

November 2018



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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- [Lead Your FSA: 2018 FSA County Committee Election – Vote Today!](#)
- [FSA Offers Joint Financing Option on Direct Farm Ownership Loans](#)
- [USDA Enrollment Period for Safety Net Coverage in 2018](#)
- [USDA Acreage Reporting Deadline for Perennial Forage Changes to July 15](#)
- [USDA Reminds Producers of Disaster Program Deadlines](#)
- [Farm Reconstitutions](#)
- [Supervised Credit](#)
- [Livestock Inventory Records](#)
- [Sign in/Sign up!](#)
- [Diversity in Agriculture at the SC AgriBiz](#)

Topics for November

South Carolina Farm Service Agency

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www.fsa.usda.gov/sc

State Executive Director:
Boone Peeler

State Committee:
Anthony Grant, Chairperson
Robert Battle
Bill Sarratt
Landy Weathers
Beth White

Lead Your FSA: 2018 FSA County Committee Election – Vote Today!

Elections are taking place now for USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees. Eligible voters started receiving ballots the week of Nov. 5, 2018.

Producers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program to be eligible to vote in the county committee election. Farmers and ranchers who supervise and conduct the farming operations of an entire farm, but are not of legal voting age, may also be eligible to vote.

County committees are unique to FSA and serve as a direct link between agricultural communities across the country and USDA. Stop by your local FSA office to learn about the candidates running in your area or look for information in your local FSA GovDelivery monthly electronic bulletin. Not receiving our emails? [Sign up today!](#)

Make your vote count! All ballots must be returned to your local FSA office, or postmarked no later than, Dec. 3, 2018.

Administrative Officer:

Kenn Jameson

For more information on FSA county committees, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/elections.

Farm Programs Chief:

Amy Turner

FSA Offers Joint Financing Option on Direct Farm Ownership Loans

Farm Loan Programs Chief:

William Shelley

The USDA Farm Service Agency's (FSA) [Direct Farm Ownership loans](#) are a resource to help farmers and ranchers become owner-operators of family farms, improve and expand current operations, increase agricultural productivity, and assist with land tenure to save farmland for future generations.

Producers can contact their [local FSA Office](#) for more information or to schedule an appointment.

Depending on the applicant's needs, there are three types of Direct Farm Ownership Loans: regular, down payment and joint financing. FSA also offers a [Direct Farm Ownership Microloan](#) option for smaller financial needs up to \$50,000.

Important Dates and Deadlines:

November 22: Offices closed for Thanksgiving

Joint financing allows FSA to provide more farmers and ranchers with access to capital. FSA lends up to 50 percent of the total amount financed. A commercial lender, a State program or the seller of the property being purchased, provides the balance of loan funds, with or without an FSA guarantee. The maximum loan amount for a Joint Financing loan is \$300,000 and the repayment period for the loan is up to 40 years.

December 15: NAP Application Closing Date for Artichokes, Asparagus, Beets, Broccoli, Brussel Sprouts, Cabbage, Carrots, Cauliflower, Greens, Herbs, Kohlrabi, Leeks, Lettuce, Green Onions, Peas, Potatoes, Radishes, Rutabagas, Turnips

To be eligible, the operation must be an eligible farm enterprise. Farm Ownership loan funds cannot be used to finance nonfarm enterprises and all applicants must be able to meet general eligibility requirements. Loan applicants are also required to have participated in the business operations of a farm or ranch for at least three years out of the 10 years prior to the date the application is submitted. The applicant must show documentation that their participation in the business operation of the farm or ranch was not solely as a laborer.

For more information about FSA Loan programs, contact your local FSA office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov. To find your local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

USDA Enrollment Period for Safety Net Coverage in 2018

Farmers and ranchers with generic base acres in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) safety net program still have time to enroll for the 2018 crop year. Producers with generic base acres have until **Dec. 7, 2018**, to allocate generic base acres, update yields, make a program election for seed cotton base acres and enroll farms that formerly contained generic base acres.

Since shares and ownership of a farm can change year-to-year, producers must enroll by signing a contract each program year.

The producers on a farm that are not enrolled for the 2018 enrollment period will not be eligible for financial assistance from the ARC or PLC programs for the 2018 crop should crop prices or farm revenues fall below the historical price or revenue benchmarks established by the program. Producers who made their elections in previous years must still enroll during the 2018 enrollment period.

The ARC and PLC programs were authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill and offer a safety net to agricultural producers when there is a substantial drop in prices or revenues for covered commodities. Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium

grain rice (which includes short grain and sweet rice), safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed, wheat and upland cotton. For more details regarding these programs, go to www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc.

