acreage reports are required for many Farm Service Agency programs. For crops enrolled in programs other than NAP (Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program), acreage reports are to be certified by July 15th deadline for

spring planted crops with the exception of August 15<sup>th</sup> for Processing Beans.

Acreage reports on crops covered by NAP are dictated by the specific covered crop, or 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific crop acreage being reported.

## DCP/ACRE Sign-up Continues

The sign-up period for DCP and ACRE are still open. Producers are encouraged to sign up for DCP before the Aug. 2, 2013, deadline. An even earlier deadline is for ACRE, which will end June 3, 2013.

The 2013 DCP and ACRE program provisions are unchanged from 2012, except that all eligible participants in 2013 may choose to enroll in either DCP or ACRE for the 2013 crop year. This means that eligible producers who were enrolled in ACRE in 2012 may elect to enroll in DCP in 2013 or may re-enroll in ACRE in 2013. Likewise producers who were enrolled in DCP may opt for ACRE enrollment.

[Read more about DCP and ACRE](#) or contact the FSA county office for more information, or an appointment to enroll.

## CRP Sign-Up Starts May 20th

USDA will conduct a four-week general sign-up for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), beginning May 20 and ending on June 14. CRP protects the nation's natural resources through voluntary participation, while providing significant economic and environmental benefits to rural communities across the United States.

Currently, about 27 million acres are enrolled in CRP. Producers that are accepted in the program can receive cost-share assistance to plant long-term, resource-conserving covers and receive an annual rental payment for the length of the contract which is 10-15 years. Contracts on 3.3

*Continued from Page 1* million acres of CRP are set to expire on Sept. 30, 2013. Producers with expiring contracts or producers with environmentally sensitive land are encouraged to evaluate their options under CRP.

For more information on CRP visit the local FSA office or [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

## Online Data Tool for Public

The USDA Race, Ethnicity, and Gender Program Statistics query tool, known as REGStats, is the official new tool of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for making program application and participation rate data available to the public on the Internet.

The REGStats website provides summary information about the number of individuals and entities that apply for, and receive, federal assistance from four USDA agencies or mission areas – the Farm Service Agency (FSA), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Rural Development (RD), and the Risk Management Agency (RMA).

The information available in REGStats includes the number of applicants and recipients, by fiscal year, for USDA programs available to agricultural producers and landowners, categorized by race, ethnicity, and gender. Summary totals may be obtained nationally, or by state and county for the 50 states, as well as the U.S. territories.

Visit the online site:

<http://www.regstats.usda.gov>

## Farm Record Change

Remember to provide all changes to your farm records to 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 to update your records – If you do have changes, please submit those prior to your appointment so we may provide you with faster and more accurate service.

## Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Compliance

Landowners and operators are reminded that in order to receive payments from USDA, they must be compliant with Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions. Farmers with HEL determined soils must apply tillage, crop residue and

rotation requirements as specified in their conservation plan.

Producers should notify FSA **prior to conducting land clearing or drainage projects** to ensure your operation stays in compliance. If you intend to clear any trees to create new cropland, these areas will need to be reviewed to ensure any work will not jeopardize your eligibility for benefits.

Landowners and operators can complete form AD-1026 Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification to determine whether a referral to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is necessary.

For more contact a FSA County Office or visit the FSA website at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

## Beginning and Limited Resource Farmers

FSA assists beginning farmers and or 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 median size.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

## FSA Microloans

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 local FSA office.

## **Loans for the Socially Disadvantaged**

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Farm operating loans are available as well as loans to purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for members of socially disadvantaged applicants.

A socially disadvantaged applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities.

For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African-Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders.

FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

## **Farm Storage Facility Loans**

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

The new maximum principal amount of a loan through FSFL is \$500,000. Participants are now 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. New 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 U.S. Treasury Department.

Payments are available in the form of a partial disbursement and the remaining final disbursement. The partial disbursement will be available after a portion of the construction has been completed. The final fund disbursement will be made when all construction is completed. The maximum amount of the partial disbursement will be 50 percent of the projected and approved total loan amount.

Applications for FSFL must be submitted to the FSA county office that maintains the farm's

records. An FSFL must be approved before any site preparation or construction can begin.

For more information about FSFL please visit your FSA county office or [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

## **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.

For more information you can stop by your FSA county office. Our staff can help with preparing and processing the application forms.

## **Maintaining the Quality of Loaned Grain**

Bins are ideally designed to hold a level volume of grain. When bins are overfilled and grain is heaped up, airflow is hindered and the chance of spoilage increases.

Producers who take out marketing assistance loans and use the farm-stored grain as collateral should remember that they are responsible for maintaining the quality of the grain through the term of the loan.

## **Unauthorized Disposition of Grain**

If loan grain has been disposed of through feeding, selling or any other form of disposal without prior written authorization from the county office staff, it is considered unauthorized disposition. The financial penalties for unauthorized dispositions are severe and a producer's name will be placed on a loan violation list for a two-year period. Always call before you haul any grain under loan.

**[Name]** County  
**FSA Office**  
**Address Line 2**  
**Address Line 3**



PRESORTED STANDARD  
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
**CITY, STATE**  
 PERMIT #XXX

## Hay Net

Producers are encouraged to use Hay Net on the FSA website (<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet>). This online service allows producers with hay and those who need hay to post ads so they can make connections. Hay Net is a popular site for farmers and ranchers who have an emergency need. Individual ads can be posted free of charge by producers who complete a simple online registration form the first time they use the site.

Selected Interest Rates for May 2013	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating - Direct	1.375%
Farm Ownership - Direct	3.500%
Limited Resource	5.000%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.500%
Emergency	2.375%
Farm Storage Facility – 7 year	1.250%
Farm Storage Facility – 10 year	1.875%
Farm Storage Facility – 12 year	2.125%
Sugar Storage Facility	2.375%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.125%

Dates to Remember	
May 1	Hispanic and Women Claims Deadline
May 20	45 <sup>th</sup> CRP Sign-up Opens
June 3	ACRE Sign-up Ends
June 7	SURE Applications accepted for 2011 losses
June 17	COC Nominations Open
Aug. 1	Last Day to File COC Nominations
Aug. 2	DCP Sign-up Ends
Nov. 4	COC Ballots Mailed to Eligible Voters
Dec. 2	Last Day to Return COC Ballots