
December 2016



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Hawaii & Pacific Basin FSA State Office

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Specialist:

Steve Peterson

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Steve Bazzell

Upcoming County Committee Meetings:

Acreage Reporting Dates

In order to comply with Farm Service Agency (FSA) program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to make an appointment with their FSA County Office to file an accurate crop certification report by the following deadlines:

January 2 - Honey

March 15 - Coffee

March 31 - All other non-insurable crops covered by Non-Insured Disaster Assistance Program not listed in this table. Acreage reporting date is by March 31 of the subsequent crop year.

May 31 - Nursery for the ensuing crop year

July 15 - Banana, Papaya, Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

September 30 - Aquaculture, Floriculture, Ginseng, Mushrooms, Turfgrass Sod for the ensuing year

December 16 - Grazed Forage - 15 days before the onset of grazing

If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office. For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact your local FSA County Office.

Hawaii County Committee
January 13, 2017 at 9:00
am

Honolulu County
Committee
December 16, 2017 at
3:00 pm

Maui County Committee
December 15, 2016 at
8:30 am

Kauai County Committee
December 20, 2016 at
9:00 am

Guam County Committee
December 15, 2016 at
10:00 am

CNMI County Committee
December 15, 2016 at
10:00 am

Contact the County Office
to confirm meeting date
and time, as budget
constraints may limit the
County Committee's ability
to meet each month.

[Click here for a list of
County Offices, contact
numbers and addresses.](#)

**Website for Hawaii and
Pacific Basin FSA:**

www.fsa.usda.gov/hi

Livestock Forage Losses

Producers in Hawaii, Kauai, and Maui Counties are eligible to apply for 2016 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) benefits on native pasture and improved pasture.

LFP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who suffer grazing losses for covered livestock due to drought on privately owned or cash leased land or fire on federally managed land.

County committees can only accept LFP applications after notification is received by the National Office of qualifying drought or if a federal agency prohibits producers from grazing normal permitted livestock on federally managed lands due to qualifying fire.

Eligible livestock producers must complete a CCC-853 and the required supporting documentation no later than January 30, 2017 for 2016 losses.

Additional Information about LFP, including eligible livestock and fire criteria, is available at your local FSA office or online at: www.fsa.usda.gov.

New USDA Commitments to Help Build Up Next Generation of Farmers and Ranchers

USDA prioritized \$5.6 billion over the next two years within USDA programs and services that serve new and beginning farmers and ranchers. A new, tailored web tool was designed to connect burgeoning farm entrepreneurs with programs and resources available to help them get started.

The new web tool is available at www.usda.gov/newfarmers. The site was designed based on feedback from new and beginning farmers and ranchers around the country, who cited unfamiliarity with programs and resources as a challenge to starting and expanding their operations. The site features advice and guidance on everything a new farm business owner needs to know, from writing a business plan, to obtaining a loan to grow their business, to filing taxes as a new small business owner. By answering a series of questions about their operation, farmers can use the site's Discovery Tool to build a personalized set of recommendations of USDA programs and services that may meet their needs.

Using the new web tool and other outreach activities, and operating within its existing resources, USDA has set a new goal of increasing beginning farmer and rancher participation by an additional

6.6 percent across key USDA programs, which were established or strengthened by the 2014 Farm Bill, for a total investment value of approximately \$5.6 billion. Programs were targeted for expanded outreach and commitment based on their impact on expanding opportunity for new and beginning farmers and ranchers, including starting or expanding an operation, developing new markets, supporting more effective farming and conservation practices, and having access to relevant training and education opportunities. USDA will provide quarterly updates on its progress towards meeting its goal. A full explanation of the investment targets, benchmarks and outcomes is available at: [BFR-Commitment-Factsheet](#).

As the average age of the American farmer now exceeds 58 years, and data shows that almost 10 percent of farmland in the continental United States will change hands in the next five years, we have no time to lose in getting more new farmers and ranchers established. Equally important is encouraging young people to pursue careers in industries that support American agriculture. According to [an employment outlook report](#) released by USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and Purdue University, one of the best fields for new college graduates is agriculture. Nearly 60,000 high-skilled agriculture job openings are expected annually in the United States for the next five years, yet only 35,000 graduates with a bachelor's degree or higher in agriculture related fields are expected to be available to fill them. The report also shows that women make up more than half of the food, agriculture, renewable natural resources, and environment higher education graduates in the United States. USDA recently released a [series of fact sheets](#) showcasing the impact of women in agriculture nationwide.