For more information, producers are encouraged to visit their local FSA office. To find a local FSA office, visit <https://www.farmers.gov/>.

USDA Acreage Reporting Deadline for Perennial Forage Changes to July 15

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) has established a new acreage reporting deadline for perennial forage for 2019 and subsequent years. Previously set in the fall, the new deadline is July 15 for all states, except for Hawaii and Puerto Rico.

Timely and accurate acreage reports for all crops and land uses, including prevented planting or failed acreage, are the foundation for many FSA program benefits, including disaster programs for livestock owners. Producers must report their acreage to maintain program eligibility.

Producers who have coverage for perennial forage under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) must report their crop acreage by the earlier of any of the following:

- the established acreage reporting date (July 15)
- 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific crop acreage being reported
- the established normal harvest date for the end of the coverage period.

USDA Reminds Producers of Disaster Program Deadlines

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds South Carolina producers who experienced losses from natural disasters during the 2017 and 2018 calendar years that they may be eligible for assistance through the Tree Assistance Program (TAP), Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) and Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP).

Tree Assistance Program (TAP):

TAP provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines lost due to natural disasters. Payment eligibility is triggered when a mortality loss in excess of 15 percent on a stand (adjusted for normal mortality) occurs due to natural disaster.

For 2017 and 2018 TAP losses, growers have until the later of Dec. 3, 2018, or 90 calendar days after the disaster event or date when the loss of trees becomes apparent to submit an application with supporting documentation.

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 who have suffered losses due to an adverse weather or loss condition, including blizzards, disease, water shortages and wildfires. ELAP assistance is provided for losses not covered by other disaster assistance programs.

For 2017 and 2018 ELAP, producers must file a notice of loss and application for payment at their local FSA office by Dec. 3, 2018. for losses occurring from Oct. 1, 2016, through Sept. 30, 2018.

Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP):

LIP provides compensation to eligible livestock owners or contract growers for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality, or injury resulting in reduced value, caused by an eligible loss condition.

For 2017 and 2018 LIP, a livestock owner or contract grower must file a notice of loss the later of 30 calendar days from when the loss of livestock is first apparent, or Dec. 3, 2018. For 2017 losses, a livestock owner or contract grower must file an application for payment by Dec. 3, 2018. For 2018 losses, a livestock owner or contract grower must file an application for payment by, March 1, 2019.

Other Amendments to the 2014 Farm Bill by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018

In February, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 made several changes to FSA disaster programs. This includes eliminating the \$20 million fiscal year funding cap for ELAP, eliminating the \$125,000 payment limitation for LIP for 2017 and future years and allowing producers to receive a payment for injured livestock that are sold for a reduced price due to an eligible event.

As a result of these changes, starting June 4, producers were allowed to submit ELAP, LIP and LFP applications for 2017 losses if they reached the payment limitation under the previous rules. The application periods for these programs for the 2017 program year will close on Dec. 3, 2018. Producers who already submitted applications and received decisions on their applications for these years do not need to file again but can reapply if they have additional losses or their application or notice of loss was denied because it was late filed.

Contact your local FSA office for program deadlines. For more information on FSA disaster assistance programs or to find your local USDA Service Center, visit <https://www.farmers.gov/>.

Farm Reconstitutions

When changes in farm ownership or operation take place, a farm *reconstitution* is necessary. The reconstitution — or recon — is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation.

To be effective for the current Fiscal Year (FY), farm combinations and farm divisions must be requested by **August 1 of the FY** for farms subject to the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program. A reconstitution is considered to be requested when all:

- of the required signatures are on FSA-155
- other applicable documentation, such as proof of ownership, is submitted.

Total Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and non-ARC/PLC farms may be reconstituted at any time.

The following are the different methods used when doing a farm recon:

Estate Method — the division of bases, allotments and quotas for a parent farm among heirs in settling an estate;

Designation of Landowner Method — may be used when (1) part of a farm is sold or ownership is transferred; (2) an entire farm is sold to two or more persons; (3) farm ownership is transferred to two or more persons; (4) part of a tract is sold or ownership is transferred; (5) a tract is sold to two or more persons; or (6) tract ownership is transferred to two or more persons. In order to use this method the land sold must have been owned for at least three years, or a waiver granted, and the buyer and seller must sign a Memorandum of Understanding;

DCP Cropland Method — the division of bases in the same proportion that the DCP cropland for each resulting tract relates to the DCP cropland on the parent tract;

Default Method — the division of bases for a parent farm with each tract maintaining the bases attributed to the tract level when the reconstitution is initiated in the system.

Supervised Credit

Farm Service Agency (FSA) Farm Loan programs are considered supervised credit. Unlike loans from a commercial lender, FSA loans are intended to be temporary in nature. Therefore, it is our goal to help you graduate to commercial credit, and our farm loan staff is available to help borrowers through training and credit counseling.

