



NEWSLETTER



August 2011

ALASKA FSA Offices

Northern County Office
PO Box 585
Delta Junction, AK 99737

**County Executive Director
Lloyd Wilhelm**
907-895-4242
866-872-3320
Fax: 907-895-5003
Email: lloyd.wilhelm@ak.usda.gov

Southern County Office
800 W Evergreen, Ste 216
Palmer, AK 99645

**County Executive Director
Doug Carter**
907-761-7754
866-872-3320
Fax: 907-761-7788
Email: doug.carter@ak.usda.gov

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

**State Executive
Director
Danny Consenstein**
907-761-7738
Fax: 907-761-7795
Email: danny.consenstein@ak.usda.gov

State Committee

Arthur Keyes, Chair
Susan Willsrud, Member
Mike Schultz, Member

FSA State Director's Column

Transportation Cost Program Update

Last month, a diverse group of 139 Alaskan producers received \$383,637 to help offset the high cost of farming in Alaska by participating in FSA's newest program, the Reimbursement Transportation Cost Payment Program for Geographically Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (RTCP). Farmers, ranchers and growers from all across the state; from Craig, to Bethel, to Kodiak and Manley Hot Springs received payments ranging from \$31 to \$8,000. These farmers produced a wide range of crops, including hay, vegetables, oysters, dairy products, grain, livestock, and peonies.

Alaska farmers make a big contribution to the economy, the health and the security of our communities. They provide jobs, economic activity, and healthy, local food for Alaskans. But our farmers face unique challenges. The RTCP program helps level the playing field for our producers and provide more local food at competitive prices.

Sign-up for 2011 RTCP program started on July 25, 2011 and will end on September 9, 2011. Agricultural producers must complete the necessary forms by the September 9 deadline to be eligible for reimbursement of 2011 eligible expenses. Application forms and information are available on our website, www.fsa.usda.gov/ak at FSA offices in Palmer and Delta, or at other USDA offices around the state.

RTCP information and sign-up meeting schedule

Northern County Producer Meetings

Fairbanks, August 24 from 10:00 a.m. to noon at the Farmers Market.

Delta Junction FSA Office, August 30, from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. in the Cooperative Extension Service Conference Room.

Fairbanks, August 31 from 10:00 a.m. to noon at the Farmers Market.

Fairbanks NRCS Office, August 31, from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Kenny Lake, September 1, from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Grizzly Restaurant.

Kenny Lake, September 1, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Soil and Water Conservation District Meeting at the Grizzly Restaurant.

Southern County Producer Meetings

Homer NRCS Office, August 11, from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Kenai NRCS Office, August 11, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Palmer FSA Office, August 29 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the FSA Conference Room

NOTICE TO HISPANIC AND/OR WOMEN FARMERS OR RANCHERS

COMPENSATION FOR CLAIMS OF DISCRIMINATION

If you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic, or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation.

To register your name to receive a claims packet, call the Farmer and Rancher Call Center at 1-888-508-4429 or visit: www.farmerclaims.gov

The claims package will have detailed information about the eligibility and claims process.



USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

County Committee Nominees for the Alaska 2011 Elections

Elections for County Committees will be held on December 5, 2011. FSA-668 County FSA Committee Official Ballots will be mailed to eligible producers on November 4, 2011.

The following LAA seats are up for elections.

Northern County LAA-2

LAA-2 Includes the area that begins where the Clear-water road intersects the AK Hwy NE to north line of Southeast Fairbanks census area, proceeding to Canadian border, then SE following Canadian border where the Alaska Gateway Regional Educational Attendance Area (AKGREAA) line intersects the Canadian border, turning NW following AKGREAA line to the AK Hwy, then proceed NW on AK Hwy to Clearwater road.

Roger Hendry resides on Cummings Road, Delta Junction. Roger has been raising forage crops and livestock as well as potatoes since 1989. Roger Hendry is a member of Alaska Farm Bureau.

Randy Mayo resides on Spruce Road, Delta Junction. Randy has been managing the Steven's Village Bison Ranch for the past 5 years. The farm produces Bison for meat and raises small grain forage for animal feed. Randy is a member of the Tanana Chiefs Conference.

Southern County LAA -3

LAA-3 Includes all of the Matanuska Borough.

Rose Marie "Tiny" DePriest arrived as a colonist in the Mat-Su valley in 1935. Owned and operated the DePriest dairy for 29 years and currently operates the Tiny Moose Farm.

Janet Dinwiddie was born and raised in the Mat-Su valley. She is a member of the Pyrah family, a farming family who has successfully run Pyrah's Pioneer Peak Farm for over 30 years. The Pyrah's farm is primarily a U-Pick operation. They also raise grass hay, grain, and turf grass sod.

