



October 2012

**USDA
Alabama FSA**

**Daniel Robinson
State Executive Director**

Sign-up for 2011 Crop SURE Begins October 22

Sign-up for the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) for 2011 crop losses will begin October 22, 2012, and end June 7, 2013. SURE is available to eligible producers on:

- farms in counties with Secretarial disaster declarations, including contiguous counties, that have incurred at least a 10 percent crop production or quality loss, or both, on all crops grown by a producer nationwide, except grazed crops
- farms in which, for the crop year, the actual production on the farm because of disaster-related conditions is 50 percent or less than normal production of the farm.

Increased Guaranteed Loan Limit

The Farm Service Agency has announced that the loan limit for the Guaranteed Loan Program will increase to \$1,302,000 on Oct. 1, 2012. The limit is adjusted annually based on data compiled by the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

The lending limit increases every year according to an inflation index. The maximum combined guaranteed and direct farm loan indebtedness will also increase to \$1,602,000. 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.

Producers should contact their local FSA County Offices with questions about farm loans.

Please Note:
Alabama has 45 local FSA offices that service producers throughout the State.

For questions or inquiries regarding information contained in this newsletter or regarding other FSA programs, please contact your local USDA-Farm Service Agency Office.

You may also visit the FSA website at:
www.fsa.usda.gov



FSA County Committee Election Ballots to be Mailed in November

Watch your mailbox for your official county office committee election ballot starting early next month. Ballots will be mailed to all eligible voters on Nov. 5, 2012. If you are an eligible voter in the Local Administrative Area where the election is being held, and do not receive a ballot by mid-November, contact your local FSA office. Completed and signed ballots must be returned to the county offices by close of business on Dec. 3, 2012.

NEW Report 2013 Perennial Forage Crops by November 15, 2012

All producers are reminded that the acreage reporting date for perennial forage crops has changed for Alabama, beginning with the crop used for 2013 harvest. The new acreage reporting date is Nov. 15, 2012. This applies to apiculture, PRF (pasture, rangeland, and forage) insured crops, and permanent grasses, including, but not limited to Bahia, Bermuda, Dallas, and Fescue. Please call for an appointment to certify your perennial forage crops.

USDA Announces Hispanic and Women Farmer and Rancher Claims Period Now Open — September 24, 2012 through March 25, 2013

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today 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: September 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 issued today (9/24/12) click on the following link:

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

IRS 1099 Changes

Calendar year 2012 has brought changes to the way FSA reports farm program payments to the producer and to the IRS.

In past years, IRS Form 1099-G would be issued to show all program payments received from the Farm Service Agency, regardless of the amount. Starting with calendar year 2012, producers whose total reportable payments from FSA are less than \$600 will not receive IRS Form 1099-G. Also, producers who receive payments from more than one county will only receive one Form 1099-G if the total of all payments from all counties is \$600 or more.

The same changes will apply to producers and vendors who normally receive IRS Form 1099-MISC from FSA.

*Subscribe to Receive FSA Newsletters
and Updates*

**To receive free FSA newsletters and updates, subscribe to GovDelivery online at:
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe>**



All FSA Offices will be **closed** on the following dates **in observance** of the respective listed **Federal holiday**.

- **October 8 — Columbus Day**
- **November 12 — Veterans Day**



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.