



# NEWSLETTER



**July 2014**

## Rhode Island County Office

60 Quaker Lane Suite 49  
Warwick, RI 02886

### Hours

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

### Phone

401-828-3120 Option 2  
Or 1-800-551-5144  
Farm Loan: Option 3  
Fax: 401-821-0780

### County Committee

Doreen Pezza-Chairperson  
Gilbert W Rathbun Jr.-Vice  
Chairperson  
Victor Hoogendoorn-  
Member  
Joseph Silveira-Member  
Lauri Roberts-Member

### County Office Staff

Ingrid Fratantuono, CED  
Anne Belleville, PT  
Leila Naylor, KPT  
Sheryl Michener, PT

### Farm Loan Staff

Roxanne Boisse, FLM

### Next County Committee Meeting:

August 6, 2014 at 10:00 am

## Rhode Island County FSA Updates

The Rhode Island County Office staff are diligently working with producers on filing their acreage report(s) by the July 15th crop reporting deadline to ensure producers maintain their program eligibility. We are also beginning to learn more about the Margin Protection Program (MPP) for our Dairy Producers as the Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC) will end by September 1st.

### July 15th, Final day to report all planted Annual Crops!

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit the Rhode Island County FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline of July 15th for all annual crops.

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting date:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.
- If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of "cover only," "green manure," "left standing," or "seed," then the acreage must be reported by July 15th

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins. For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact the Rhode Island County FSA office at 401-828-3120 option 2.

### Compliance Spot Checks

Compliance spot checks will be conducted on 2014 crops. Instead of locally selecting farms, contracts, deficiency loans, etc. for review, a nationwide selection of producers is employed. Spot check selections are to be conducted based on a producer's participation in Conservation Reserve Program, Direct and Counter-cyclical Program, Loan Deficiency Program, etc. For more information about the spot check selection procedure, feel free to contact your local Farm Service Agency office for additional clarification.

## COC Nomination Deadline

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committees is important to farmers and ranchers. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA County Committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

County Committee members are a critical component of the operations of FSA. They help deliver FSA farm programs at the local level. Farmers and ranchers who serve on County Committees help with the decisions necessary to administer the programs in their counties. They work to ensure FSA agricultural programs serve the needs of local producers.

FSA County Committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws. County Committee members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions.

The COC nomination period runs from June 17, 2014 through August 1, 2014. The nomination form is available at USDA Service Centers and online. This year the following County is up for County Committee Election in Rhode Island **LAA-3 Washington County**. For more information contact your local FSA office.

## USDA Kicks off the 2014 "Feds Feed Families" Nationwide Food Drive

USDA kicked off the 6th annual Feds Feed Families Campaign on June 2, 2014. The food drive is an annual event in which Federal employees, nationwide, collect food for distribution by food banks, food pantries, and shelters. The Feds Feed Families program started in 2009. The 2014 food drive officially began on June 2 and will run through August 27.

All Federal agencies across the country participate in the campaign and Federal employees are asked to donate non-perishable food items throughout the summer. Donations are given to local food banks across the country – having a positive impact to help food banks address food insecurity. Secretary Vilsack noted that the latest USDA estimates show that in 2012, food insecurity affected 14.5 percent of American households at some point.

If you are interested in making a donation to the annual "Feds Feed Families" Food Drive, please contact your local USDA Service Center at 401-828-3120 Option 2.

For more information on the Feds Feed Families campaign, please visit: <http://www.usda.gov/fedsfeedfamilies>.

## **2012 & 2013 ELAP Losses Must be Filed by Aug. 1, 2014 for Honeybee, Livestock and Farm-Raised Fish Losses**

Producers who suffered eligible livestock, honeybee or farm-raised fish losses have until August 1, 2014, to submit a notice of loss and application for payment under the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-raised Fish Program (ELAP).

ELAP provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish that have losses due to disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires. ELAP assistance is provided for losses not covered by the Livestock Forage Program (LFP) and Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP). Producers who suffered eligible livestock, honeybee or farm-raised fish losses during 2012 and 2013 program years must submit a notice of loss and application for payment to their local FSA office by August 1, 2014. For 2014 program year losses, the notice of loss and an application for payment must be submitted by November 1, 2014.

For more information, producers can review the ELAP Fact Sheet on the Farm Bill webpage. Producers are encouraged to make an appointment with their local FSA office to apply for these programs.

## **Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food**

The Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food (KYF2) initiative is a USDA-wide effort focused on strengthening local and regional food systems.

In recent years, consumers have shown an increased interest in purchasing locally-produced foods and many farmers and ranchers followed the trend and offer fresh foods through local markets.

USDA followed suit, developing KYF2, which helps connect consumers with producers in their community. USDA offers a wide range of programs that can assist farmers, ranchers, businesses, communities and individuals. To learn more about grants, loans and support that is available, visit [http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=KYF\\_GRANTS](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=KYF_GRANTS).

These USDA programs stimulate economic development in agricultural communities, foster new opportunities for farmers and ranchers, promote locally and regionally grown and processed foods, cultivate healthy eating habits and educated consumers, expand access to affordable fresh and local food and develop a connection between food, agriculture, community and the environment.

For more information on KYF2, visit <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/knowyourfarmer=navid=KNOWYOURFARMER>.

## USDA Announces New Support for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers

*Department Implementing New Farm Bill Programs, Unveiling New Centralized Online Resource to Support Next Generation of Farmers*

USDA has announced the implementation of new Farm Bill measures and other policy changes to improve the financial security of new and beginning farmers and ranchers. USDA also unveiled [www.USDA.gov/newfarmers](http://www.USDA.gov/newfarmers), a new website that will provide a centralized, one-stop resource where beginning farmers and ranchers can explore the variety of USDA initiatives designed to help them succeed.

USDA's [www.usda.gov/newfarmers](http://www.usda.gov/newfarmers) has in depth information for new farmers and ranchers, including: how to increase access to land and capital; build new market opportunities; participate in conservation opportunities; select and use the right risk management tools; and access USDA education, and technical support programs. These issues have been identified as top priorities by new farmers. The website will also feature instructive case studies about beginning farmers who have successfully utilized USDA resources to start or expand their business operations.

Today's policy announcements in support of beginning farmers and ranchers include:

- Waiving service fees for new and beginning farmers or ranchers to enroll in the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the 2014 crop year. NAP provides risk management tools to farmers who grow crops for which there is no crop insurance product. Under this waiver, announced via an official notice to Farm Service Agency offices, farmers and ranchers whom already enrolled in NAP for the 2014 crop year and certified to being a beginning farmer or social disadvantaged farmer are eligible for a service fee refund.
- Eliminating payment reductions under the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) for new and beginning farmers which will allow routine, prescribed, and emergency grazing outside the primary nesting season on enrolled land consistent with approved conservation plans. Previously, farmers and ranchers grazing on CRP land were subject to a reduction in CRP payments of up to 25 percent. Waiving these reductions for new and beginning farmers will provide extra financial support during times of emergency like drought and other natural disasters.
- Increasing payment rates to beginning farmers and ranchers under Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP). Under this provision, beginning and farmers can claim up 90 percent of losses for lost livestock, such as bees, under ELAP. This is a fifty percent increase over previously available payment amounts to new and beginning farmers.

In the near future, USDA will also announce additional crop insurance program changes for beginning farmers and ranchers – including discounted premiums, waiver of administrative fees, and other benefits.

Additional information about USDA actions in support of beginning farmers and ranchers is available [here](#).

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).