

July 13, 2017



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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Florida FSA Newsletter

Florida Farm Service Agency

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Gainesville, FL 32606

www.fsa.usda.gov/fl

State Committee:

Martin Griswold
Donell Gwinn
Gayle King
James Peebles

Acting Executive Director:

Debby Folsom

Executive Officer:

Debby Folsom

Division Chiefs:

Administrative Officer

Mark Cotrell

Farm Program

Serving on FSA's County Committees

July 13, 2017 at 1 PM EST

Join and listen in as a few County Committee members talk about the importance and benefits of serving on an FSA County Committee. This webinar is open to the public; the audience will be in listen-only mode but questions can be submitted via the chat feature in Ready Talk. [Register.](#)

What's new about the 2017 Census of Agriculture

- *A question about military veteran status.* Respondents will have the opportunity to tell NASS whether they have served or are currently serving on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces, Reserves, or National Guard.
- *Expanded questions about food marketing practices, including the gross value of edible agricultural products sold directly to both consumers and retail markets.* In 2012, this section only included yes/no type questions to determine whether an operation marketed food items

Tom Hockert

directly to consumers.

Farm Loans

Justin Teuton

Please contact your local FSA Office for questions specific to your operation or county.

- *Elimination of specific designations or titles such as principal operator and new/beginning farmer.* Removing these designations helps to better capture the roles and contributions of women and new/beginning farmers. To maintain continuity with the principal operator data series in earlier censuses, the 2017 Census of Agriculture retains a principal operator bridge question.
- *An expanded question about who makes what kind of decisions on the farm.* The 2017 Census questionnaire includes functional decision-making categories for each decision maker listed and asks respondents to mark all that apply: day-to-day decisions, land use/crop decisions, livestock decisions, record keeping/financial decisions, and estate planning.

CRP Routine Grazing and Managed Harvesting

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) participants can utilize routine grazing and managed harvesting as outlined in their conservation plan. Managed harvesting and routine grazing are authorized under certain conditions to improve the quality and performance of the CRP cover.

Routine grazing is authorized every other year. Contracts approved prior to July 28, 2010, and still considered managed grazing can only participate in grazing one out of every three years.

Managed harvesting for hay is authorized no more frequently than one in three years.

Under normal conditions, managed haying and routine grazing can be requested at the local FSA office by the landowner or producer on the CRP contract. The same acreage cannot be hayed and grazed.

CRP acres must be considered fully established before haying or grazing can be authorized. In addition, haying or grazing CRP acres is not authorized during the primary nesting season. For Florida, the primary nesting season is March 1st through July 15th. Producer must request approval before haying or grazing the acreage.

Before grazing eligible acreage, CRP participants must request approval and obtain a modified conservation plan to include routine grazing requirements. CRP participants are not permitted to graze any acreage hayed or grazed under managed or emergency provisions. Participants must report the number of acres routine grazed by Oct. 10, 2017.

Routine grazing and managed harvesting will result in an annual rental payment reduction of no less than 25 percent based on the number of acres actually grazed or harvested. Producers who qualify as a beginning farmer or rancher will not be assessed a payment reduction.

All hayed and grazed acres are subject to FSA spot-check at any time during or after the authorization period.

It is important to contact your local FSA office prior to any haying or grazing activities on CRP acres to ensure your contract remains in compliance.

Enrollment Period for 2017 Safety Net Coverage Continues Through Aug. 1

Producers on farms with base acres under the safety net programs established by the 2014 Farm Bill, known as the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs, can visit their local FSA office to sign contracts and enroll for the 2017 crop year. The enrollment period will continue until Aug. 1, 2017.

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

If a farm is not enrolled during the 2017 enrollment period, the producers on that farm will not be eligible for financial assistance from the ARC or PLC programs for the 2017 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 2015 must still enroll during the 2017 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 and wheat. Upland cotton is no longer a covered commodity. 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 <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Eligibility for Nominations for the 2017 County Committee Elections

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees are a critical component of the day-to-day operations of FSA and allow grassroots input and local administration of federal farm programs.

Committees are comprised of locally elected agricultural producers responsible for the fair and equitable administration of FSA farm programs in their counties. Committee members are accountable to the Secretary of Agriculture. If elected, members become part of a local decision making and farm program delivery process.

A county committee is composed of three to 11 elected members from local administrative areas (LAA). Each member serves a three-year term. To be eligible for nomination and hold office as a committee member or alternate, a person must fulfill each of the following requirements: (1) be a producer with an interest in farming or ranching operations, (2) participate or cooperate in any FSA program provided for by law, (3) be a U.S. citizen, (4) be of legal voting age, (5) meet the basic eligibility requirements, and (6) reside in the county or multi-county jurisdiction in which they will be serving.

All nomination forms for the 2017 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA service center by Aug. 1, 2017. For more information on FSA county committee elections and appointments, refer to the FSA fact sheet: Eligibility to Vote and Hold Office as a COC Member available online at: www.fsa.usda.gov/elections.

Florida Family Farm Conference

All Farmers & Farmers Market Managers Welcome

Conference Day 1

When: July 17, 2017

7:30 AM-5:00 PM

Where: Indian River Research & Education

Center, 2199 South Rock Road

Fort Pierce, FL 34945

Conference Day 2

When: July 18, 2017

8:00AM-1:00 PM

Where: Nature's Green Farms,

Schuman Road Fort Pierce, FL 34945

Free Registration & Prizes!!!

Free Breakfast & Lunch!!!

Raffle: Irrigation Pump and more!!!

Register NOW:

Call :954-434-8220

website: www.nsied.org

Register for FREE Organic Production Workshops Today!

Florida Organic Growers and UF IFAS host two Free Organic Vegetable Production System Workshops in July.

Florida Organic Growers and UF IFAS are hosting two free Organic Vegetable Production System workshops this month.

The first will be hosted on campus at University of Florida on Monday July 24th and travel reimbursement will be made available as needed to interested growers.

The second will be hosted at Frog Song Organics Farm on Thursday July 27th.

Please see details below.

Title: [Organic Vegetable Production and High Tunnel Research Results](#)

Time and Date: 1 pm – 4:30 pm, Monday July 24th, 2017

Location: Straughn Professional Development Center, UF
2142 Shealy Dr
Gainesville, FL 32608

[Register here!](#)

Travel reimbursement available for Florida Growers and Extension Agents. Please inquire.

Topics will include:

- Benefits and challenges of high tunnel production
- High tunnel structures
- Soil fertility and crop nutrient management

- Disease and pest management
- Economic considerations
- Organic certification and USDA cost share program

Title: [Organic Tomato Grafting and High Tunnel Production](#)

Time and Date: 9 am – 12 pm, Thursday July 27th, 2017

Location: Frog Song Organics
4317 NE US Hwy 301
Hawthorne, FL 32640

[Register here!](#)

Topics will include:

- Why graft? - An overview of vegetable grafting
- Tomato grafting techniques and hands-on practice
- Integrated use of grafting in organic tomato production
- Results from an on-farm research trial of organic production of grafted specialty tomatoes in a high tunnel system
- Grafting challenges and economic feasibility

For more information, please call Tyler at FOG: 352-377-6345 ext. 123.

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