



Hawaii & Pacific Basin NEWSLETTER

August 2015



Your Farm Service Agency Online Monthly Newsletter Covering the Latest Topics

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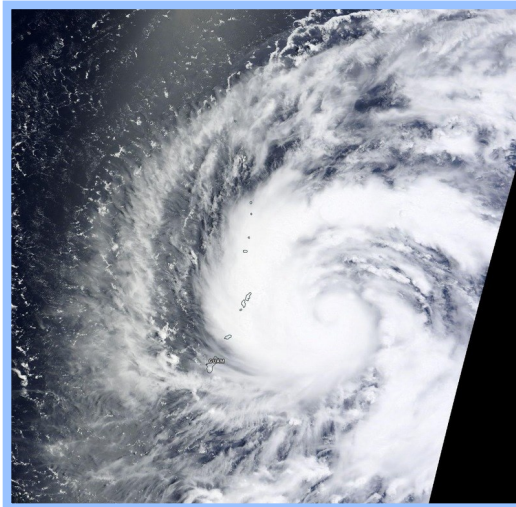
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Dates to Remember

Honolulu FSA County Office has relocated to:

Airport Industrial Park at 3375 Koapaka Street, Suite B-211, Honolulu. Phone: 861-8538.

Typhoon Soudelor Sacks Saipan & Tinian



Typhoon Soudelor on August 2, 2015. Image credit: NASA Terra/MODIS.

Once again our island homes and businesses were hit with devastating weather when Typhoon Soudelor made landfall on Saipan and Tinian in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands August 1-3, 2015. The damages were so extensive that within two days a Presidential Disaster Declaration was issued and federal resources were marshalled to provide relief.

Farm Service Agency (FSA) quickly stepped in to offer its services to assist commercial agricultural producers who were negatively impacted by Typhoon Soudelor including the following programs:

[Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance](#) (NAP) helps to offset production losses for those producers who were signed-up in advance for the program.

[Tree Assistance Program](#) (TAP) is available for qualifying producers of papaya, banana and other tropical fruits offering cost share to clean up and replant.

[Livestock Indemnity Program](#) (LIP) helps offset ranchers' losses of cattle, goats or sheep.

[Emergency Livestock, Honey Bee and Farm Raised Fish](#) (ELAP) may be available to producers with losses of livestock, honey bees and farm raised fish.

[Emergency Conservation Program](#) (ECP) may be made available to assist producers with the clean-up and restoration of operations, including debris removal and fence replacement.

[Emergency Loans](#) (EM) can assist qualified borrowers with the restoration or replacement of essential property; pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year; pay essential family living expenses; reorganize the farming operation; and refinance certain debts, excluding real estate. The Emergency Loan Program was triggered by the Presidential Disaster Declaration, and commercial producers will have until April 5, 2016 to apply for this program.

[Farm Loan Programs](#) offers a range of low-interest loan programs including microloans to assist producers. Additionally, producers with FSA existing loans should contact their loan officer once they anticipate having problems making their regular payments.

For more information about FSA's programs including what to do in advance of the next disaster visit www.fsa.usda.gov/hi or for a more comprehensive look at USDA disaster assistance visit: www.usda.gov/disaster.

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Hawaii County Farm Service Agency Hilo Office	
154 Waiuanue Ave, Room 219 Hilo, HI 96720 Ph: (808)933-8381 x 1 Fax: (855)356-9492	Lester Ueda County Executive Director Linda Kow Farm Loan Manager
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Office Hours: Monday—Friday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm	
Next County Committee Meeting Dates:	
<u>Hawaii County</u> - October 9 at 8:30 am	
<u>Honolulu County</u> - August 21 at 3:00 pm	
<u>Kauai County</u> - September 16 at 8:30 am	
<u>Maui County</u> - August 20 at 8:30 am	
<u>Guam County</u> - December 16 at 9:00 am	
<u>CNMI County</u> - December 16 at 9:00 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. A list of County Offices, contact numbers and addresses may be found at: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/hi_cof_staff.pdf	

Reimbursement of Transportation Cost Payment Program

Farmers and ranchers residing in Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands and Republic of Palau, Alaska, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands can apply to recover a portion of their transportation expenses through the 2015 Reimbursement Transportation Cost Payment Program (RTCP). Producers must submit their application to their Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Office by September 11, 2015. Applicants will have until November 2, 2015 to provide supporting documentation.

Payments are calculated based on the costs incurred for transportation of the agricultural commodity or inputs, subject to an \$8,000 per producer cap per federal fiscal year. In the event that claims for payments exceed the funds available from the program for a fiscal year, payments will be reduced on a pro-rata basis.

For more information on the RTCP program, contact your [FSA County Office](#) or visit the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport.



Farm and Foreign Agriculture Service Deputy Under Secretary Alexis Taylor took a break from Trans-Pacific Partnership Trade Talks, recently held on Maui, to have lunch with United States Department of Agriculture Hawaii and Pacific Basin staff. From the left are Farm Service Agency (FSA) Farm Loan Analyst Faith Umetsu, Rural Development Area Specialist Nenita Acob, Deputy Under Secretary Alexis Taylor, Natural Resources Conservation Service Finance Resource Specialist Kevin Kinvig and FSA State Executive Director Diane Ley.

Presidential Disaster Declarations Trigger Emergency Loans

Hawaii County, Tinian and Saipan were declared primary disasters due respectively to lava flows and Typhoon Soudelor. Under these two designations, producers are eligible to apply for low interest emergency loans to assist with the recovery from production and physical losses.

