



May/June 2012

**USDA
Alabama FSA**

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State Executive Director

June 1, 2012, is the Deadline to Sign Up for DCP/ACRE

Enrollment is now underway for the 2012 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Program (DCP). The deadline to sign up for DCP is **June 1, 2012**. Here are some IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

- All producers planting on **DCP base acres** must be identified on the DCP/ACRE contract and receive a proportionate share of the DCP/ACRE payment for the farm.
- Changes on the farm that take place after the June 1, 2012, enrollment deadline **must** be reported to your local FSA office. Changes may include, but are not limited to:
 - Ownership changes
 - Producer changes (Individuals and Entities)
 - Change in crop share arrangements

The Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) offers producers an alternative to DCP payments. The ACRE alternative provides eligible producers a state-level revenue guarantee, based on the five-year state Olympic average yield and the two-year national average price. By participating in ACRE, producers elect to forgo counter-cyclical payments. Producers also agree to receive a 20 percent reduction in direct payments and a 30 percent reduction in loan rates. **Note:** Producers are encouraged to report farm record changes prior to June 1, 2012. Changes cannot be made after Sept. 30, 2012.

June 1, 2012, is the Deadline to Sign Up for 2010 SURE Losses

The sign-up period for **2010** Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) losses continue through **June 1, 2012**. The SURE provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disasters that occurred in the crop year 2010. SURE is available to eligible producers on:

- Farms in counties with Secretarial disaster declarations, including contiguous counties, that have incurred crop

production or quality losses, or both, and includes all crops grown by a producer nationwide, except grazed crops.

- Any farm in which, for the crop year, the actual production on the farm because of disaster-related conditions is 50 percent or less than normal production of the farm.

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Measurement Service Available Through FSA

Farmers who would like a guarantee on their crop plantings and land use acreages can make it official by using the FSA measurement service. Producers must file a request with the county office staff and pay the cost of a field visit to have stake and referencing done on the farm. Measurement service is available using digital imagery. If an on-site visit is not required, producers are charged a reduced rate.

Incorrect acreage self-certification can result in reduced program payments, penalty or loss of eligibility.

Producers can request ortho-imagery and CLU covering their land (commonly referred to as a clip) at no charge. This would provide the acreage of an entire field.

Please Note:
Alabama has 45 local FSA offices that service producers throughout the State.

For questions or inquiries regarding information contained in this newsletter or regarding other FSA programs, please contact your local USDA-Farm Service Agency Office.

You may also visit the FSA website at:
www.fsa.usda.gov, and subscribe to receive free email updates at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe>



All FSA Offices will be closed on the following dates in observance of the respective listed Federal holidays:

- **May 28** — Memorial Day
- **July 4** — Independence Day



Report 2012 Crop Acreages Before Reporting Deadline Dates

An accurate and timely certified acreage report is required for producers participating in the Direct and Counter-cyclical Payment Program (DCP), Average Crop Revenue Election Program (ACRE), Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE), Marketing Assistance Loans (MALs), Loan Deficiency Payments (LDPs), Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) in order to be eligible for program payment benefits. Filing an acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage, can prevent loss of benefits. Photography, official acres and past records are available to assist you in the certification process, as well as measurement services to ensure program compliance and an accurate report of acreage. All acreage reports are subject to spot-check for program compliance, and no revisions can be made to the report after the crop or farm has been spot-checked. The intended use of the crop cannot be revised after the crop is certified; therefore, it is important that producers are certain of their intentions at the time of certification.

Producer shares can be revised at any time with documentation presented to the FSA County Committee, such as a lease stating the shares. Fruits and vegetables are not allowed to be planted on DCP base acres without a payment reduction, except under certain criteria. If you plan to plant fruits or vegetables for the commercial market, you should check with the FSA office prior to planting to find out how many acres, if any, you can plant without a payment reduction.