Pam Lewis of Palmer married into a third generation farm family 33 years ago. She has helped her husband with the planting and harvesting of several varieties of spuds. The last two years she has ventured into the greenhouse business, along with tending a nice outdoor veggie garden where she has been harvesting and selling her produce at the Anchorage Farmers' Market.

Kelly Strawn has resided in Palmer for the last 25 years. She owns a 17-acre organic farm on Lazy Mountain. The farm produces a variety of fruits, berries, vegetables, and ornamental flowers, part of which is within a 1,440 square foot high tunnel greenhouse.

All candidates have agreed to serve if elected.

E-Mail Addresses

Up until a few months ago, we have sent monthly newsletters by mail to all producers, and by email to those who wanted the electronic version. Because of budget cuts, we will be transitioning away from "snail mail" to email newsletters. To subscribe to the electronic delivery service, visit the Alaska FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov/ak Click on "Email Updates" on the right side of the Alaska FSA homepage. Individuals will be prompted to enter an email address, then after clicking the "Submit" button; choose which e-mail notifications to receive, including the Alaska Newsletter. For questions or more information about signing up for FSA newsletter e-mail alerts, please contact the Alaska State FSA at 907-761-7738.

Hispanic and Women Farmers

A process to resolve the claims of Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who believe they were discriminated against when seeking USDA farm loans has been established. If you believe that the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) improperly denied farm loan benefits to you between 1981 and 2000 because you are Hispanic, or because you are female, you may be eligible to apply for compensation. For additional information on this and other settlement issues contact:

Hispanic and Women Farmer Claims Process, please visit:

www.farmerclaims.gov or call 1-888-508-4429

Pigford – The Black Farmers Discrimination

Litigation, please visit: www.blackfarmercase.com or call 1-866-950-5547

Keepseagle - The Native American Farmers Class Action Settlement please visit:

www.IndianFarmClass.com or call 1-888-233-5506

Adjusted Gross Income Report to IRS

Producers are reminded they must submit an Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) verification consent form (CCC-927 or CCC-928) to the IRS as soon as possible in order to maintain eligibility for 2009 and 2010 program benefits.

The consent form authorizes IRS to verify for FSA whether a payment recipient's AGI meets the eligibility requirements for FSA programs.

Producers who fail to file these forms before Sept. 2011 will receive a notice from the National Office stating that the producer is ineligible for 2009 and/or 2010 payments.

IRS requires written consent from all individuals or legal entities before verification of the average AGI can be provided to USDA. Individuals must submit form CCC-927 and legal entities must submit form CCC-928.

Loans for the Socially Disadvantaged

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating type loans and/or purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, 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.

If producers or their spouses believe they would qualify as socially disadvantaged, they should contact their local FSA office for details. FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

Rural Youth Loans

FSA 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:

United States citizen or a legal resident alien (or permanent resident of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands)

- ✓ 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
- ✓ Unable to get a loan from other sources
- ✓ conduct a modest income producing project in a supervised program of work
- ✓ 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.

Stop by the county office for help preparing and processing the application forms.

Alaska State FSA Office
 800 W Evergreen, STE 216
 Palmer, AK 99645



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Recover Transportation Cost

Farmers and ranchers in Alaska can apply for the Reimbursement Transportation Cost Payment Program (RTCP). Applications will be accepted between July 25 and September 9, 2011 for this USDA Farm Service Agency program providing relief from the high transportation costs that Alaskan agricultural producer's experience. Contact the Alaska Farm Service Agency for information. Applications open July 25 and close September 9, 2011.

DON'T DELAY - ASK TODAY. www.fsa.usda.gov/ak

**Southern Service Center
 800 West Evergreen #216
 Palmer, AK 99645
 Doug Carter, 907-761-7754**

**Northern Service Center
 Jarvis Bldg. 1420-1/2 Alaska Hwy.
 Delta Junction, AK 99737
 Lloyd, Wilhelm, 907-895-4242**

Selected Interest Rates for August 2011		
Farm Operating - Direct		2.125%
Farm Ownership - Direct		4.625%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher		1.500%
Farm Storage Facility Loan	7 year	2.250%
	10 year	3.000%
	12 year	3.375%
Commodity Loans	1996-Present	1.250%

Dates to Remember	
August 24	Fairbanks Farmers Market
August 29	Producer Meeting Palmer FSA Office
August 30	Producer Meeting Delta Junction FSA Office
August 31	Fairbanks Farmers Market
August 31	Fairbanks NRCS Office
Sept. 1	Kenny Lake Grizzly Restaurant
9 Sept.	RTCP Sign-up Closed

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of 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, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or 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, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.