

AUGUST 2014



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Chatham County FSA Office

P O Box 249 Mailing
65 E Chatham St Physical
Pittsboro, NC 27312

Phone: 919-542-2244 ext. 2
Fax: 919-542-4868

County Executive Director:
Claudia A Austin

Farm Loan Manager:
Bill Rhodes

Program Technicians:
Vonetta S French
Lori E Andrews

County Committee

Clarence L Durham, Chair
John S Glosson, Vice-Chair
Billy Fitts, Member

Transition Incentives Program (TIP)

The 2014 Farm Bill authorized funding for the voluntary transition of land enrolled under an expiring CRP contract from a retired or retiring owner or operator to a veteran or beginning farmer or socially disadvantaged farmer to return the land to production for sustainable grazing or crop production. To be considered eligible, participants must enroll in TIP during the period beginning 1 year before the CRP contract expiration date and September 30 of the year when the CRP contract is scheduled to expire.

Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP)

The Non-insured Assistance Program (NAP) will be available for the 2015 crop year to producers for individual crop losses. NAP provides financial assistance to producers for losses on crops that are not insurable and the **loss is caused by a natural disaster**. An eligible producer is a landowner, tenant, or sharecropper who shares in the risk of producing an eligible crop. Eligible crops include commercial crops and other agricultural commodities produced for food (including livestock feed) or fiber for which the catastrophic level of crop insurance is unavailable. To apply for NAP coverage you must file an application for coverage, CCC-471, and pay the service fee and these actions must be taken by the crop application closing date. The service fee is \$250 per crop not to exceed \$750 per producer per county.

Barbara C Pugh, Advisor

Upcoming 2015 closing dates are:

Next County Committee Meeting:
September 9 at 9:30 am

September 2, 2014 for: Sage and **Strawberries** .
October 1, 2014 for: Barley, Oats, Rye and Wheat (intended use NOT for grain)
November 15, 2014 for: Alfalfa, Apples, Blackberries, Blueberries, Caneberries, Grapes, **GRASS (Grazing or Hay)**, Honey, Lespedeza, Peaches, Pecans, Plums, and Raspberries.

Please note that the new crop reporting date for pasture is November 15 of each year. This means that the coverage needs to be taken out AND the crop report must be completed by November 15.

FSA County Committee Election

The Chatham County Farm Service Agency (FSA) Committee election will be held this year for Local Administrative Area (LAA) 1 on December 1, 2014. LAA 1 includes the townships of: Albright, Bear Creek, and Matthews. A producer is eligible to be a County FSA committee member if the producer resides or operates a farm in the Local Administrative Area (LAA) in which the election is to be held and is eligible to vote. Any interested person who would like more information on committee nominations or the committee election process should contact the county office.

IMPORTANT ELECTION DATES:

Nov 3, 2014 Ballots mailed to eligible voters
Dec 1, 2014 Last day to return voted ballots

Loans for the Socially Disadvantaged

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating type loans and/or purchase or improve farms or ranches. While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for members of socially disadvantaged applicants. A socially disadvantaged applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities. For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

USDA Reminds Farmers of 2014 Farm Bill Conservation Compliance Changes

Changes mandated through the 2014 Farm Bill require producers to have a Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification (AD-1026) on file. For farmers to be eligible for premium support on their federal crop insurance, a completed and signed AD-1026 form must be on file with the FSA. Since many FSA and Natural Resource Conservation (NRCS) programs have this requirement, most producers should already have an AD-1026 on file. If producers have not filed, they must do so by June 1, 2015. When a farmer completes the AD-1026, FSA and NRCS staff will outline any additional actions that may be required for compliance with the provisions. The Risk Management Agency, through the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC), manages the federal crop insurance program that provides the modern farm safety net for American farmers and ranchers. Since enactment of the 1985 Farm Bill, eligibility for most commodity, disaster, and conservation

programs has been linked to compliance with the highly erodible land conservation and wetland conservation provisions. The 2014 Farm Bill continues the requirement that producers adhere to conservation compliance guidelines to be eligible for most programs administered by FSA and NRCS. This includes the new price and revenue protection programs, the Conservation Reserve Program, the Livestock Disaster Assistance programs and Marketing Assistance Loans implemented by FSA. It also includes the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, the Conservation Stewardship Program, and other conservation programs. FSA recently released a revised form AD-1026, which is available at USDA Service Centers and online at: www.fsa.usda.gov. USDA will publish a rule later this year that will provide details outlining the connection of conservation compliance with crop insurance premium support. Producers can also contact their local USDA Service Center for information. A listing of service center locations is available at www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/contact/local/.

Foreign Buyers Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA. All individuals who are not U.S. citizens, and have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form (FSA-153) could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, Realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

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).