



Building Rural America
National Association of Credit Specialists
of the
USDA – Farm Service Agency
Information Technology Committee

THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE MET AT THE DETROIT MARRIOTT AT THE RENAISSANCE CENTER HOTEL IN DETROIT, MICHIGAN ON JUNE 18, 2012 TO REVIEW RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED BY THE MEMBERSHIP.

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS ARE RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION:

Resolution 1

CONCERN: 3 FLP Exhibit 5 is not on the FSA website to advise applicants of all the information needed to submit an application in addition to the forms. This can mislead applicants since the forms are listed but not the additional information.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Add 3 FLP Exhibit 5, to the USDA FLP Website under the “Farm Loan Application Forms” tab.

Resolution 2

CONCERN: According to the National office borrowers with direct and guaranteed loan information can have two different mail codes, but not two county codes (case numbers). When PLP guaranteed loans were centralized, the PLP servicing office was instructed to use their county code for the borrower case number regardless of the property location. Many borrowers now have two case numbers (one with direct activity and one with guaranteed).

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Precise, step by step instructions are needed for establishing and/or maintaining case number and mail codes for borrowers having guaranteed and direct activity. A report is needed to determine which borrowers have more than one case number.

Resolution 3

CONCERN: Currently basic information (address, birthday, marital status, etc.) for guaranteed borrowers must be updated in SCIMS and GLS. Which is a duplication of work.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Link SCIMS to GLS so there is truly one point of entry.

Resolution 4

CONCERN: FSA needs automation of more of the application process as the cumbersome number of forms required, need to be hand completed or individually printed out. This results in duplicate entry of data for both the applicant and FSA.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: The data captured and stored in SCIMS, DLM, and FBP is available and could be used to populate and print out all loan application, loan processing and loan closing forms. Over-all this would be a time saving, resource saving and cost saving implementation. Forms should be designed so they will work with an automated system and not require changes every few months.

Resolution 5

CONCERN: It would be helpful if a Farm Business Plan balance sheet would automatically populate with the customers loans and balances based on the date we select as a balance sheet date. It would also be helpful if the actual income and expense schedules could populate with the actual payments made from NITC/DLM.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: The information that is in DLM loan schedule should be automatically populated into the FBP loan schedule.

Resolution 6

CONCERN: Form FSA-2040 is cumbersome and time consuming to complete. The information is already in the farm business plan projections.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Populate the 2040 form from the Farm Business Plan data.

Resolution 7

CONCERN: When information on graduation reviews and YEAs are put into the FBP, the information does not flow over to DLS & the info and dates have to be input again. This re-entering of dates leaves room for errors and takes more time.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Have the Credit Presentation for YEA/Graduation Reviews flow into the DLS program, avoiding duplication of work

Resolution 8

CONCERN: The 15 minute inactivity lockout on computers requires multiple logins during the day. Recent PII training stated the required time was 30 minutes; not 15.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Set the inactivity lockout time to 30 minutes as allowed by the Department.

Resolution 9

CONCERN: FSA currently has no methodology by which to accept electronic funds as a means for payment. All loan payments and other fee payments must be paid by check.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Develop a system by which customers can use EFT as a method to make loan payments and the payment of other fees (credit report fees, lien search fees, continuation fees) to FSA.

Resolution 10

CONCERN: The last page of "Form FSA-2028, Security Agreement", does not print the entity name above the first signature line. This requires the document to be saved as a Word document and corrected, which can be very time consuming.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Correct the document to place the entity name above the signature line,

Resolution 11

CONCERN: Entering all of the farms that a customer operates into FBP "Income and Expense - Rent- Land/Animals" can be very time consuming when there are multiple landlords. This increases the chance for errors in data entry inputs.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Allow the data from the Producer Farm Data Report from Farm Records to populate into FBP "Income and Expense - Rent- Land/Animals".

Resolution 12

CONCERN: Form FSA-2026, Promissory Note, is manually completed by Agency employees. Installments are manually calculated. This can lead to errors in completion of this legal document.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Automate Form FSA-2026, Promissory Note, to calculate the payment. Allow for the user to change the fields if an alternative payment structure is necessary. Allow this form to have the capability to be prefilled similar to the data filled forms option available in GLS.

