The Chatham County Farm Service Agency (FSA) Committee election will be held this year for Local Administrative Area (LAA) 3 on December 3, 2012.

LAA 3 includes the townships of: Baldwin, Cape Fear, New Hope, Oakland-Haw River, and Williams.

Form FSA 669A will be used to nominate eligible nominees. Any eligible voter may nominate themselves or other eligible candidates. However nominees MUST be eligible voters located in LAA 3. Blank petitions (FSA-669A’s) will be mailed to all known eligible voters and are included in this mailing or these petitions may be obtained from the county office.

Persons nominated should actively participate in the operation of a farm or ranch and be well qualified for committee work. A producer is eligible to be a County or Community FSA committee member if the producer resides in the Local Administrative Area (LAA) in which the election is to be held and is eligible to vote. To ensure diversity on county FSA committees, the Chatham County FSA encourages nominations from groups representing producers who are fairly representative of agricultural producers in each LAA and the committee encourages nominations from socially disadvantaged groups and beginning farmers. Any interested person who would like more information on committee nominations or the committee election process should contact the county office.

IMPORTANT ELECTION DATES:
- Aug 1, 2012 . . . . . . . . . . Last day to file nomination form
- Nov 5, 2012 . . . . . . . . . . Ballots mailed to eligible voters
- Dec 3, 2012 . . . . . . . . . . Last day to return voted ballots
- Jan 1, 2013 . . . . . . . . . . Elected member takes office

2010 SURE (DISASTER PROGRAM)
SIGN UP UNDERWAY

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) sign up is now underway for the 2010 year. SURE provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to natural disaster that were incurred in the crop year 2010. To be eligible for SURE payments, a producer is required to obtain crop insurance on all crops in all counties or, if crop insurance is not available, to participate in the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) except for grazed acreage. However, crop insurance or NAP coverage is not required for crops that are not of economic significance or those where the administrative fee required to buy NAP coverage exceeds 10% of the value of the coverage. Eligible farmers and ranchers who meet the definition of Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource, or Beginning Farmer or Rancher are exempt from the risk management purchase requirement. The last day to sign up for SURE is June 1, 2012.

A farm enrolled in SURE is eligible when either:

- a portion of the farm is located in a county covered by a qualifying natural disaster declaration (USDA Secretarial Declarations only) or a contiguous county; or,
- the actual production is less than 50% of the normal production.

Losses are measured with consideration to the whole-farm revenue, which includes crop insurance indemnities and commodity program payments, so that producers are not paid more than once for the same loss. Producers who had a loss in 2010 should contact the Chatham Farm Service Agency for additional information.
DIRECT & COUNTER CYCLICAL PROGRAM

The last day to sign up for the Direct & Counter Cyclical Program (DCP) is August 1, 2012. This includes a late filed period from June 1 to August 1. Please be reminded that you also must complete a crop report of your farm by July 16 in order to receive the DCP payment. Due to budget constraints, the county office will only mail out one reminder postcard in June.

CROP REPORTS

Producers are reminded to report their planted acreage to FSA. Crop reports are required to earn payments in many programs. Crop reports must account for all cropland on a farm, whether idle or planted. Small grains (wheat, barley, oats, rye) must be reported by May 15. All spring or summer seeded crops (corn, soybeans, sorghum, grass, tobacco, cotton, CRP, and fruits or vegetables) must be reported by July 16. Prevented planting and failed acreage should also be reported. Prevented planting occurs when a crop cannot be planted during the established planting period because of a natural disaster. Prevented planted acres must be reported timely while there is still evidence of the natural disaster. Failed acreage is timely planted acreage with the intent to harvest, but because of disaster related conditions, the crop failed before it could be harvested. Acreage reports for failed acreage must be filed before disposition of the crop and producers must be able to establish, to the satisfaction of the County Committee, that the crop failed or was prevented from planting because of a natural disaster.

2012 ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME PROVISIONS

For 2012, FSA will provide producers with an average AGI certifications and consent form (CCC-931) to complete. The form authorizes the IRS to disclose to USDA 2009-2012 tax-related information. Producers should mail or return the completed CCC-931 directly to the county office. As required by law, producers must sign the 931 to grant the IRS the authority to provide tax-related information to USDA. Producers who do not file CCC-931 for 2012 will not receive 2012 programs payments. Producers who have not filed CCC-931 for 2011 will receive written notice of the requirement to avoid delay or refund of program payments received. The IRS will check each participant’s AGI compliance and notify USDA if the participant exceeded average AGI limitations for each year. Average AGI calculations for 2012 are based on the 2008, 2009, and 2012 tax years. Producers whose average AGI appear to be in excess of the limitations will be notified in writing of the results, and provided an opportunity to make available within 30 days to the NC FSA State Office, a 3rd party verification from a CPA or attorney that demonstrates the limits have not been exceeded. Producers determined not in compliance with AGI limitation will be offered appeal rights to either FSA or National Appeals Division. Producers that fail to respond to written notices of AGI non-compliance or are determined non-compliant will be notified of the requirement to refund the applicable program payments.

OFFICE CLOSING

The Chatham County FSA Office will be closed, Monday, May 28 in observance of Memorial Day.

FOREIGN INVESTORS

Foreign person who have bought or sold agricultural land should report the transaction within 90 days to the FSA office. Failure to submit the report could result in a civil penalty of up to 25% of the fair market value of the interest held in the agricultural land. A foreign person can be an individual, a government, or a foreign organization.

OFFICE CLOSING

The Chatham County FSA Office will be closed, Wednesday, FSA Office will be closed, Wednesday, July 4 in observance of Independence Day.