

June 2014



---

## Grafton County, NH FSA Updates

---

### Topics for June

- [Grafton County Announces ECP Sign-up](#)
- [County Committee Nomination Period Begins June 15, 2014](#)
- [USDA Farm Service Agency Announces Tree Assistance Program \(TAP\) Sign-Up](#)
- [2014 Acreage Reporting Dates](#)
- [Beginning Farmer Loans](#)
- [USDA Announces Restart of the Biomass Crop Assistance Program](#)
- [Selected Interest Rates for June](#)
- [Dates to Remember](#)

---

#### Grafton County FSA Office

19 Archertown Rd Ste 1  
Orford, NH 03777

Office Hours:  
Monday-Friday  
8:00am - 4:30pm

Phone: 603-353-4650  
Fax: 603-353-4647

**County Executive Director:**  
Steven Schmidt  
[steven.schmidt@nh.usda.gov](mailto:steven.schmidt@nh.usda.gov)

**Program Technicians:**  
Tara Hamlett  
[tara.hamlett@nh.usda.gov](mailto:tara.hamlett@nh.usda.gov)

Joanne Fullerton  
[joanne.fullerton@nh.usda.gov](mailto:joanne.fullerton@nh.usda.gov)

**County Committee Members:**  
David Clement  
Shirley Tullar

#### Grafton County Announces ECP Sign-up

Grafton County has been approved to conduct a sign-up for the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) administered by the USDA Farm Service Agency. ECP provides emergency funding and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters. In the first two weeks of April 2014 rain and rapid snow melt caused damage to cropland in the towns of Haverhill, Piermont and Orford. **PRODUCERS WHO HAVE SUFFERED LOSSES FROM THE RAIN AND RAPID SNOW MELT THAT TOOK PLACE THE FIRST TWO WEEKS IN APRIL, 2014 MAY CONTACT THE GRAFTON COUNTY FARM SERVICE AGENCY OFFICE AND REQUEST ASSISTANCE. THE SIGN-UP PERIOD IS JUNE 23, 2014 TO JULY 28, 2014.**

A producer qualifying for ECP assistance may receive cost share levels not to exceed 75 percent of the eligible cost of restoration measures. The following types of measures may be eligible:

- debris removal from cropland;
- grading, shaping, releveling or similar measures;
- and restoring conservation structures and other installations.

Qualifying damage includes damage that would:

- be so costly to rehabilitate that Federal assistance is or will be needed to return the cropland to productive use;
- be unusual and is not the type that would recur frequently in the same area;
- affect the productive capacity of the cropland;

Russell Keniston

- impair or endanger the land.

**Next County Committee Meeting:**

July 16, 2014 at 11:00 am

**NH Acting Farm Loan**

**Manager:**

Brian Kuper

[brian.kuper@vt.usda.gov](mailto:brian.kuper@vt.usda.gov)

**Farm Loan Team:**

The Concord Center

10 Ferry St Box 212 Suite 212

Concord, NH 03301-5081

For more information, please contact the Grafton County FSA Office at 19 Archertown Rd, Orford, NH 03777, phone: 603-353-4650.

---

## County Committee Nomination Period Begins June 15, 2014

The nomination period for local Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees begins Sunday, June 15, 2014 and ends Friday, August 1, 2014. The LAA up for election in Grafton County this year is LAA 1 which consists of the towns: Bath, Monroe, Lyman, Littleton, Lisbon, Sugar Hill, Landaff, Easton, Franconia, Bethlehem, and Lincoln.

County committees are a vital link between the farm community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Through the county committees, farmers and ranchers have a voice; their opinions and ideas get to be heard on federal farm programs.

To be eligible to serve on an FSA county committee, a person must participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA, be eligible to vote in a county committee election and reside in the local administrative area where the person is nominated.

Farmers and ranchers may nominate themselves or others. Organizations representing minorities and women also may nominate candidates. To become a candidate, an eligible individual must sign the nomination form, FSA-669A. The form and other information about FSA county committee elections are available at [www.fsa.usda.gov/elections](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections). Nomination forms for the 2014 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on Aug. 1, 2014. Elections will take place this fall.

While FSA county committees do not approve or deny farm ownership or operating loans, they make decisions on disaster and conservation programs, emergency programs, commodity price support loan programs and other agricultural issues. Members serve three-year terms. Nationwide, there are about 7,800 farmers and ranchers serving on FSA county committees. Committees consist of three to 11 members that are elected by eligible producers.

