



Building Rural America
National Association of Credit Specialists
of the
USDA – Farm Service Agency
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE MET AT THE ASTOR CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL IN NEW ORLEANS, LA, ON JUNE 24-26, 2019 TO REVIEW RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED BY THE MEMBERSHIP.

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS ARE RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION:

Resolution 1

CONCERN: 1-FLP Paragraph 222 L states that term limit information can be found in the customer profile. The Customer Profile is also mentioned in other handbook references regarding term limits as well. However, the term limit information in the Customer Profile for FO loans is rarely correct and the OL term limit information has many problems in providing accurate information. Incorrect information provided on this report contribute to errors and misunderstandings with producers.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: The Customer Profile calculations for the term limits need to be fixed with an enhancement to the software.

Resolution 2

CONCERN: Using the GLS system to create EFTs is cumbersome and not user friendly.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Develop an FSA-owned system or add on to an existing system for the creation of EFTs.

Resolution 3

CONCERN: With the deployment of the farmers.gov portal, employees have been told to use Microsoft Edge as the browser to access this site. However, other FSA programs, such as Farm Business Plan, will not function properly when using Microsoft Edge. This creates an unnecessary switching between browsers.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Coordinate all online programs and sites so FSA employees can use one internet browser.

Resolution 4

CONCERN: Often times, the FLP forms that are provided on the form website in the DOCX format require the ability to enter multiple lines of data. To do this the restrict editing option must be stopped so that sufficient room is available. However, many people struggle with how this can be done.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Add instructions to the employee forms website landing page on how to un-restrict editing.

Resolution 5

CONCERN: Currently when reviewing borrower's repayment history the only way to determine if payments were made on time is to pull ADPS and manually calculate when payments are made.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: In DLM customer status, add a section where it will show all scheduled payments and due dates and the date each scheduled payment is made.

Resolution 6

CONCERN: When entering a new loan into GLS, the "voluntary information" is required to be entered before you can move forward. If the information is left blank on the application (which is acceptable) then it puts the FSA employee in the awkward position of having to guess an applicant's race, ethnicity, and sex. No employee should ever be put in a position to have to make assumptions on these matters. It opens up the agency and the employee to discrimination claims.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Include a radio button on the GLS screen for these items that says "not provided", or simply change the program so that this information can be left blank when it's not provided.

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS ARE RECOMMENDED FOR NON-ADOPTION:

Resolution 7

CONCERN: Under the sections 'Items Received from Customer' and 'Items Provided to Customer' there is no option for any applications concerning Farm Loans. Currently, we are selecting 'Other' and adding that we provided/received an application in the correlating detail block. This was available in the previous Bridges to Opportunity receipt for service we were using prior to Farmers.gov

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Add 'FLP Application' to the provided and received sections under Receipt for Service.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE: These improvements have already been made.

Resolution 8

CONCERN: The following e-mail was sent to AgLearn's Help Desk on 10/29/2018 after I'd closed out of the course part way through it:

I'm enrolled in the course titled "151 Quick Ideas to Improve Your People Skills" and wanted to finish reading the last portion of it. It shows as completed and won't let me open it back up when I click the "Enter" button shown below.

I can't find where to delete the course either in order to attempt to add it back in. I started it myself (it was not assigned to me), so I thought I'd be able to delete it myself. How do I get back in to this training?

The Help Desk's response was:

Thank you for contacting the AgLearn Helpdesk.

We apologize for the inconvenience.

Unfortunately, once a course has moved to the completion status, the option to relaunch the course is no longer available, unless it has been re added back to your learning plan.

For access options regarding this training, please contact your designated training officer or point of contact listed within the link below.

The current list of Training Administrators can be found here:

http://usda.custhelp.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/1705

If you have any additional questions or concerns please let us know.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: 1) All courses should have the content open for review after completion in order to refresh employees' skills at their convenience - OR - they should be able to be "re added" to allow this content review without deleting the prior course status showing it is completed.

2) Any course that is added voluntarily by the employee should also be able to be deleted by that employee without going through a Training Administrator.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE: Each state has a training administrator who can add or delete training.

Resolution 9

CONCERN: When we need to gather information from a non-applicant to put into MIDAS so they can carry over to the security agreement (such as a non-applicant spouse in a community property state), cosign on a youth loan when required by 3-FLP Par 228, or similar situations. The AD-2047 has some but not all of the information we need to put the non-applicant into MIDAS, it does not have marital status, race, veteran status, date of birth, and Hispanic or not Hispanic or Latino. This is a common problem we encounter in our office in northeast Arkansas.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Develop a form or amend AD-2047 to capture the information farm loan programs needs to properly complete the addition of a non-applicant into MIDAS when the need arises.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE: Not a mandatory FLP form. This could also be a reporting issue where this is required for FLP but not for FP. Additionally, you can add a non-applicant spouse in FBP without this information.

Resolution 10

CONCERN: When taking an assignment on Farm Program payments, having to enter the dollar amount and year for every single program (some of which might not even be funded with the next farm bill) is inefficient and leads to delinquent borrowers getting program payments.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Improve the assignment system of Farm Records to be able to put an assignment on ALL FP payments while the borrower has FLP loans.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE: This appears to be a Farm Program issue. The county office PT's should be entering these each year because program names may change from year to year. (Delinquent borrowers should not be getting program payments because they should be offset).

Resolution 11

CONCERN: Form FSA-2001, "Request for Direct Loan Assistance" can be confusing for our customers. No matter if the applicant is an individual, a married couple or an entity, there will be at least 2 blank pages with each application. Many applicants fill out the first page and later realize that they need to fill out page 2 or pages 3 & 4. Unless the applicant is an individual, the first page of the form should be blank, which is not ideal.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Revise the form to have 3 separate versions of the form. There could be a 2001-I for and Individual applicant, a 2001-M for Married applicants and a 2001-E for Entity applicants. By making this simple change, there would be no confusion for FSA applicants on what pages to be completed for the application.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE: The cover sheet of the application has detailed instructions under Applicant Identification.

Resolution 12

CONCERN: Recently OCIO provided instruction that Microsoft Edge internet browser was required for use with specific applications. However, it is not compatible with Farm Business Plan.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Coordinate all FSA applications so the same internet browser can be used for optimal performance.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE: Clarification needed on specific applications.

Resolution 13

CONCERN: A specific form is used to file records at the courthouse. Then an entirely different numbered form is used to release the filing.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: A specific form is used to file records at the courthouse. Then an entirely different numbered form is used to release the filing.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE: This is a state issue. Further, there is no a proposed solution.

Resolution 14

CONCERN: Form FSA-2370 does not currently have a place for a name or signature or initials and date for the reaffirmation of the continued waiver of borrower training.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Revise Form FSA-2370 to add a signature and date block for the continued waiver of borrower training.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE: Each loan should have a decision on borrower training, so a new form will be required for each loan decision.

Resolution 15

CONCERN: Requirements for a complete DOL-ML application include verification of all non-farm income relied upon for repayment, but the application doesn't ask for the employer's name and contact information.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Add the line items to the form.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE: Duplicate of Resolution #11.

Respectfully submitted by the 2018/2019, Information Technology Committee:

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