

For: State and County Offices

Using Register for Base and Yield Elections

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



1 Overview

A Background

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (the Act) provides a 1-time opportunity for farm owners to make base and yield elections for the Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP). The regulation at 7 CFR §1412.201 provides that election must be made by the farm owner no later than April 1, 2003.

The National Office has received numerous telephone calls from State Offices requesting the use of a register to schedule appointments for the DCP base and yield election process in County Offices with no available appointment times through the April 1, 2003, deadline. Owners are concerned they may be forced to accept the default base option provided in the Act.

B Purpose

This notice:

- advises State and County Offices that the April 1, 2003, deadline for owners to make base and yield elections will **not** be extended
- authorizes using a register, **for owners who contact the County Office by April 1 to make a base and yield election**, in County Offices that are unable to schedule an appointment with an owner because of heavy workload
- provides guidelines for using a register.

<b>Disposal Date</b>	<b>Distribution</b>
October 1, 2003	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

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### 2 Authorized Use of Register

#### A Limitations

A register is authorized for base and yield elections **only when both** of the following apply:

- an owner of a farm contacts the County Office, by April 1, 2003, to make or revise base and yield elections
- the County Office is unable to schedule an appointment for the owner to make the elections by April 1, 2003, because of heavy workload.

#### B Establishing Register

Registers authorized according to subparagraph A shall be established according to 1-CM, subparagraph 2 C, including the name of the owner and the applicable farm number or farm numbers.

**Exception:** Owners are not required to make an office visit to have their name placed on the register. Telephone contacts, e-mails, etc., are sufficient to indicate an owner's desire to make a base and yield election.

#### C Scheduling Appointments

When owners contact the County Office to make or revise base and yield elections, appointments shall be scheduled according to 1-CM, paragraph 3 and the following:

- set an appointment date and time to service owners on the register, that is **both** of the following:
  - the earliest practical date for the owner and County Office
  - within a few weeks following the April 1, 2003, deadline

**Note:** A specific deadline for owners on a register to make or revise base and yield elections will be provided in the near future. Owners who miss a scheduled appointment shall be permitted to make or revise base and yield elections up to the specific deadline.

- attempt to contact owners on the register to make base and yield elections by April 1, 2003, if workload decreases or appointments are canceled.

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### 3 Using Default Method After COB April 1, 2003

#### A Default Method

Specific instructions will be provided in a separate notice, by COB April 4, 2003, on actions to take for farms that will receive defaulted bases and yields.

**Important:** It is imperative that the specific instructions for the automated system be followed. Therefore, County Offices shall take no actions on farms that will be defaulted until receipt of the applicable notice. The instructions will include the following:

- which farms shall be defaulted
- timeframe for **starting and completing** the default method

**Note:** County Offices will **not** be permitted to use the default method until the week of April 7, 2003.

- steps that shall be completed in the automated system.

### 4 Deadline for Requesting FY 2002 Farm and Tract Divisions

#### A Later of April 1, 2003, or Appointment Date

All farm owners have until April 1, 2003, to request FY 2002 farm division and/or tract division for base and yield election purposes. Owners of farms on a register for base and yield election, according to paragraph 2, have until the scheduled appointment date to request a division.

County Offices shall accept FY 2002 farm division and tract division requests through the later of:

- April 1, 2003
- the owner's scheduled appointment date, according to paragraph 2.

**Note:** See Notice CM-452 for restrictions on dividing tobacco farms for FY 2002.

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### **5 State and County Office Action**

#### **A State Office Action**

State Offices shall ensure that County Offices:

- are informed of the contents of this notice immediately
- strictly adhere to the contents of this notice.

#### **B County Office Action**

County Offices shall:

- continue to publicize the April 1, 2003, deadline for making base and yield elections
- use a register according to this notice, when owners timely request an appointment to make or revise base and yield elections, but heavy workload in the County Office does not permit a scheduled appointment date on or before April 1, 2003.