The announcement builds on USDA's ongoing work to engage its resources to inspire a strong next generation of farmers and ranchers by improving access to land and capital; building market opportunities; extending conservation opportunities; offering appropriate risk management tools; and increasing outreach and technical support. To learn more about USDA's efforts, visit the [Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Results Page](#).

Report Livestock Losses

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides assistance to eligible producers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law. LIP compensates livestock owners and contract growers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather, including losses due to hurricanes, floods, blizzards, wildfires, extreme heat or extreme cold.

For 2016, eligible losses must occur on or after Jan. 1, 2016, and no later than 60 calendar days from the ending date of the applicable adverse weather event or attack. A notice of loss must be filed with FSA within 30 days of when the loss of livestock is apparent. Participants must provide the following supporting documentation to their local FSA office no later than 90 calendar days after the end of the calendar year in which the eligible loss condition occurred.

- Proof of death documentation
- Copy of growers contracts
- Proof of normal mortality documentation

USDA has established normal mortality rates for each type and weight range of eligible livestock, i.e. Adult Beef Cow = 1.5% and Non-Adult Beef Cattle (less than 400 pounds) = 3%. These established percentages reflect losses that are considered expected or typical under "normal" conditions. Producers who suffer livestock losses in 2016 must file both of the following:

- A notice of loss the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss was apparent or by January 30, 2017
- An application for payment by March 30, 2017.

Additional Information about LIP is available at your local FSA office or online at: www.fsa.usda.gov.

2015, 2016 and 2017 Average Adjusted Gross Income Compliance Reviews

The AGI verification and compliance reviews for 2015, 2016 and 2017 are conducted on producers who the IRS indicated may have exceeded the adjusted gross income limitations described in [7 CFR 1400.500]. Based on this review, producers will receive determinations of eligibility or ineligibility.

If the producer is determined to have exceeded the average AGI limitation of \$900,000, receivables will be established for payments earned directly or indirectly by the producer subject to the \$900,000 limitation. The Hawaii State FSA Office has begun notifying producers selected for review. If you have any questions about the review process or determinations, please contact the Hawaii State FSA Office at 808-541-2600. Producers who receive initial debt notification letters may only appeal the amount of the debt to their local FSA office. Payment eligibility adverse determinations become administratively final 30 days from the date of the payment eligibility adverse determination letter and can only be reopened if exceptional circumstances exist that prevented the producer from timely filing the appeal.

USDA Expands Microloans to Help Farmers Purchase Farmland and Improve Property

Producers, Including Beginning and Underserved Farmers, Have a New Option to Gain Access to Land

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is offering farm ownership microloans, creating a new financing avenue for farmers to buy and improve property. These microloans are especially helpful to beginning or underserved farmers, U.S. veterans looking for a career in farming, and those who have small and mid-sized farming operations.

The microloan program, which celebrates its third anniversary this week, has been hugely successful, providing more than 16,800 low-interest loans, totaling over \$373 million to producers across the country. Microloans have helped farmers and ranchers with operating costs, such as feed, fertilizer, tools, fencing, equipment, and living expenses since 2013. Seventy percent of loans have gone to new farmers.

Now, microloans will be available to also help with farm land and building purchases, and soil and water conservation improvements. FSA designed the expanded program to simplify the application process, expand eligibility requirements, and expedite smaller real estate loans to help farmers strengthen their operations. Microloans provide up to \$50,000 to qualified producers, and can be issued to the applicant directly from the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA). This microloan announcement is another USDA resource for America's farmers and ranchers to utilize, especially as [new and beginning farmers and ranchers](#) look for the assistance they need to get started. To learn more about the FSA microloan program visit www.fsa.usda.gov/microloans, or contact your local FSA office. To find your nearest office location, please visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Interest Rates for December 2016

Farm Operating Loans 2.25%
Farm Operating Microloans 2.25%
Farm Ownership Loans 3.25%
Farm Ownership Microloans 3.25%
Farm Ownership Loans Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher 1.5%
Emergency Loans 3.25%

Dates to Remember

December 13, 2016 - Deadline to return County Committee Election Ballots

December 13, 2016 - Deadline for Hawaii County producers to apply for Emergency Loans due to impacts of drought

December 16, 2016 - Deadline to apply for Conservation Reserve Program Grasslands

January 11, 2017 - Deadline for Kauai County producers to apply for Emergency Loans due to impacts of drought

January 30, 2017 - Deadline for Kauai, Maui and Hawaii County ranchers to apply for 2016 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP)

January 30, 2017 - Deadline to submit a notice of loss for the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) for 2016

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. 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).



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