

March 2013



Chatham County FSA Updates

DEAR PRODUCERS: Welcome to the new GovDelivery bulletins and updates service from your Name County FSA office. Note that you are welcome to request to receive bulletins from more than one state and/or county and can add or remove individual subscriptions at any time.

Chatham County FSA Office

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County Committee

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Billy Fitts, Member

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2011 SURE Sign-Up Underway

The Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) sign up is now underway for the 2011 year. SURE provides benefits for farm revenue losses due to **natural disaster** that were incurred by September 30, 2011.

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 7, 2013.

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 2011 should contact the Chatham Farm Service Agency for additional information.

Farm Loans Available

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 currently 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 for a maximum of up to \$300,000. Guaranteed loans can reach a maximum indebtedness of \$1,112,000. Producers are encouraged to apply early so that a loan can be processed and funded in a timely manner. FSA employees will help you complete the necessary 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 Bill Rhodes, Farm Loan Manager at 704-788-2107 ext 115.

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.

Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Compliance

Landowners and operators are reminded that in order to receive payments from USDA, compliance with Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions is required. Farmers with HEL determined soils must apply tillage, crop residue, and rotation requirements as specified in their conservation plan.

Producers should notify FSA prior to conducting land clearing or drainage projects to insure compliance. If you intend to clear any trees to create new cropland, these areas will need to be reviewed to ensure any work will not jeopardize your eligibility for benefits.

Landowners and operators can complete form AD-1026 Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification to determine whether a referral to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is necessary.

For more information on Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation provisions, contact a FSA County Office or visit the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov/.

HWFRCP Ends March 25

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack reminds Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers who allege discrimination by the USDA in past decades that the filing period will close March 25, 2013.

USDA urges potential claimants to contact the Claims Administrator for information and mail their claim packages on or before March 25, 2013.

The process offers a voluntary alternative to litigation for each Hispanic or female farmer and rancher who can

prove that USDA denied his or her application for loan or loan servicing assistance for discriminatory reasons for certain time periods between 1981 and 2000. As announced in February 2011, the voluntary claims process will make available at least \$1.33 billion for cash awards and tax relief payments, plus up to \$160 million in farm debt relief, to eligible Hispanic and women farmers and ranchers. There are no filing fees to participate in the program.

Claimants may register for a claims package by calling the telephone number below Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time or by downloading the forms from the website.

Website: www.farmerclaims.gov

Phone: 1-888-508-4429

Claims Period: September 24, 2012 - March 25, 2013.

Independent legal services companies will administer the claims process and adjudicate the claims. Although there are no filing fees to participate and a lawyer is not required to participate in the claims process, persons seeking legal advice may contact a lawyer or other legal services provider.

DCP Sign-Up Continues Through August 2

DCP and ACRE signups for the 2013 crops are on-going. The DCP sign-up period will end on Aug. 2, 2013; and the ACRE sign-up period will end on June 3, 2013.

The 2013 DCP and ACRE program provisions are unchanged from 2012, except that all eligible participants in 2013 may choose to enroll in either DCP or ACRE for the 2013 crop year. This means that eligible producers who were enrolled in ACRE in 2012 may elect to enroll in DCP in 2013 or may re-enroll in ACRE in 2013. Likewise producers who were enrolled in DCP may opt for ACRE enrollment. The county office recently mailed a yellow postcard to all known eligible DCP Farm Operators. If you have received this postcard, please contact the county office to make an appointment to sign up your farm.

[Read more about DCP and ACRE](#) or contact the FSA county office for more information, or an appointment to enroll.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. 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 20250-9450, 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).