



**Alabama
USDA
State Office**

May 2006
Alabama News

Alabama FSA
State Office
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Hours
Monday - Friday
7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Danny F. Crawford
State Executive Director

Required Acreage Reporting Deadlines for 2006 Crops

An accurate and timely certified acreage report is required by the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 for producers participating in the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payment Program (DCP), marketing loans, Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP), Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) in order to be eligible for program payment benefits. Filing an acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of benefits. Photography, official acres and past records are available to assist you in the certification process as well as measurement services to ensure program compliance and an accurate report of acreage. All acreage reports are subject to spot check for program compliance, and no revisions can be made to the report after the crop or farm has been spot checked. The intended use of the crop cannot be revised after the crop is certified so it is important that producers are certain of their intentions at the time of certification.

Producer shares can be revised at any time with documentation presented to the COC, such as a lease stating the shares. Fruits and vegetables are not allowed to be planted on DCP base acres without a payment reduction except under certain criteria. If you plan to plant fruits or vegetables for the commercial market, you should check with the FSA office prior to planting to find out how many acres, if any, you can plant without a payment reduction.

A certification report is acceptable from any of the following: farm operator, farm owner, tenant for their crop share, or person authorized by power-of-attorney. Producers are not required to report crop acreage for reasons other than those mentioned above; however, FSA will accept acreage reports from all producers who wish to report their crops. It is suggested that you call the local FSA Office to make an appointment to report your crops. To be considered timely filed, acreage reports shall be filed as follows:

Reminders

June 1 – Final date to sign up for the 2006 DCP without a penalty.

eGov Services – allows customers to receive FSA services electronically. To utilize the egov services, producers must register online at www.eauth.egov.usda.gov and complete the online registration, then visit your local FSA office to activate your account.

May 31 – Final date to request loans or loan deficiency payments (LDP) on 2005 crop corn, grain sorghum, safflower seed, soybeans, and cotton.

Crop	Final Acreage Reporting Date
Tobacco	May 31, 2006
All crops except small grains and tobacco	July 15, 2006
NAP Crops -- ■ Where the NAP policyholder has paid a fee for NAP coverage	The earlier of: ■ 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest or ■ July 15, 2006
Prevented planted acreage	Prevented planted acreage should be reported no later than 15 calendar days after the final reporting date for the applicable crop.
Failed acreage	Failed acreage shall be filed before the disposition of the crop.

Don't Forget to Report Changes in Farming Operations

Failure to notify FSA of changes in your farming operation may adversely impact your eligibility for USDA benefits. You should be aware of how Highly Erodible Land, Conservation, Wetland Conservation, Payment Eligibility, and Payment Limitation Provisions affect your eligibility for Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP) payments. Changes to your farming operation may include, but are not limited to, a change in the structure of your farming operation or changes in your rental agreement. Any change in your farming operation must be reported to this office no later than September 30 of the program year. Failure to timely report changes may result in ineligibility for DCP benefits. For more information on the above program provisions, please contact our office.

Special Accommodations – Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the local FSA Office directly or by telephone.

Emergency Loans Still Available

A Presidential Major Disaster was declared in many southeastern areas due to damages caused by Hurricane Katrina last fall. As a result of this major disaster, several Alabama counties were declared eligible for Federal Assistance, including FSA's emergency loans for eligible family farmers. Emergency loans are provided to help farmers recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding, and other natural disasters. Several counties in Alabama were also declared disaster areas last fall because of drought and higher than normal temperatures.

Farmers operating in disaster declared counties still have time to apply for low-interest emergency loans. Applications for emergency loans must be received within eight months of a county's disaster designation date, which in this case varies, ranging from May 9, 2006, to November 7, 2006; therefore, farmers are advised to contact their local FSA Office for final submission dates of EM loan applications in their area. Farmers should also contact their local FSA office for applicable counties, eligibility details and more information regarding FSA's emergency loans. Information regarding Secretarial or Presidential Disaster Designations for Alabama can also be found online at: <https://disasterhelp.gov/>.

Reconstitution Methods of Division

A farm, as defined by the Farm Service Agency, is made up of tracts of land that have the same owner and operator. When a change occurs in the ownership or operation of a farm, a farm reconstitution is necessary, and the FSA office staff must be promptly notified. Dividing a farm into two or more resulting farms because of a change in ownership or operation is called a farm division, and there are three methods for dividing a farm's crop acreage base:

- **Estate** –the highest priority method. In this method, the farm's acreage base is divided according to the direction in a will. This method may also be used if all heirs sign a written agreement designating the division of base on the parent farm.
- **Designation by Landowner** –the division of acreage base in the manner agreed to by the parent farm owner and the purchaser or transferee. This method is used when part or all of a farm or a tract is sold. To use this method, the land that is sold must have been owned for at least three years, and the owner of the parent farm and the purchaser must file a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) designating bases. The MOU must be filed before the farm is reconstituted or there is any subsequent transfer of ownership. Owners who are thinking about selling any land are advised to obtain a written agreement on the division of base at the point of sale of the land. When using the designation by Landowner method, all sellers and buyers must sign the FSA-155, Request for Farm Reconstitution.
- **Default** –used when the higher priority methods of Estate and Designation by Landowner are not applicable. Using this method of division, each resulting farm receives the base that is allocated to the tracts of land associated with each farm.

To be effective for fiscal year 2006, which began October 1, 2005, the farm division must be requested by August 1, 2006, for farms subject to the Direct and Count-Cyclical Program (DCP). **Please Note: A request for a farm division after current fiscal year DCP payments have been made will be processed in the following fiscal year. However, if the producer requests that the reconstitution not be processed in the following fiscal year, all payments shall be refunded. After the payment is refunded, the reconstitution may be processed. For more information about farm reconstitutions, contact the FSA Service Center Office.**

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