



Your Farm Service Agency Online Monthly Newsletter Covering the Latest Topics

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**2015 County Committee Election Results**

The 2015 Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committee (COC) elections were held earlier this month; now, it is time to meet the new and renewing County Committee members. They include:

**Guam County** – Teddy Lee Concepcion has produced livestock for 35 years. Ted is an active member of the Steering Committee for the Guam Livestock Association.

**Commonwealth Islands of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)** – James Manglona has produced crops and livestock for 20 years. James is a former director of the Rota Soil and Water Conservation District and has served as a Vice Chairperson and member. This is his second term on the CNMI COC.

**Hawaii County** – Charlie Onaka and his wife Gwen operate a cattle ranch and coffee farm in West Hawaii. Charlie was elected again to serve on the Hawaii COC. He served previously from 2004-2012. Charlie says, “The committee is an important aspect of FSA and an excellent opportunity for producer input.”

**Honolulu County** – Patsy Oshiro and her husband have operated a hog farm in Waianae for over 20 years. Patsy grew up on a Manoa lettuce farm in Waianae. She is an active member of the National Pork Producers Council through the Hawaii Pork Industry Association, and serves as the Hawaii State contact to the National Pork Board.

**COC Election Results**

**Maui County** – Paul Lopes is a livestock operator from Haiku and has served as a COC member since 2013.

**Kauai County** – Dickie Yoshii has been farming since 1974 cultivating banana, papaya, mango, dragon fruit, lychee, longan, and other fruits. Dickie has been actively participating in FSA programs and services since early on in his agricultural career.

Elected county committee members serve a three-year term and are responsible for making decisions regarding FSA disaster, conservation and price support programs, as well as other important federal farm program issues.

County committee members are a valuable asset because they are comprised of local producers who participate in FSA programs themselves and have a direct connection to farmers and ranchers in the community.

Recently elected county committee members will begin their term on January 1, 2016, joining the existing committee members. For more information about county committees and the election process, please contact your local FSA Office or visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

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Looking for great ideas to expand your market; want to how to co-

llaborate with your neighboring farmers and ranchers; need resources to make it happen? Visit: [www.knowyourfarmer@usda.gov](mailto:www.knowyourfarmer@usda.gov)!

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<b>Office Hours: Monday—Friday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm</b>	
<p><b>Next County Committee Meeting Dates:</b></p> <p><u>Hawaii County</u> - January 8, 2016 at 8:30 am</p> <p><u>Honolulu County</u> - January 15, 2016 at 3:00 pm</p> <p><u>Kauai County</u> - January 21, 2016 at 9:30 am</p> <p><u>Maui County</u> - January 21, 2016 at 8:30 am</p> <p><u>Guam County</u> - January 13, 2016 at 9:00 am</p> <p><u>CNMI County</u> - January 23, 2016 at 9:00 am</p> <p>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: <a href="http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/hi_cof_staff.pdf">http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/hi_cof_staff.pdf</a></p>	

## Maui and Kauai Ranchers May Apply for Disaster Assistance

Maui and Kauai county ranchers are eligible to apply for 2015 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) benefits to compensate for grazing losses for covered livestock due to drought on privately owned or cash leased land.

For 2015 and subsequent years, eligible livestock producers must complete a CCC-853 and the required supporting documentation no later than 30 calendar days after the end of the calendar year (January 30, 2016) in which the grazing losses occurred. Losses must occur in the calendar year the application is being filed.

Additional information about LFP, including eligible livestock, is available at your [FSA County Office](#) or online at: [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

## Livestock Indemnity Program

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides assistance to eligible producers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather including hurricanes, floods, wildfires and extreme heat or cold.