Resolution 13

CONCERN: Finance Office will no longer be sending out payment reminders to borrowers to states that opt out.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Develop a system within Hyperion where the county office can easily go in and print out the payment reminders needed each month so that the letters are automatically prefilled with the borrowers address and payments.

Resolution 14

CONCERN: In DLM while viewing the "FBP Loan Schedule", the undisbursed amounts of the FSA Loans is not included in the loan schedule. When viewing this screen it would be helpful to know what the undisbursed amount is without having to go into the check request page of DLM.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Add a section on the DLM /FBP loan schedule to show the undisbursed amount on each FSA loan.

Resolution 15

CONCERN: When entering a status report, lenders do not have a separate field to enter protective advances such as forced place insurance and property taxes.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Create a separate field in LINC for entry of protective advances on status reports.

Resolution 16

CONCERN: When one check is submitted and must be split between two programs, there is no methodology in NRRS to enter the check once and split it. For example: Customer writes one check for both an FSFL annual installment and an FLP annual installment. The check number is entered once and a program selected. Both programs cannot be selected.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Make changes to NRRS to allow for a check to be split between two separate programs.

Resolution 17

CONCERN: There is only one general checklist for all loans in DLM. Many of the categories do not apply to certain loan types. This is time-consuming to populate the N/A items

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Have one checklist for FO and OL loans and a separate checklist for youth loans.

Resolution 18

CONCERN: The FBP Loan Schedule; in DLM does not reflect the payment due date, whether the loan is ahead or behind schedule, and, if past due, the amount past due.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Change the FBP Loan schedule in DLM to better reflect the information on the 540 report.

Resolution 19

CONCERN: When a borrower pays in full or the debt otherwise satisfied, the case does not leave the DLS dashboard until any past due work items are ended.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: All work items except for Security Instruments should be ended automatically when the debt is paid in full or satisfied by adding a Paid in Full and/or Satisfied by Approved Debt Settlement radio button.

Resolution 20

CONCERN: The Borrower Mortgage Monitoring Report is not a useful tool under DLS -SI tab for loan managers. To properly utilize this report to its fullest, we need a place to enter the tax parcel number so that taxes can be checked in each county using this report and the field office does not have to keep any manual ledgers for tracking taxes.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Add an additional tab in DLS under SI to allow for the tracking of real estate tax payments.

Resolution 21

CONCERN: It is very cumbersome to have to look up the full Social Security Number each time a FLP payment is received in NRRS.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Add a SCIMS hyper-link in NRRS-FLP which should open to allow the last 4 numbers of the social security to be entered.

Resolution 22

CONCERN: FSA actions on the accounts of Active Duty military members have limitations. Conversely there are additional actions that must be taken by FSA staff. It is difficult to manually track these accounts.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Place a code on the 540 report (suggest ADM, Active Duty ,Military) by the borrowers name thereby alerting the FSA personnel that the farmer is on Active Duty and certain actions are taken and others delayed due to the fact the borrower is on Active Duty military.

Resolution 23

CONCERN: Check requests are currently completed in DLS-LM; however, there is no way to record the use of funds, the person authorizing the transaction and the person completing the transaction. Offices are still maintaining this information on a manual bases which consumes resources (time, paper, ect).

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Expand the check request function in DLS-LM to include fields to record the use of funds, the authorizing official and the processing official. This will allow a quicker review method of funds used on an active not fully advanced loan and on previous loans that have been fully advanced.

Resolution 24

CONCERN: The recent changes to NRRS were great except for one point in the process when it becomes confusing. When you have entered the payment and selected the loan you have two options: "Save" and "Save & Return to Borrower Selection". If you are done with the payment then you must select "Save & Return.." and on the next screen you have the "Submit" and "Validate" options. The choice of "Save & Return..." is misleading and causes confusion.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Modify the "Save & Return to Borrower Selection" to "Save & Return for selection or Submission of Payment"

Resolution 25

CONCERN: If we have range or pasture loss due to a disaster and our customer's feed costs increase by 30% they are eligible for an EM loan based upon this increase in feed costs. FBP allows for calculations of crop/production loss but only has a place to enter the amount you've calculated separately for the increase in feed cost. This opens the potential for errors in calculation.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Add the increased feed cost calculations in the EM Credit Presentation in FBP.

