

USDA Satellite Features Feed

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FEATURE – FARMERS MEET TO LEARN ABOUT FARM BILL

INTRO: USDA is holding public meetings with farmers to get them up to speed on the Two Thousand Eight Farm Bill and how it's different from the Two Thousand Two Farm Bill. The USDA's Bob Ellison has more. 1:41

RUNNING A FARM OR RANCH MAY NOT LEAVE PRODUCERS MUCH TIME TO LEARN ABOUT THE NEW TWO THOUSAND EIGHT FARM BILL. SO THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE IS HOLDING A SERIES OF PUBLIC MEETINGS, TO INFORM PRODUCERS ABOUT CONSERVATION PROGRAMS AND OTHER PROVISIONS THAT CAN HELP THEM. THIS MEETING IN FLORIDA WAS HOSTED BY USDA'S NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE.

Jill Epley, USDA NRCS: NRCS is providing these farm bill meetings to provide education and outreach to our local farmers and ranchers to keep them updated about any changes that have occurred from our two thousand two farm bill to our two thousand eight farm bill.

Frank Ellis, USDA NRCS: There are a lot of changes that we wanted to let the producers be aware of so this is a series of meetings that we will have throughout the state and this is the third one.

PRODUCERS ARE LEARNING ABOUT NEW PROGRAMS AND PAYMENT LIMITS, AND SOME NEW RULES.

Francis Walker, Florida Farmer: There are additional practices that I didn't know anything about that's available to the farmer.

Wilbur Dean, Florida Conservation Districts: Until you get specifics the farmer is not quite sure of what the guidelines are exactly what they're signing up for. So yes this has been long awaited.

SOME PRODUCERS SAY FARM BILL PROGRAMS, ESPECIALLY THOSE THAT HELP PAY FOR CONSERVATION IMPROVEMENTS, ARE CRUCIAL TO HELP THEM GET THROUGH BAD ECONOMIC TIMES,.

Wendell Mallette, Farmer: Without the farm bill being able to help the farmers out and cost share then the farmers would not be able to produce what the general public needs.

Paul Still, Florida Farmer: And it's really a case of getting the information out to them that these cost share funds can help them particularly in these periods of tight financial situations to cover and make some improvements to their operation.

I'M BOB ELLISON FOR THE U-S DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.