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Chatham County, NC FSA Updates

Chatham County FSA Office

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

Phone: 919-542-2244 ext. 2
Fax: 844-325-6879

County Executive Director:
Claudia A Austin

Senior Farm Loan Officer:
Bill Rhodes

Program Technicians:
Vonetta S French
Lori E Andrews

County Committee:
Clarence Durham - Chair
Billy Fitts - Vice Chair
John Glosson - Member
Barbara Pugh - Advisor

Next County Committee Meeting: January 12, 2016
at
9:00 am

Producers Must Report Prevented Planting

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds producers to report prevented planting in order to establish or retain FSA program eligibility. Producers must report crop acreage they intended to plant, but due to natural disaster, were prevented from planting. Prevented planting acreage must be reported on form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date as established by FSA and Risk Management Agency (RMA). **The final planting date in Chatham County for Wheat is November 20.**

If a producer is unable to report the prevented planting acreage within the 15 calendar days following the final planting date, a late-filed report can be submitted. Late-filed reports will only be accepted if FSA conducts a farm visit to assess the eligible disaster condition that prevented the crop from being planted. A measurement service fee of \$46 per farm will be charged. If the producer has crop insurance on wheat, and has timely reported the prevented planting to the crop insurance agent, the fee may be waived. Please contact the county office to schedule an appointment to file a Notice of Loss.

Secretary Vilsack Announces Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Sign Up

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that an additional 800,000 acres of highly environmentally sensitive land may be enrolled in Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) under certain wetland and wildlife initiatives that provide multiple benefits on the same land. **The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will accept new offers to participate in CRP under a general signup to be held Dec. 1, 2015, through Feb. 26, 2016.** Eligible existing program participants with contracts expiring Sept. 30, 2015, will be granted an option for one-year extensions.

Farmers and ranchers interested in removing sensitive land from agricultural production and planting grasses or trees to reduce soil erosion, improve water quality and restore wildlife habitat are encouraged to enroll. For 30 years, the Conservation Reserve Program has helped farmers and ranchers prevent more than 8 billion tons of soil from eroding, reduce nitrogen and phosphorous runoff relative to cropland by 95 and 85 percent respectively, and even sequester 43 million tons of greenhouse gases annually, equal to taking 8 million cars off the road. The voluntary Conservation Reserve Program allows USDA to contract with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive land is conserved. Participants establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat. In return, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. Contract duration is between 10 and 15 years. Farmers and ranchers should consider the various CRP continuous sign-up initiatives that may help target specific resource concerns. Financial assistance is offered for many practices including conservation buffers and pollinator habitat plantings, and initiatives such as the highly erodible lands, bottomland hardwood tree and longleaf pine.

Farmers and ranchers may visit their FSA county office for additional information. **Please keep in mind that one requirement for CRP offered land is that the land has a cropping history of 4 out of 6 years 2008-2013.** For more information on CRP and other FSA programs, please visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

Direct Loans

FSA offers direct farm ownership and direct farm operating Loans to producers who want to establish, maintain or strengthen their farm or ranch. FSA loan officers process, approve and service direct loans.

Direct farm operating loans can be used to purchase livestock and feed, farm equipment, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance and other costs including family living expenses. Operating loans can also be used to finance minor improvements or repairs to buildings and to refinance some farm-related debts, excluding real estate. Direct farm ownership loans can be used to purchase farmland, enlarge an existing farm, construct and repair buildings, and to make farm improvements. The maximum loan amount for both direct farm ownership and operating loans is \$300,000 and a down payment is not required. Repayment terms vary depending on the type of loan, collateral and the producer's ability to repay the loan. Operating loans are normally repaid within seven years and farm ownership loans are not to exceed 40 years.

Please contact Bill Rhodes, Senior Farm Loan Officer at 704-788-2107 ext.2 or william.rhodes@nc.usda.gov for more information or to apply for a direct farm ownership or operating loan.

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).