The FSA team will help borrowers identify their goals to ensure financial success. Through this process, FSA staff will advise borrowers in developing strategies and a plan to meet your operation's goals and graduate to commercial credit. Ultimately, the borrower is responsible for the success of the farming operation, but FSA's staff will help in an advisory role to provide the tools necessary to help you achieve your operational goals and manage your finances.

For more information on FSA farm loan programs, visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

Livestock Inventory Records

Producers are reminded to keep updated livestock inventory records. These records are necessary in the event of a natural disaster.

When disasters strike, the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) can assist producers who suffered excessive livestock death losses and grazing or feed losses due to eligible natural disasters.

To participate in livestock disaster assistance programs, producers will be required to provide verifiable documentation of death losses resulting from an eligible adverse weather event and must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent. For grazing or feed losses, producers must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent and should maintain documentation and receipts.

Producers should record all pertinent information regarding livestock inventory records including:

- Documentation of the number, kind, type, and weight range of livestock
- Beginning inventory supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts

For more information on documentation requirements, contact your local FSA office.

Sign in/Sign up!

Farmers, ranchers and agricultural producers have new online options to access U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs. Through USDA's new streamlined process, producers doing business as an individual can now register, track and manage their applications for the Market Facilitation Program (MFP) and 2017 Wildfires and Hurricanes Indemnity Program (2017 WHIP) on the secure and convenient www.farmers.gov. USDA eAuthentication does not have the mechanism to issue login accounts to businesses, corporations, other entities, or for anyone acting on behalf of another individual or entity. Producers, doing business as an individual, first need to sign up for Level 2 eAuthentication access.

- Step 1: Create an online account at www.eauth.usda.gov
- Step 2: Complete identity verification by either using the online self-service identity verification method or by completing the identity verification in-person at your USDA Service Center.

- Step 3: Contact your local USDA Service Center to have your new Level 2 account linked with your USDA customer record
- Step 4: You're enrolled and ready to log in

Users with a secure Level 2 eAuthentication ID, linked to their USDA customer record, can apply for select USDA programs, view and print farm maps and farm records data. Enrolling is easy! Visit farmers.gov/sign-in to learn more.

To locate a service center near you or use online services not requiring eAuthentication access, visit www.farmers.gov. For technical assistance, call the eAuthentication help desk at 1-800-457-3642.

Diversity in Agriculture at the SC AgriBiz

The 7th annual SC AgriBiz & Farm Expo is slated to deliver a diversity of programming at the 2019 Expo. Located at the Florence Center, in Florence, SC, the Expo will take place Wednesday, January 23rd and Thursday, January 24th. There will be tracks for field crop farmers, fruit and vegetable farmers, livestock producers as well as lots of innovative information to gather from others. Whether it is in a formal educational setting, connecting during the many lunch 'n learn sessions or visiting with the exhibitors – there is something for everyone!

On Wednesday, January 23rd, the Fruit & Vegetable track will include a Lunch 'n Learn working session titled, "Online Marketing...What you Thought You Knew." Jan Nirri, with Success Factor Consultants, is a long time supporter and advocate of farming, small business farming operations and especially Regenerative/Restorative practices. She knows first hand of your needs and challenges relative to marketing, web development and online marketing services. Grab your lunch and learn what are the best marketing tools for YOUR business and how to get the most out of various methods available.

Continuing with the importance of marketing, Bruce McLean with NC State, NC Cooperative Extension will discuss the importance of understanding different marketing options and how to choose a path that meets your needs.

Other informative sessions will include learning more about goat and free-range chicken farming; how others have survived and thrived in the produce industry and how to successfully grow fruits and vegetables. The goat and free-range chicken presentation will focus on improving general management practices to ensure a successful small ruminant and backyard poultry operation.

There will be an informative session on the ACRE program and "How to get Your Agribusiness Operation to the Next Level." This session will focus on business planning, grants & funding options, agribusiness entrepreneurs and how to receive free business mentoring.

As you can see, there is something for everyone and this is just a brief recap of the Fruit and Vegetable Track. The schedule for the field crop producers is just as informative with many opportunities to gain lots of timely information.

Save the dates on your calendar and plan to attend the 7th Annual SC AgriBiz & Farm Expo, January 23-24, 2019 in Florence, SC. We will have breakfast ready for you on Wednesday, January 23rd at 8AM, (compliment's of AgFirst Farm Credit Banks) so come early, enjoy breakfast and start the day off with other farmers.

For detailed schedule and more information, visit the website at scagribizexpo.com.

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