



NEWSLETTER



November
2012

County Committee Voting Begins - Ballots Due Dec. 3

Ballots for this year's county committee election will be mailed to eligible voters on November 5, 2012. Voters must complete their ballots and return them to the Farm Service Agency county office by the close of business on December 3, 2012. If mailed, ballots must be postmarked by midnight December 3, 2012.

Eligible voters in a Local Administrative Area #1 who have not received a ballot should contact the FSA county office staff.

Voter Requirements - Persons meeting requirements in **1 or 2, plus 3**, below, are eligible to vote:

1. Be of legal voting age and have an interest in a farm or ranch as any of the following:

- An individual
- The authorized representative of an entity
- Both spouses when property is owned jointly
- Spouses in community property states.

2. Is not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations on an entire farm.

3. Participates or cooperates in any FSA program that is provided by law.

Discrimination Prohibited - No person shall 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.

2013 NAP Coverage Deadlines

The Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) is designed to provide catastrophic coverage for all crops not covered by Federal Crop Insurance. These include alfalfa, grass hay, rye crops, grain hay and pasture. Producers interested in purchasing coverage for the 2013 crop year must do so by the following deadlines:

- Pasture, alfalfa, grass, mixed forage, barley, rye, triticale and wheat hay—**11-30-2012**
- Oat hay—**03-15-2013**

The application fee is \$ 250 per crop, \$ 750 per county and \$ 1,875 for multi-county.

2013 Crop Reporting

The acreage reporting deadlines have been changed to coincide with acreage reporting dates for federal crop insurance. The first major crop reporting date is December 15 for the following crops: Alfalfa Seed, Fall Barley, Fall Canola, Perennial Forage, Mint, Winter Onions, Fall Wheat, and other Fall-Seeded Small Grains.

Increased Guaranteed Loan Limit

The Farm Service Agency has announced that the loan limit for the Guaranteed Loan Program has increased to \$1,302,000. The limit is adjusted annually based on an inflation index and data compiled by the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

As a reminder, the one-time loan origination fee charged on FSA guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans is 1.5 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan.

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

**County Committee
Jim McNeley
Alice Dinsdale
Martin Landa**

**Office Staff
Marti Hamilton
Maryanne Webster**

Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher Claims Period

USDA has announced that Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA in past decades can file claims between September 24, 2012 and March 25, 2013.

The process offers a voluntary alternative to litigation for each Hispanic or female farmer and rancher who can prove that USDA denied their applications for loan or loan servicing assistance for discriminatory reasons for certain time periods between 1981 and 2000.

As announced in February 2011, the voluntary claims process will make available at least \$1.33 billion for cash awards and tax relief payments, plus up to \$160 million in farm debt relief, to eligible Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers. There are no filing fees to participate in the program.

The Department will continue reaching out to potential Hispanic and female claimants, around the country to get the word out to individuals who may be eligible for this program so they have the opportunity to participate.

Call center representatives can be reached at 1-888-508-4429. Claimants must register for a claims package (by calling the number or visiting the website) and the claims package will be mailed to claimants. All those interested in learning more or receiving information about the claims process and claims packages are encouraged to attend meetings in your communities about the claims process and contact the website or claims telephone number.

Website: www.farmerclaims.gov

Phone: 1-888-508-4429

Claims Period: Sept. 24, 2012 - March 25, 2013.

Independent legal services companies will administer the claims process and adjudicate the claims. Although there are no filing fees to participate and a lawyer is not required to participate in the claims process, persons seeking legal advice may contact a lawyer or other legal services provider.

To read Secretary Tom Vilsack's entire news release click on the following link:

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2012/09/0309.xml&contentonly=true>

2011 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program Applications

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) will continue to accept SURE applications for 2011 crop losses through June 7, 2013. The SURE Program provides payments to producers when crop revenues are less than the crop guarantee. The SURE Program payment is equal to 60 percent of the difference between the crop guarantee and revenue.

To determine the guarantee and revenue for the SURE Program, all crops on all farms for a producer are included in the calculation. Payments under the SURE Program are limited to \$100,000.

To be eligible for the 2011 SURE Program, producers must have crop insurance on all insurable crops. For crops that are not covered by crop insurance, producers must have purchased Non Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage with FSA. The crop insurance and NAP purchase requirement is waived for crops that are not economically significant to the farming operation. In addition, for SURE Payment the producer must have at least one crop with a 10 percent production loss.

For more information concerning the 2011 SURE program or other Farm Service Agency programs, contact the county office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov

Selling Land

If you plan on selling farmland, you should be aware of several consequences associated with FSA programs. For example, if you're planning to sell land that's enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program, the buyer must agree to continue the enrollment. If the buyer doesn't continue the CRP contract, you may be required to refund all of the payments you've received to date. Reviewing program implications with your local Farm Service Agency staff before completing a sale of farmland is always a prudent precaution.

Changing Banks

Almost all Farm Service Agency payments are made electronically using direct deposit.

To keep the system running smoothly, it's critical to keep the county office staff up to date on changes in your financial institutions.

If you have changed accounts or institutions that affect the direct deposit of your FSA payments, contact the FSA county office so we can update our files to insure continued uninterrupted service.

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, the FSA has provided priority funding for members of socially disadvantaged groups.

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 a member 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.

Receive News Electronically via GovDelivery

Many producers have already enrolled in the new GovDelivery system that provides notices, newsletters and reminders via email. It's free and it's instant and can be sent to your home or office.

FSA, like many other organizations, is working smarter and more efficiently. Conversion to electronic notifications via email helps conserve resources and save taxpayer dollars. County Committee ballots will continue to be mailed to all eligible producers.

If you haven't signed up yet, do so now. And encourage your neighbors to subscribe to receive free e-mail updates instantly: www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe

Selected Interest Rates for November 2012	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.125%
Farm Operating - Direct	1.125%
Farm Ownership - Direct	3.125%
Limited Resource	5.000%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.500%
Emergency	2.125%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.125%
Farm Storage Facility Loan	1.125%-2.0%

Dates to Remember	
Nov 22	Office closed for the Thanksgiving holiday
Nov 30	NAP Application for Coverage deadline
Dec 3	COC ballot deadline
Dec 15	Acreage reporting deadline for perennial forage and fall seeded grains
Dec 25	Office closed for the Christmas holiday
Jan 1	Office closed for the New Year's holiday