

May 2013



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## Alabama FSA State Updates

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### Alabama FSA State Office

4121 Carmichael Rd.,  
Suite 600  
Montgomery, AL 36106

Phone: 334-279-3500  
Fax: 334-279-3550

**State Executive Director:**  
Daniel Robinson

**State Committee Members:**  
Dr. Walter Hill, Chairperson  
Laura Elliott, Member  
Danny Ellison, Member  
George Hodge, Member  
Fred Hughes, Member

### 45th CRP General Sign-Up Begins May 20

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 sign-up can receive cost-share assistance to plant long-term, resource-conserving covers and receive an annual rental payment for the length of the contract (10-15 years).

Contracts on 3.3 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 and other FSA programs, visit a local FSA service center or [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

Note: Beginning May 13, 2013, FSA will resume accepting offers under Continuous CRP for all conservation initiatives offered under the program, including: Highly Erodible Land Initiative; Longleaf Pine initiative; Wetland Restoration Initiative; Upland Bird Habitat Buffer Initiative; Duck Nesting Habitat Initiative; and Pollinator Initiative.

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### ACRE Sign-Up Ends June 3

The sign-up period for DCP and ACRE is 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.

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## Acreage Certification Deadlines Approaching

--May 15, 2013, is the deadline to report 2013 crop tobacco, sweet corn, tomatoes, and potatoes

--May 31, 2013, is the deadline to report 2013 nursery crops

After spring planting, producers should certify their 2013 acreage. Filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, is required for participation in several FSA programs, and can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs.

To be considered timely filed, acreage reports shall be filed by the following deadline dates:

- May 15, 2013 – Tobacco, sweet corn, tomatoes, potatoes
- May 31, 2013 – Nursery crops
- July 15, 2013 -- All crops except small grains and tobacco
- The earlier of: 15 calendar days before onset of harvest, or July 15, 2013, for Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) crops where the NAP policyholder has paid a fee for NAP coverage

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 for the applicable crop.

Note: NAP crop production records must be submitted by the subsequent crop year's final acreage reporting date.

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## 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 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 information on Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation provisions, contact a FSA County Office or visit the FSA website at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

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## Financing for 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).

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## 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>

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