

November 2013



Alaska State and County FSA Updates

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ALASKA FSA Office

www.fsa.usda.gov/ak

Northern County Office

PO Box 585
Delta Junction, AK 99737

County Executive Director/Farm Loan Officer

Lloyd Wilhelm
907-895-4242
Fax: 907-895-5003
Email:
lloyd.wilhelm@ak.usda.gov

Southern County Office
800 W Evergreen, Ste 216
Palmer, AK 99645

County Executive Director/Farm Loan Officer Vacant

907-761-7754
Fax: 907-761-7789

Hours Monday-Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Alaska FSA State Director News

As our Alaskan fall turns quickly to winter, it's a good time to reflect on this year's growing season and start planning for next year. Wasn't this a crazy year? We had one of the coldest springs, which delayed planting, a hot dry summer, and now a warm, windy wet fall. I don't know about you, but I'm ready for the snow to fall.

Winter is a great time for financial planning. Gather up all of your records and receipts and take a good hard look at your income and expenses. Those of you who have applied for FSA's Reimbursement Transportation Cost Program (RTCP) should contact your local office to be sure you have submitted all of the necessary documentation of your expenses from this fiscal year. Also, as you plan for next season, check out our new Microloan Program (in this Newsletter or online at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=fmlp&topic=dflop>) to use this simplified new program to expand or improve your operations. You may also want to consider our risk management tools, such as the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=diap&topic=nap>, to protect yourself against potential crop losses in the future.

Call, click or visit our FSA offices this winter to talk to us about how FSA can help with comprehensive business planning for a successful farm, ranch or growing operation.

RTCP Deadline to Turn In Your Receipts

State Executive Director
Danny Consenstein
907-761-7738
Fax: 907-761-7795

Email:
danny.consenstein@ak.usda.gov

State Committee

Arthur Keyes, Chair
Mike Schultz, Member
Nathan Soboleff, Member

Committee Meetings:

Northern Co. Dec. 5 at 10:00 am
Southern Co. Dec. 5 at 4:00 pm

Extended to November 22, 2013

The Reimbursement Transportation Cost Program (RTCP) signup ended on September 9, 2013. This program covered transportation expenses incurred from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013. If you applied for the RTCP program, and have not turned all your receipts in to the FSA office, now is the time to do so. The final deadline to turn in receipts is November 22, 2013. If you have any questions, contact your local FSA office.

Changing Banks

Almost all Farm Service Agency payments are made electronically using direct deposit. To keep the system running smoothly, it's critical to keep the county office staff up to date on changes you might make in your financial institutions.

If you have changed accounts or institutions that might affect the direct deposit of your FSA payments, contact the FSA county office so we can update our files to insure continued uninterrupted service.

County Committee Elections

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. 4, 2013. If for some reason you don't receive a ballot, feel free to notify the county FSA office.

Completed and signed ballots must be returned to the county office by close of business on Dec.2, 2013.

The following are this year's candidates who have been nominated in their LAA's to serve as a committee member. All candidates have agreed to serve if elected.

Northern County LAA-1

LAA-1 Includes the area that encompasses the following areas: North Slope, Northwest Arctic, Yukon-Koyukuk and Nome Census areas, as well as the Denali and Fairbanks North Star Borough.

McLaren "Mac" Carter resides in Central, AK, a diversified farmers market vegetable producer who raises a large variety of crops from tomatoes to potatoes and has lived and farmed in the Central, Alaska community for 16 years. The Carter's are very involved with the community and each year celebrate a annual bringing in of the crops through a community festival for the whole area.

Lawrence "Bruce" Davis resides in Nome, AK, is a second generation Nome Reindeer Herder who manages and oversees the family Reindeer herd on the Seward Peninsula. Lawrence is involved with different USDA conservation and farm programs that promote sound conservation practices, herd health and grazing measures.

Election Ballots will be Counted in Public at the Northern County FSA Office at 10:00 a.m. on December 5, 2013.

Southern County LAA -2

LAA-2 Includes the municipality of Anchorage, Valdez/Cordova Census area south of Chugach Mtns. Kenai Peninsula Borough north of Kasilof River.

Abby Ala, a 2nd generation farmer in Soldotna on land that has been in her family for over 66 years. Abby

operates a greenhouse, produces vegetables as well as hay, and boards horses.

Natasha Ala, a 3rd generation Alaska homestead family in Soldotna follows in a long tradition of farming and soil and water conservation.

William L. Hightower grew up on his grandmother's farm in Iowa and attended Iowa State University studying forestry. Since moving to Sterling, Alaska in 1975 he has been involved in mini farming, raising produce and livestock.

Election Ballots will be Counted in Public at the Southern County FSA Office at 4:00 p.m. on December 5, 2013.

Eligible voters in the above local administrative area who have not received a ballot should contact the FSA county office staff.

Voter Requirements - Persons meeting requirements in **1** or **2**, plus **3**, below, are eligible to vote: **1.** Legal voting age and have an interest in a farm or ranch as any of the following: an individual, an authorized representative of an entity, spouses when property is owned jointly or in community property states. **2.** Not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations on an entire farm. **3.** Participates or cooperates in any FSA program that is provided by law.

Discrimination Prohibited No person shall be denied the right to vote because of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation or marital or family status.

Loans for the Socially Disadvantaged

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Farm operating loans are available as well as loans to purchase or improve farms or ranches. While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for members of socially disadvantaged applicants.

A socially disadvantaged applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities.

For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African-Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders.

FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

Microloan Program

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) has a new Microloan (ML) program to better serve the unique financial operating needs of beginning, niche and small family farm operations.

The low-interest FSA Microloan can help farmers with credit needs of \$35,000 or less. The streamlined application process fits the needs of new and smaller producers. This loan program will also be useful to specialty crop producers and operators of community supported agriculture (CSA).

Eligible applicants can apply for up to \$35,000 to pay for start-up expenses such as hoop houses to extend the growing season, essential tools, irrigation and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents,

marketing, and distribution expenses. As financing needs increase, applicants can apply for a regular operating loan up to the maximum amount of \$300,000. Applicants can also obtain financing from a commercial lender under FSA's Guaranteed Loan Program.

Individuals interested in applying for a microloan or would like to discuss other farm loan programs available, should contact the local FSA office to setup an appointment.

Rural Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency makes loans to rural youths to establish and operate income-producing projects in connection with 4-H Clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5,000. For more information you can stop by your FSA county office. Our staff can help with preparing and processing the application forms.

Selected Interest Rates for November 2013

Farm Operating - Direct 2.125%
Farm Ownership - Direct 4.250%
Farm Ownership - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher 1.500%
Farm Storage Facility – 7 year 2.000%
Farm Storage Facility – 10 year 2.625%
Farm Storage Facility – 12 year 2.875%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present 1.125%

Dates to Remember

Nov. 4, 2013 – COC ballots mailed to eligible voters
Nov. 22, 2013 - Last day to submit receipts for RTCP to the USDA Service Center
Dec. 2, 2013 - Last day to return voted COC ballots to the USDA Service Center
Dec. 5, 2013 -Northern County Office Count Ballots at 10:00 a.m.

Dec. 5, 2013 -Southern County Office Count Ballots at 4:00 p.m.

Jan. 1, 2014 - Newly elected county committee members take office

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).