FSA will mail ballots to eligible voters beginning Nov. 3, 2014. Ballots are due back to the local county office either via mail or in person by Dec. 1, 2014. Newly elected committee members and alternates take office on Jan. 1, 2015.

---

## USDA Farm Service Agency Announces Tree Assistance Program (TAP) Sign-Up

As of Tuesday, April 15, 2014, orchardists and nursery tree growers who experienced losses from natural disasters that occurred on or after Oct. 1, 2011, can sign up for the Tree Assistance Program (TAP). TAP was authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014 as a permanent disaster program. TAP provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines

damaged by natural disasters.

Eligible tree types include trees, bushes or vines that produce an annual crop for commercial purposes. Nursery trees include ornamental, fruit, nut and Christmas trees that are produced for commercial sale. Trees used for pulp or timber are ineligible.

To qualify for TAP, orchardists must suffer a qualifying tree, bush or vine loss in excess of 15 percent mortality from an eligible natural disaster. The eligible trees, bushes or vines must have been owned when the natural disaster occurred; however, eligible growers are not required to own the land on which the eligible trees, bushes and vines were planted.

If the TAP application is approved, the eligible trees, bushes and vines must be replaced within 12 months from the date the application is approved. The cumulative total quantity of acres planted to trees, bushes or vines, for which a producer can receive TAP payments, cannot exceed 500 acres annually.

---

## 2014 Acreage Reporting Dates

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for Grafton County:

**July 15, 2014: Corn, Fall Market Sweet Corn, Spring Forage Seeding, All Other Crops**

November 15, 2014: 2015 Perennial Forage, 2014 Fall Forage Seeding, 2014 Fall Seeded Small Grains.

---

## Beginning Farmer Loans

FSA assists beginning farmers 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 average size farm.

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).

---

## USDA Announces Restart of the Biomass Crop Assistance Program

The Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) was reauthorized by the 2014 Farm Bill and will resume on a limited basis [on June 9] upon the publication of a Notice of Funding Availability.

BCAP employs three types of biomass assistance primarily through approved BCAP project areas. For growing new biomass, BCAP provides financial assistance with 50 percent of the cost of establishing a perennial crop. To maintain the crop as it matures until harvest, BCAP provides an annual payment for up to 5 years for herbaceous crops, or up to 15 years for woody crops. To collect existing agriculture or forest residues that are not economically retrievable, BCAP provides assistance with mitigating the cost of harvesting and transporting the materials to the end-use facility.

The 2014 Farm Bill authorizes \$25 million annually for BCAP, requiring between 10 and 50 percent of the total

funding to be used for harvest and transportation of biomass residues. Traditional food and feed crops are ineligible for assistance. The 2014 Farm Bill also enacted several modifications for BCAP, including higher incentives for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, and narrower biomass qualifications for matching payments, among other changes.

Only the matching payments portion of the BCAP, with narrower biomass qualifications, will resume this summer. Additional information will be provided as the updated BCAP regulations and policies are implemented. With the 2014 Farm Bill requiring several regulatory updates to BCAP, the resumption of establishment and annual payments has been deferred until a later date.

For forest residues, this year's matching payments are targeted for energy generation **while reducing fire, insect and disease threats on Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands**. Agriculture residues for energy are also eligible for matching payments.

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA), which administers BCAP, will coordinate the BCAP enrollments. For more information on BCAP and other FSA programs, visit the Grafton County FSA office or go online to [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

---

## Selected Interest Rates for June

Farm Operating Loans (including Microloans) - 2.25%  
Farm Ownership Loans - Direct - 4.0%  
Farm Ownership Loans - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer - 1.50%  
Farm Ownership Loans - Direct - Joint Financing - 2.50%  
Emergency Loans - 3.25%  
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years) - 2.25%.

---

## Dates to Remember

June 23, 2014 - Beginning of ECP Sign-up  
July 4, 2014 - Office Closed - Federal Holiday  
July 16, 2014 - COC Meeting 11:00 am  
July 28, 2014 - End of ECP Sign-up  
August 1, 2014 - End of COC Election Nomination Period  
November 3, 2014 - COC Election Ballots mailed to eligible voters  
**Acreage Reporting Deadlines**  
July 15, 2014 - Corn, Fresh Market Sweet Corn, Spring Forage Seeding, All Other Crops  
November 15, 2014 - 2015 Perennial Forage, 2014 Fall Forage Seeding, 2014 Fall Seeded Small Grains

---

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).