

July 2018



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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Alaska State FSA Newsletter

Alaska State Farm Service Agency

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Alaska FSA State Director News

I hope all of you had a wonderful 4th of July holiday. John Adams, 2nd President of the United States wrote to his wife Abigail and had this to say when the day Declaration of Independence was approved by the Continental Congress. "I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated, by succeeding Generations, as the great anniversary Festival. It ought to be commemorated, it ought to be solemnized with Pomp and Parade, with Shews, Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other from this Time forward forever more." I shared this quote with my family a couple of years ago, and we try very hard to do it all in our family celebrations. The more I study the lives of the founders of this great nation, the more grateful I am for the opportunities myself, my family and my fellow citizens in this country enjoy. Opportunities to work, to play, to go to school, to

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Hours Monday-Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Committee Meetings:
Northern Co TBA
Southern Co Aug.14,10:00
am

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

travel, to associate with friends and family, and generally to enjoy life to its fullest. It is truly a great country that we live in.

Hay harvest is in full swing here in South Central Alaska. The hay fields near where I live were cut, tedded, raked into windrows and baled in as few as 4 days. Daily temperatures in the upper 70's and low 80's are perfect growing and hay making conditions. Add long hours of sunlight, water for irrigation, nutrient rich soils and amazing growth takes place. My wife says if you look closely at the carrots and onions in the garden, you can actually see them grow. Vegetable growers are also seeing results with favorable growing weather. Farmers markets are in full swing with lots of fresh vegetables and greens. Shopping for Alaskan Grown produce helps boost the local economy, keeping your hard-earned dollars close to home and supports your neighborhood producers. We can all make Alaskan agriculture successful by simply purchasing local and Alaskan Grown agriculture products.

Update Your Records

FSA is cleaning up our producer record database. If you have any unreported changes of address, zip code, phone number, email address or an incorrect name or business name on file they need to be reported to our office. Changes in your farm operation, like the addition of a farm by lease or purchase, need to be reported to our office as well. Producers participating in FSA and NRCS programs are required to timely report changes in their farming operation to the County Committee in writing and update their CCC-902 Farm Operating Plan.

If you have any updates or corrections, please call your local FSA office to update your records.

2018 Acreage Reporting Dates

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit the County FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline.

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for all Alaska:

For 2018 crop year

September 30, 2017 Value-loss crops and controlled environment crops

(except Nursery)

December 15, 2017 Perennial Forage, Fall-Seeded Small Grains

January 2, 2018 Honey

May 31, 2018 Nursery

July 15, 2018 All other crops, CRP

For 2019 crop year

September 30, 2018 Value-loss crops and controlled environment crops
(except Nursery)

December 15, 2018 Perennial Forage, Fall-Seeded Small Grains

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- 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.
- If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of “cover only,” “green manure,” “left standing,” or “seed,” then the acreage must be reported by July 15th.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact your local County FSA office.

Nominations Open for the 2018 County Committee Elections

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) encourages all farmers, ranchers, and FSA program participants to take part in the Northern and Southern County Committee election nomination process which opens June 15.

FSA's 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 composed 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. One-third of the seats on these committees are

open for election each year. 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.

County committees may have one or more appointed advisors to further represent the local interests of underserved farmers and ranchers. Underserved producers are beginning, women and other minority farmers and ranchers and land owners and/or operators who have limited resources. Other minority groups including Native American and Alaska Natives; persons under the poverty level, and persons that have disabilities are also considered underserved.

All nomination forms for the 2018 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA service center by Aug. 1, 2018. 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 or www.fsa.usda.gov/ak.

This year, nominations and elections will be held in the following Alaska LAAs:

Southern County LAA-1

LAA -1 which Includes all of the following boroughs and census areas: Wade Hampton, Bethel, Dillingham, Bristol Bay, Lake & Peninsula, Aleutians East and West, Kodiak Island and the Kenai Peninsula Borough south of the Kasilof river (includes Homer and surrounding area).

Northern County LAA-3

LAA-3 which includes the area beginning at the SE corner of the Matsu Borough proceeding north to NW corner of SE Fairbanks Census area, east to line following Clearwater road intersecting AK Hwy, proceeding SE to AKGREAA line, south then SE following line to Canadian border, south following Canadian border to Chugach Mtn. Range, turning west following Chugach Mtn. west to SW corner of Matsu Borough. (Includes Delta Junction, Glennallen, and Kenny Lake.)

For more information about county committees, please contact the Northern County FSA office at 907-895-4242 and the Southern County FSA office at 907-761-7754 or visit www.fsa.usda.gov/elections or www.fsa.usda.gov/ak.

Kenai Peninsula Borough Eligible for Emergency Loans Following Presidential Disaster Declaration

Kenai Peninsula Borough was declared a primary disaster due to a severe storm that occurred on December 4, 2017. Under this designation, producers with operations in any primary or contiguous county are eligible to apply for 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 from the date of the declaration to apply for emergency loan assistance. 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.

Livestock Losses

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides assistance to eligible producers for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality caused by adverse weather, disease 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 disease losses, FSA county committees can accept veterinarian certifications that livestock deaths were directly related to adverse weather and unpreventable through good animal husbandry and management.

Due to an amendment in the Bipartisan Budget Act (BBA), for 2017, 2018 and subsequent livestock losses, eligible livestock owners must file a notice of loss by the later of:

- 30 calendar days of when the loss is first apparent; or
- 60 days after the regulations governing LIP, including BBA provisions, are published in the Federal Register.

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.

In addition to filing a notice of loss, producers must also submit an application for payment by March 31, 2019.

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

USDA Enrollment Period for Safety Net Coverage in 2018

Farmers and ranchers with base acres in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) safety net program may enroll for the 2018 crop year. The enrollment period will end on Aug. 1, 2018.

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

The producers on a farm that are not enrolled for the 2018 enrollment period will not be eligible for financial assistance from the ARC or PLC programs for the 2018 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 previous years must still enroll during the 2018 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, wheat and seed cotton. 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>.

USDA Partners with Texas A&M to Help Veterans Seeking Agriculture Loans and Careers

USDA announced a partnership between the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Texas A&M's AgriLife Extension Service to help military veterans obtain loans and pursue careers as farmers and ranchers. Secretary Perdue joined local dignitaries, members of the Armed Forces, veterans, and community leaders at the Dallas Farmers Market to unveil the new pilot program.

USDA's [Farm Service Agency](#) (FSA) is collaborating with AgriLife Extension Service on the pilot, which is part of the Texas A&M Battleground to Breaking Ground project. The program makes it easier for veterans to meet federal requirements to get FSA direct [farm ownership](#) loans, which can help provide access to land and capital.

The pilot program, which will include 15 to 18 veterans, will roll out in three phases: an introductory workshop, a business planning curriculum, and a production curriculum over a period of 12 to 18 months.

Typically, loan applicants must participate in the business operations of a farm for at least three years during a 10-year period. However, as part of this pilot program, participants can combine the certificate they receive with their military leadership or management experience to satisfy this requirement. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, approximately 45 percent of armed service members are from rural America.

Pilot program applications will be accepted from interested veterans between June 15 and July 20, 2018, until 11 p.m. central standard time, [apply here](#). For more information about USDA programs, visit newfarmers.usda.gov/veterans or <https://www.farmers.gov>.

To learn about other ways USDA is supporting veterans, visit <https://www.usda.gov/our-agency/initiatives/veterans>, and watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OAeLqXHUU3w>.

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in these meetings and/or events should contact Lloyd Wilhelm, Northern CED, at (907) 895-4242, Erin Sturdivant, Southern CED, at (907) 761-7754 or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339.

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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