For 2015, eligible losses must occur on or after January 1, 2015 and before December 31, 2015. A notice of loss must be filed with Farm Service Agency (FSA) within 30 days of when the loss of livestock is apparent. Producers must provide the following supporting documentation to their FSA County Office no later than 30 calendar days after the end of the calendar year for which benefits are requested:

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

Normal mortality rates are established for each type and weight range of eligible livestock reflecting losses that are considered expected or typical under "normal" conditions. Producers who suffer livestock losses in 2015 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, 2016
- An application for payment by January 30, 2016

Additional Information about LIP is available at your local [FSA County Office](#) or online at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

## Emergency Loans Available in Multiple Counties

Last summer severe weather wreaked havoc on producers in Hawaii and the Pacific Basin resulting in damages to farms and ranches in Hawaii County from flash flooding that occurred August 24 through September 27, 2015. In response, Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Administrator Val Dolcini issued an Administrator's Physical Loss Notification which triggered the availability of low interest [Emergency Loans](#).

Emergency loans help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding and other natural disasters or quarantine.

Producers have eight months or until June 5, 2016 to apply for emergency loan assistance. Farm Service Agency 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.

Recent natural disasters triggered the availability of emergency loans as follows:

County & Natural Disaster	Declaration Trigger	Deadline to Apply
Guam County Typhoon Dolphin	Presidential Disaster Declaration	February 5, 2016
Saipan & Tinian Typhoon Soudelor	Presidential Disaster Declaration	April 5, 2016
Maui and Kauai Counties – Drought	Secretarial Disaster Designation	April 19, 2016
Hawaii County Flash Flooding	Administrator's Physical Loss Notification	June 5, 2016

Interest Rates for December 2015	
Farm Operating Loans	2.375 %
MicroLoans	2.375 %
Farm Ownership Loans	3.75 %
Farm Ownership Loans Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50 %
Emergency Loans	3.375 %

## 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 noninsurable crops covered by Non-Insured Crop 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.

## FSA Job Vacancies in American Samoa and Hawaii Counties

Farm Service Agency (FSA) currently is advertising to fill the following job vacancies:

- Program Technician, part-time, permanent hire. Location: American Samoa. Requires ability to communicate and converse in Samoan and English languages. Job vacancy announcement closes on 12/28/2015. To apply go to: [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov).
- Field Assistant, full-time, temporary hire. Location: Hawaii County. Job vacancy announcement closes on 12/28/2015. For an application call 808-933-8381, extension 1.



## Back For the Holidays - Breakfast Taro

*Hawaii County Committee Member Aileen Yeh shares one of her favorite recipes for taro.*

Select the amount of taro corms desired. Chinese taro is a good choice for this recipe.

Boil the taro corms until a knife passes easily through. Pour off water from taro and allow to cool before peeling the outer skin off the taro. Allow to cool further then grate the taro over a bowl.

Mix in enough milk or cream to create a moldable texture, and add enough sugar to make it slightly sweet, if desired.

On a sheet of plastic wrap or foil, roll the mixture into a log about 2.5 to 3 inches in diameter and about 8 inches long. Wrap in the plastic wrap, and add an outer wrap of foil to hold the shape.

Refrigerate overnight or until cold. Slice into patties, and fry in butter until crisp and browned, and serve. If there are leftovers, keep refrigerated or freeze. Enjoy!



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).

## NASS & HDOA Job Vacancies

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) and the Hawaii Department of Agriculture (HDOA) have posted job vacancy announcement for the following positions in Honolulu County:

- NASS/HDOA Temporary Employee (89-day hire with possible 89-day extension). Math and writing skills required to edit surveys and write releases; no difficult computations required. Position available now. For an application call 808-522-8080.
- NASS Agriculture Research Enumerator; Part-Time/Intermittent hire. Auto and valid driver's license required; mileage paid. For an application call 808-262-5876.



### Dates to Remember

January 30, 2016	Deadline for Maui and Kauai ranchers to apply for 2015 Livestock Forage Disaster Program
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 and Tinian producers to apply for Emergency Loans due to impacts from Typhoon Soudelor
April 19, 2016	Deadline for Maui and Kauai County producers to apply for Emergency Loans due to impacts of drought
June 5, 2016	Deadline for Hawaii County producers to apply for Emergency Loans due to flooding that occurred between August 24-September 27, 2015
Continuous	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program sign-up