A certification report is acceptable from any of the following: farm operator, farm owner, tenant for their crop share, or person authorized by power-of-attorney. Producers are not required to report crop acreage for reasons other than those mentioned above; however, FSA will accept acreage reports from all producers who wish to report their crops. It is suggested that you call the local FSA office to make an appointment to report your crops. To be considered timely filed, acreage reports shall be filed by the following deadline dates:

Crop	Final Acreage Reporting Date
Tobacco	June 2, 2012
All crops except small grains and tobacco	July 15, 2012
Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Crops — where the NAP policyholder has paid a fee for NAP coverage	The earlier of: 15 calendar days before onset of harvest or July 15, 2011
Prevented Planted Acreage	Prevented planted acreage should be reported no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date for the applicable crop.
Failed Acreage	Failed acreage shall be filed before the disposition of the crop.



Timely Filing of Failed Acreage Prevented Planting for Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

The form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and prevented planting for the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). For losses on crops covered by NAP and crop insurance, you **MUST FILE a CCC-576 (Notice of Loss) in the FSA Office within 15 days of the occurrence of the natural disaster or of when losses become apparent. Timely filing a Notice of Loss is REQUIRED for ALL CROPS, including grasses.**

If filing for **PREVENTED PLANTING**, an acreage report (FSA-578) and Notice of Loss (CCC-576) **MUST BE FILED within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.** Contact your local FSA office for a list of final planting dates.

Production Reporting Under the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

Production records for individual crops need to be filed with Farm Service Agency (FSA) to establish an approved Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) yield. If this is the first year you've participated in NAP, you can provide production and acreage information from prior years to establish your yield. If you participated in NAP in previous years, you must report your production and acreage on a yearly basis to keep your yield up to date. Records submitted must be reliable and verifiable and should show crop disposition. It is recommended that producers submit 2011 production records as soon as possible after harvest. **All production records must be submitted by the subsequent crop year's final acreage reporting date.**

FSA Direct and Guaranteed Farm Loans

The Farm Service Agency is committed to providing family farmers with loans to meet their farm credit needs. If you are having trouble getting the credit you need for your farm, or regularly borrow from FSA, direct and guaranteed loans are available.

Ask your lender about an FSA loan guarantee if you've had a setback and your lender is reluctant to extend or renew your loan.

Farm ownership loans or farm operating loans may be obtained as direct loans up to a maximum of \$300,000. Guaranteed loans can reach a maximum indebtedness of \$1,214,000. Producers are encouraged to apply early so that the loan can be processed and funded in a timely manner.

Special loan funds are also available under the **Beginning Farmer and Limited Resource Loan Program, and the Socially Disadvantaged Loan Program.** FSA employees will help you complete the necessary application and other forms, and help you understand what information is required, where to find it, or who to contact to get it. To find out more about FSA loan programs, contact the FSA Office or visit <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.



Cold Storage Facility Loans Available

— FSA's Farm Storage Facility Loan Program allows producers to build cold storage facilities to store fresh fruits and vegetables. The facility may include pre-

fabricated buildings suitable for storing and having a useful life of at least 15 years. The loan may also provide for permanently affixed cooling, circulating, and monitoring equipment, as well as electrical equipment including labor and materials for installation of lights, motors, and wiring integral to the proper operation of a cold storage facility.

Note: Scales, portable equipment, used bins, and used equipment **are not** eligible for financing. Also, facilities built for commercial purposes and not for the sole use of the borrower **are not** eligible for financing.

For more information on this program or other FSA programs, please contact the local FSA county office or visit <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>, then click on "Price Support" (left column), and then "Facility Loan Programs" (right column).

May 31, 2012, is the Final Date to Request 2011 Crop Loans and LDPs

May 31, 2012, is the final date to request Marketing Assistance Loans (MALs) and Loan Deficiency Payments (LDPs) on 2011 crop corn, grain sorghum, safflower seeds, soybeans and cotton.

Adjusted Gross Income Compliance Verification

IS REQUIRED for Producers Participating in USDA Programs



USDA and the Internal Revenue Service have established an electronic information exchange process for verifying compliance with the adjusted gross income (AGI) provisions for farm programs. Written consent is required from each producer or payment recipient for the tax review process. No actual tax data will be included in the report that IRS sends to FSA.

This process ensures that payments are not issued to producers whose AGI exceeds certain limits. The limits set in the 2008 Farm Bill are \$500,000 nonfarm average AGI for commodity and disaster programs; \$750,000 farm average AGI for direct payments; and \$1 million nonfarm average AGI for conservation programs.

