

July 2014



## Topics for July

- [2013 ACRE](#)
- [Continuous Conservation Reserve Program \(CRP\) Sign-up](#)
- [Report Crops before the July 15, 2014, Acreage Reporting Deadline](#)
- [COC Nomination Deadline is August 1](#)
- [2012 & 2013 ELAP Losses Must be Filed by Aug. 1, 2014 for Honeybee, Livestock and Farm-Raised Fish Losses](#)
- [USDA Announces New Support for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers](#)
- [Microloan Program](#)
- [2014 MAL and LDP Requests](#)
- [Compliance Spot Checks](#)
- [Unauthorized Disposition of Grain](#)
- [USDA Invites Suggestions for the 2017 Census of Agriculture](#)

---

## Alabama FSA State Updates

---

### Alabama FSA State Office

4121 Carmichael Rd.,  
Suite 600  
Montgomery, AL 36106

Phone: 334-279-3500  
Fax: 855-747-0599

**State Executive Director:**  
Daniel Robinson

**State Committee Members:**  
Dr. Walter Hill, Chairperson  
Laura Elliott, Member  
Danny Ellison, Member  
George Hodge, Member  
Fred Hughes, Member

**Next State Committee Meeting:** July 15-16, 2014

**County Committee Meeting:**

### 2013 ACRE

Participation in 2013 ACRE requires production reports for planted acres that must be submitted for the covered commodities and peanuts planted on the farm by July 15, 2014. Failure to report production for those covered commodities and peanuts planted on ACRE farms may result in contract termination. If the contract is terminated, all payments, including direct payments previously received plus interest will be required to be refunded.

---

### Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Sign-up

The Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is a private lands environmental improvement program that allows participants the opportunity to enroll acreage in conservation practices that will reduce soil erosion, improve water and soil quality and provide wildlife habitat and food sources. To be eligible for enrollment in the Continuous CRP, participants and acreage must meet certain requirements. Provided the eligibility requirements are met, FSA will automatically accept enrollments of acreage into Continuous CRP. Landowners may enroll in the program at any time during the year. Continuous CRP Practices include but are not limited to: Filter Strips, Riparian Buffers, Farmable Wetlands, Wetland Restoration,

Please contact your local County FSA office for the next scheduled County Committee meeting.

Bottomland Timber Establishment on Wetlands, Habitat Buffers for Upland Birds, Pollinator Habitat Initiative, and Longleaf Pine Initiative. Contact your local FSA Office for more details and a full listing of CRP initiatives.

---

## Report Crops before the July 15, 2014, Acreage Reporting Deadline

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit the FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline. The following 2014 acreage reporting dates are applicable for Alabama:

November 15, 2013: Apiculture, PRF/Perennial Forage, Onions  
January 15, 2014: Blueberries, Canola, Rapeseed, Fall Oats, Peaches, Fall Wheat  
March 15, 2014: Pecans, Potatoes (planted 1/1-3/1)  
May 15, 2014: Sweet Corn, Potatoes (planted 3/2-4/15), Tobacco, Tomatoes  
**July 15, 2014: All other crops**

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- 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 your local County FSA office.

---

## COC Nomination Deadline is August 1

The nomination period for local Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees began Sunday, June 15, 2014.

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.

The COC nomination period runs from June 15, 2014, through August 1, 2014. 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.

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.

For election purposes, counties are divided into local administrative areas (LAA). Each LAA nominates and elects 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.

For more information on FSA and the County Committee election process, please visit us online at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

---

## **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 for 2012 and 2013 program years 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).

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.

---

## **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.

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

---

## Microloan Program

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

FSA offers applicants a Microloan designed to help farmers with credit needs of \$35,000 or less. The loan features a streamlined application process built to fit 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 a maximum amount of \$35,000 to pay for initial 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 or obtain financing from a commercial lender under FSA's Guaranteed Loan Program.

Individuals who are interested in applying for a microloan or would like to discuss other farm loan programs available should contact their local FSA office to set up an appointment with a loan official.

---

## 2014 MAL and LDP Requests

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) is accepting requests for marketing assistance loans (MALs) and loan deficiency payments (LDPs) for eligible 2014 commodities.

MALs and LDPs for the 2014 crop year become available to eligible producers beginning with harvest/shearing season and extending through a specific commodity's final loan availability date.

MALs and LDPs provide financing and marketing assistance for wheat, feed grains, soybeans, and other oilseeds, pulse crops, rice, peanuts, cotton, wool, mohair and honey. MALs provide producers interim financing after harvest to help them meet cash flow needs without having to sell their commodities when market prices are typically at harvest-time lows. A producer who is eligible to obtain a loan, but agrees to forgo the loan, may obtain an LDP if such a payment is available. Marketing loan provisions and LDPs are not available for sugar and extra-long staple cotton.

The 2014 Farm Bill also establishes payment limitations per individual or entity not to exceed \$125,000 annually on certain commodities for the following program benefits: price loss coverage payments, agriculture risk coverage payments, marketing loan gains (MLGs) and LDPs. These payment limitations do not apply to MAL loan disbursements.

Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) provisions were modified by the 2014 Farm Bill, which states that a producer whose total applicable three-year average AGI exceeds \$900,000 is not eligible to receive an MLG or LDP.

National and county loans rates for 2014 crops are posted on the FSA website at: [www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport).

For more information, please visit a nearby USDA Service Center or FSA's website [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

---

## 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.

---

## Unauthorized Disposition of Grain

If loan grain has been disposed of through feeding, selling or any other form of disposal without prior written authorization from the county office staff, it is considered unauthorized disposition. The financial penalties for unauthorized dispositions are severe and a producer's name will be placed on a loan violation list for a two-year period. Always call before you haul any grain under loan.

---

## USDA Invites Suggestions for the 2017 Census of Agriculture

USDA invites suggestions for the 2017 Census of Agriculture that is conducted once every five years by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). The Census provides detailed data covering nearly every facet of U.S. agriculture down to the county level.

NASS released the complete 2012 Census of Agriculture results on May 2, 2014. The agency is now planning the content for the 2017 Agriculture Census and is accepting input. Any individual or organization may submit suggestions on questionnaire items to add or delete, as well as any other ideas concerning the Census. There will be another opportunity to provide official comment through the Federal Register process in the coming weeks.

Content suggestions for the 2017 Census will be accepted until August 4, 2014. Comments can be submitted online at [www.agcensus.usda.gov/Contact\\_Us/Census\\_Program\\_Input\\_Form/](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Contact_Us/Census_Program_Input_Form/). Written suggestions may be mailed to: Census Content Team, Room 6451, 1400 Independence Ave, SW, Washington, DC 20250.

To learn more and to access the complete 2012 Census of Agriculture results, including State and County Profiles and all the other Census data and tools, visit [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov).

---

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).