Producers have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for emergency loan assistance. Farm Service Agency (FSA) will consider each loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability. Producers can borrow up to 100 percent of actual production or physical losses, to a maximum amount of \$500,000.

For more information about emergency loans, please contact your local FSA office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

2016 NAP Deadline September 1, 2015

Producers are reminded to apply for 2016 Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) benefits by September 1, 2015. This deadline applies to value loss crops including nursery, floriculture, propagation stock non-ornamental nursery, aquaculture, Christmas trees, ginseng, turf grass sod, mushrooms and other crops. The deadline for grazed forage, fruits and vegetables is December 1, 2015.



The service fee for basic NAP coverage is the lesser of \$250 per crop or \$750 per producer per administrative county, not to exceed a total of \$1,875 for a producer with farming interest in multiple counties. Producers interested in buy-up coverage must pay a premium, in addition to the service fee. The maximum premium will be \$6,563. Minority, beginning or limited resource farmers or ranchers may qualify to have service fees waived and may choose to purchase buy-up coverage with service fees waived and the premium capped at \$3,282.

The application and service fee must be filed with producers' Farm Service Agency County Office by September 1, 2015.

Conservation Field Day

Several dozen landowners and stakeholders with an interest in conserving Hawaii's natural resources recently participated in the first Hawaii Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Field Day at Ahu Lani Sanctuary on the Hamakua Coast of Hawaii Island. The event as co-hosted by the Farm Service Agency (FSA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), State of Hawaii Division of Forestry and Wildlife (DOFAW) and John Lindelow and David DeEsch of Ahu Lani Sanctuary.



John Lindelow - visionary and committed landowner of Ahu Lani Sanctuary.

The very rainy day began inside the Sanctuary's gathering room. There program specialists with FSA, NRCS and DOFAW briefed the participants on the goals of CREP which include restoring native, threatened and endangered habitat and controlling the spread of invasive species.

From the landowner's perspective, John Lindelow offered an overview of the challenges and rewards of working through the first CREP contract in the State of Hawaii. Then everyone went out into the pouring rain on a walkabout to see the results of CREP first hand. David DeEsch led with a look at the nursery operation, noting the special care and timing required of young Koa tree seedlings for optimal opportunity to thrive once set out in the tall and aggressive kikuyu grass.

Next it was down the sanctuary road and up a fence line to view old Ohia trees that serve as over story which facilitates the growth of volunteer plants. The volunteers are transplanted along the stream banks and other areas that had been cleared of tall grasses and invasive brush and trees. John and David proved to be a wealth of information, answering questions and pointing out the many techniques that were deployed to help ensure the success of their CREP project area. Everyone participating in the field day agreed that Ahu Lani Sanctuary's CREP project is a success!

[Conservation Reserve Program](#)—Celebrating 30 years of successful voluntary conservation initiatives!

Reporting Organic Crops

Producers who want to use the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) organic price and select the "organic" option on their NAP application must report their crops as organic.

When certifying organic acres, the buffer zone acreage must be included in the organic acreage. Producers must also provide a current organic plan, organic certificate or documentation from a certifying agent indicating an organic plan is in effect. Documentation must include:

- Name of certified individuals, address and telephone number;
- Certificate number, effective date of certification, list of commodities certified and name and address of certifying agent; and
- A map showing the specific location of each field of certified organic, including the buffer zone acreage.

Certification exemptions are available for producers whose annual gross agricultural income from organic sales totals \$5,000 or less. Although exempt growers are not required to provide a written certificate, they are still required to provide a map showing the specific location of each field of certified organic, transitional and buffer zone acreage.

For questions about reporting organic crops, contact your local [FSA County Office](#).

Interest Rates for August 2015

Farm Operating Loans	2.625 %
MicroLoans	2.625 %
Farm Ownership Loans	4.00 %
Farm Ownership Loans Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50 %
Emergency Loans	3.625 %

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).

Guaranteed Loans

Farm Service Agency (FSA) guaranteed loans allow lenders to provide agricultural credit to farmers who do not meet commercial lender's normal underwriting criteria. Farmers and ranchers apply for a guaranteed loan through a lender, and the lender arranges for the guarantee. Farm Service Agency can guarantee up to 95 percent of the loss of principal and interest on loans which can be used for both farm ownership and operating purposes.

Guaranteed farm ownership loans can be used to purchase farmland, construct or repair buildings, develop farmland to promote soil and water conservation or to refinance debt. Guaranteed operating loans can be used to purchase livestock, farm equipment, feed, seed, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance and other operating expenses.

Farm Service Agency can guarantee farm ownership and operating loans up to \$1,392,000.

Dates to Remember

September 1, 2015	Deadline to sign-up for 2016 Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and NAP Buy-Up for value loss crops (See Page 3)
September 11, 2015	Deadline to apply for 2015 Reimbursement of Transportation Costs Payment Program (RTCP)
September 30, 2015	Deadline for Hawaii, Maui and Honolulu producers to apply for Emergency Physical Loss Loans due to high winds and flooding in January 2015
November 2, 2015	Deadline to submit documentation for 2015 RTCP
November 4, 2015	Deadline for Hawaii County producers to apply for Emergency Loans due to lava flow impacts
December 7, 2015	Deadline to submit County Committee election ballots for 2015
February 5, 2016	Deadline for Guam County producers to apply for Emergency Loans due to impacts from Typhoon Dolphin
April 5, 2016	Deadline for Saipan & Tinian producers to apply for Emergency loans due to impacts of Typhoon Soudelor
Continuous	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program sign-up