

March 2018



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

# NEWSLETTER

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### Hawaii & Pacific Basin FSA State Office

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### A Special 2018 Ag Day Message from: AL Frenzel, State Executive Director, Hawaii and Pacific Basin Farm Service Agency

#### National Agriculture Day Celebrates American Food and Fiber Production

March 20 is National Agriculture Day – a day designated each year by the [Agriculture Council of America \(ACA\)](#) to celebrate the accomplishments of agriculture. The [Farm Service Agency \(FSA\)](#) joins the council in thanking American agricultural producers, especially in Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, for their contributions to the nation's outstanding quality of life.

This year's theme, **Agriculture: Food for Life**, spotlights the hard work of American farmers, ranchers and foresters who diligently work to provide food, fiber and more to the United States and countries around the world. To ensure a prosperous future for American agriculture, FSA provides continuous support to agriculturalists across the country.

FSA is rural America's engine for economic growth, job creation and development, offering local service to millions of rural producers. In fiscal year 2017, [USDA Farm Loan programs](#) provided \$6 billion in support to producers across America, the

## Upcoming County Committee Meetings:

Hawaii County Committee  
April 19, 2018 Time: 8:30am

Honolulu County Committee  
April 20, 2018 Time: 3:00pm

Maui County Committee  
April 19, 2018 Time: 8:30am

Kauai County Committee  
March 21, 2018 Time:  
9:00am

Guam County Committee  
April 11, 2018 Time: 9:00am

CNMI County Committee  
April 11, 2018 Time:  
11:00am

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](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/hi)

second highest total in FSA history. FSA also distributed \$1.6 billion in [Conservation Reserve Program \(CRP\)](#) payments to over 375,000 Americans to improve water quality, reduce soil erosion and increase wildlife habitat.

For agricultural producers who suffered market downturns in 2016, USDA is issuing approximately \$8 billion in payments under the [Agriculture Risk Coverage \(ARC\) and Price Loss Coverage \(PLC\) programs](#). USDA also continues to provide extensive assistance in response to natural [disasters](#) throughout the country, including last year's hurricanes in Florida, Texas, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, drought in the northern high plains, wildfires in the west and central plains, floods, tornados, freezes and other catastrophic weather events.

To support [beginning farmers and ranchers](#), Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue signed a Memorandum of Understanding with officials from [SCORE](#), the nation's largest volunteer network of expert business mentors, to support new and beginning farmers. The agreement provides new help and resources for beginning ranchers, veterans, women, socially disadvantaged Americans and others, providing new tools to help them both grow and thrive in agribusiness.

I am honored to administer programs that enable our producers to manage their risks when the agriculture industry faces hardship. On behalf of the Farm Service Agency supporting Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, I would like to thank our agricultural producers for continuing to feed our nation and the world.

For more information about FSA programs and services, visit <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/>.

AL Frenzel  
State Executive Director

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## “Your FSA Farm Loan Compass”

FSA Farm Loan borrowers, who received their first loan within the last three years, should have received a printed copy of “Your FSA Farm Loan Compass” in the mail. The guide provides information on your responsibilities as an FSA Borrower and, equally important, FSA’s responsibilities to you. For an electronic copy please click here: <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/farm-loan-programs/farm-loan-servicing/index>.

For more information please contact your local FSA office.

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## Acres 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.

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## Tree Assistance Program (TAP) Sign-up

Orchardists and nursery tree growers who experience losses from natural disasters during calendar year 2018 must submit a TAP application either within 90 calendar days after the disaster event or the date when the loss is apparent. TAP was authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014 as a permanent disaster program. TAP provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters.

Eligible tree types include trees, bushes or vines that produce an annual crop for commercial purposes. Nursery trees include ornamental, fruit, nut and Christmas trees that are produced for commercial sale. Trees used for pulp or timber are ineligible.

To qualify for TAP, orchardists must suffer a qualifying tree, bush or vine loss in excess of 15 percent mortality from an eligible natural disaster, plus an adjustment for normal mortality. The eligible trees, bushes or vines must have been owned when the natural disaster occurred; however, eligible growers are not required to own the land on which the eligible trees, bushes and vines were planted.

If the TAP application is approved, the eligible trees, bushes and vines must be replaced within 12 months from the date the application is approved. The cumulative total quantity of acres planted to trees, bushes or vines, for which a producer can receive TAP payments, cannot exceed 500 acres annually.

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## Weather the Storm: FEMA Mobile App Provides Weather Alerts and Safety Tips

USDA offers programs to help producers recover from disasters; FEMA can help you prepare ahead of time.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recently launched a free mobile app that will instruct the public on what to do before, during and after emergencies. The app is available for download for Apple, Android and Blackberry mobile devices.

Download the app to:

- Receive alerts from the National Weather Service for up to five locations
- Get safety reminders, read tips to survive natural disasters and customize your emergency checklist

- Locate open shelters and where to talk to FEMA in person (or on the phone)
- Upload and share your disaster photos to help first responders.

For more information about the FEMA app, visit [fema.gov/mobile-app](http://fema.gov/mobile-app). To download the FEMA app from the Apple Store visit <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/fema/id474807486?mt=8>. To download the FEMA app on Google Play for Android visit: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=gov.fema.mobile.android&hl=en>

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## March 2018 Interest Rates

Farm Operating Loans 3.125%  
Farm Operating Microloans 3.125%  
Farm Ownership Loans 3.750%  
Farm Ownership Microloans 3.750%  
Farm Ownership Loans Direct Down Payment for Beginning Farmer or Rancher 1.50%  
Emergency Loans 3.750%

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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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