Participants in CCC programs subject to average AGI rules must submit form CCC-931 to their local FSA County Office to avoid interruption of program benefits. This form may be obtained from local FSA and NRCS offices.

Practice Farm Safety—



Flowing grain in a storage bin or gravity-flow wagon is like quicksand; it can kill quickly. It takes less than five seconds for a person caught in flowing grain to be trapped. The mechanical aspects of grain handling equipment also presents a real danger. Augers, power take offs, and other

moving parts can grab people or clothing.

These hazards, along with pinch points and missing shields, are dangerous enough for adults, not to mention children. It is always advisable to keep children a safe distance from operating farm equipment. Always use extra caution when backing or maneuvering farm machinery. Ensure everyone is visibly clear and accounted for before machinery is engaged.

FSA wants all farmers to have a productive crop year, and that begins with putting safety first.

DATES TO REMEMBER

May 31	Final date to request 2011 crop loans and LDPs
June 1	Final date to enroll in 2012 DCP and ACRE
June 1	Final date to apply for 2010 crop losses under SURE
June 2	Final Date to report tobacco crop acreages
July 15	Final date to report all crop acreages except small grains and tobacco

FSA 2012 County Committee Elections

The election of agricultural producers to the Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to all farmers and ranchers, whether beginning or long-established, large or small operation. 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. County Committee (COC) members are a critical component of FSA operations. The intent is to have the COC reflect the makeup of the producers and to represent all constituents. This means wherever possible, minorities, women or lower income producers need to be on the committee to speak for these underrepresented groups.

For election purposes, counties are divided into local administrative areas, or LAAs. Each LAA contributes one producer to serve a three-year term on the Farm Service Agency County Committee. Most counties are divided into three LAAs. Combined counties may have three to five LAAs. Each year, an election is held in an LAA where a committee member's three-year term is expiring. In counties with three LAAs, one seat is up for election. In combined counties, two seats may be up for election. This varies among counties.

Nomination Period Opens June 15

Nominations for candidates to run for the Farm Service Agency County Committee Election, representing producers in the Local Administrative Area, will be accepted beginning June 15 through August 1, 2012.

Producers who are residents in the LAA holding the election and who participate or cooperate in an FSA program and are of legal voting age may be nominated to serve on the County Committee. Individuals may nominate themselves or others as candidates. Also, organizations representing socially disadvantaged, minority or women farmers or ranchers, as well as beginning farmers, may also nominate candidates.

A nomination form, FSA-669A, dated 02-22-12, must be used to nominate a candidate. The form and details may be picked up at the FSA County Office or downloaded from the FSA Web site at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>, click on "Newsroom," then "County Committee Elections." Eligible voters can nominate as many candidates as they wish.

To be valid, the nomination form must be signed by the person being nominated, indicating agreement to serve if elected, as well as the person making the nomination, and

returned to the FSA County Office by the close of business on August 1, 2012, or postmarked by midnight August 1, 2012.

Election — December 3

The county committee election is held by mail. Ballots will be mailed to eligible voters beginning November 5, and must be **returned to the FSA county office by the close of business on December 3, 2012, or postmarked by midnight December 3, 2012.**

Who Can Vote

Agricultural producers of legal voting age can vote if they participate or cooperate in any FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the farming operations on an entire farm can also vote. No one can 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. If you are unsure of your eligibility, contact the staff at the FSA Service Center Office.

Who Can Hold Office

To hold office as a county committee member, a person must meet the basic eligibility criteria:

- Participate or cooperate in a program administered by FSA
- Be eligible to vote in a county committee election
- Reside in the LAA in which the person is a candidate
- Not have been: (1) removed or disqualified from the office of county committee member, alternate, or employee; (2) removed for cause from any public office or have been convicted of fraud, larceny, embezzlement or any other felony; or (3) dishonorably discharged from any branch of the armed services.

2012 COC Election Calendar	
June 15	Eligible Voters List is complete and nomination period begins
August 1	Deadline to submit nomination forms
November 5	Ballots mailed to eligible voters
December 3	Deadline to return completed ballots to FSA County Office
January 1, 2013	New committee members and alternates take office

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.