

**For:** FSA Employees

**Entering Outreach Press Releases in the Outreach Tracking and Information System (OTIS)**

**Approved by:** Deputy Administrator, Field Operations



**1 Overview**

**A Background**

FSA is committed to providing programs and services to under-served and SDA groups. To evaluate FSA’s efforts, FSA developed OTIS, a web-based tracking tool.

OTIS was developed specifically for State and County Offices to do the following:

- formulate, certify, and report State Outreach Plans
- schedule and certify event plans
- request approval of funding for events
- report post-event results
- maintain community-based partner information.

FSA records the planning and execution of outreach activities conducted in National and Field Offices using OTIS. Press releases are considered a key part of outreach. The National Office reviews and comments on bi-annual event results and generates reports on request.

**B Purpose**

This notice informs State and County Offices that to streamline the volume of press releases being recorded in OTIS, the outreach reporting requirements will be changed based on this notice.

<b>Disposal Date</b>	<b>Distribution</b>
May 1, 2012	All FSA employees; State Offices relay to County Offices

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### 1 Overview (Continued)

#### C OS Contact

If there are questions about this notice, contact Nancy Bond, DAFO, OS, by either of the following:

- e-mail to [nancy.bond@wdc.usda.gov](mailto:nancy.bond@wdc.usda.gov)
- telephone at 202-260-6069.

### 2 Using OTIS

#### A Outreach Reporting Requirements

OTIS enables FSA to track the number and characteristics of outreach activities submitted to support FSA Program Outreach requirements. OTIS meets outreach requirements agreed on by FSA and OIG in Audit Agreement-09601-0011-AT, "Minority Participation in Farm Service Agency's Farm Loan Programs" that include the following:

- designing and implementing an automated data and information collection system
- developing a data distribution (reporting) and monitoring system.

Outreach activities for FY 2012 shall be entered in OTIS. The types of activities available in OTIS fall into 2 categories as provided in subparagraphs B and C.

County Offices shall enter their outreach activities **monthly** for FY 2012. After each monthly activity is completed, the "Activity Results" shall be entered. County Offices shall **not** wait until FY-end to enter outreach activities and results.

County Offices shall continue to plan election outreach activities and enter them in OTIS as directed in 15-AO. Activity results for election outreach activities shall also be entered into OTIS as they are completed.

#### B Nonmedia Outreach Activities

Nonmedia outreach activities include conferences, fairs, farm shows, field days, group meetings, technical assistance, and workshops.

#### C Media Outreach Activities

Media outreach activities include broadcast media, direct/electronic mail, newsletters, and print media.

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### 3 Action

#### A County Office Action

County Offices shall enter the following into OTIS for FY 2012:

- **all** outreach activities, categorized into either of the following 2 categories:
  - **nonmedia** includes conferences, fairs, farm shows, field days, group meetings, technical assistance, and workshops
  - **media** includes broadcast media, direct/electronic mail, newsletters, and print media
- **only** press releases about either of the following:
  - Goal 4, “County Committee”
  - Goal 8, “Hispanic/Women Farmer and Rancher Claims Process”.

**Note:** County Offices who send their press releases to their local newspaper or other media outlets, regardless of whether the press release was issued from the State Office or initiated by the County Office, are **required** to keep a copy of the press releases on file in the County Office and record the date it was sent to the newspaper. If known, specify in the file whether the press release was published. The copies on file should be available for future civil rights review purposes.

#### B State Office Action

**Only** press releases about either of the following shall be entered into OTIS:

- Goal 4, “County Committee”
- Goal 8, “Hispanic and Women’s Claims Process”.

Press releases on any other programs or topics shall **not** be entered into OTIS in FY 2012.

**Note:** Entries that do **not** conform to this paragraph will **not** be approved in OTIS. Unapproved items will be purged from OTIS at annual closeout each FY.