Resolution 26

CONCERN: Loan closings can be held up when a check is ordered without a bank account being tied to the loan resulting in a paper check being mailed.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Produce a warning in DLM check request when money is ordered and no account has been linked to the borrower's loan.

Resolution 27

CONCERN: Environmental information is not collected for subordination, thereby leaving significant work unaccounted for.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Add this to the DLS information collected and reported.

Resolution 28

CONCERN: A payoff notification, signed by two office employees, is required to be completed to provide payoff amounts. An automated payoff statement is generated by the DLS.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: 4-FLP, Exhibit 26 should be obsolete and a notification statement be issued from DLS that contains similar information.

Resolution 29

CONCERN: The Finance Office receives and applies payments on customer's accounts. They do not inform the county office of payments received.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Finance Office should be required to contact the county office prior to processing any payments.

Resolution 30

CONCERN: There is a delay of at least 24 hrs when linking a loan to EFT before a check request can be processed without a paper check being automatically issued.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: The EFT system should be updated to allow real time linking.

Resolution 31

CONCERN: When Projected Income & Expense plans are duplicated and moved to actual for completion of a YEA, the scheduled debts do not move, only the info at the summary level will move over.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Allow the scheduled debt info from the beginning balance sheet flow over with the conversion of projected to actual.

Resolution 32

CONCERN: The EFT system requires a 14 day validation on a manual validation before a check request can be processed or a paper check will automatically be issued. Currently, check requests are processed in DLM with a warning screen which tells the user to confirm the loan has been linked to a valid account. The EFT system can accept check requests but does not know if

the account is valid or if the loan has been linked. This causes many problems which results in paper checks being issued.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Fully link EFT & DLM so that a check request will not process if the account is not valid on the loan hasn't been linked, or if there are discrepancies in the information so that a paper check will not automatically be issued.

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTIONS ARE RECOMMENDED FOR NON-ADOPTION:

Resolution 33

CONCERN: FSA is now reporting delinquent accounts automatically to one of the national credit reporting data repositories. Removing the delinquent account data once the account is brought current, however, does not appear to be happening.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: The system should also report when the account has been paid current.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE: Move to non-adopt by convention delegates. The report is updated every 90 days and includes the borrowers who have paid current.

Resolution 34

CONCERN: Having to click the "per package" option on each category of the DLM checklist is time-consuming.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Have a "per Package all" option at the beginning of the checklist that populates the entire form.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE: Move to non-adopt by convention delegates.

Resolution 35

CONCERN: We send servicing notices certified and regular mail at the same time. DLS only tracks the certified route. This leaves us unable to show that a regular mail notice was sent on the same date. This results in DLS telling us the next step is to send the same notice by regular mail,

which we already did when we sent the certified notice. DLS will not allow us to enter a date prior to the date the certified notice was returned unclaimed.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Allow a separate entry of the date that the regular mail notice was sent in order keep the servicing moving.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE: Move to non-adopt by convention delegates.

Resolution 36

CONCERN: Currently county offices are unaware when guaranteed lenders enter online status reports.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Automatically generate an email to notify the local servicing office when a status report is entered by a lender. The email should contain a link to the report that was entered so it can be quickly accessed, reviewed, and printed for the file.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE: Move to non-adopt by convention delegates.

Resolution 37

CONCERN: When requesting the obligation of a guaranteed loan if a previous guaranteed loan is being terminated and the new loan will bring the total debt to the loan limit, the obligation automatically rejects. This causes additional delays in processing.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Allow real-time updating of terminations as will be done with obligations.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE: Move to non-adopt by convention delegates.

Resolution 38

CONCERN: FSA is attempting to meet the demands of the Paper Reduction Act and to reduce costs. Using personal wand scanners on the farm would greatly help.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: If each FLP office had a portable scanner, they would be able to scan any documents directly onto their laptops at the farm instead of coming back to the office and photo copying and then sending back the originals by mail.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Currently not practical due to limited internet/computer access when visiting applicants in the field.

Resolution 39

CONCERN: Customers have to provide us their balance sheet and financial information in a hard copy format many times requiring them to refill out documents. FSA then must manually enter them into the FBP. Originally, the FBP was to have a public access option so that customers could enter data in for Agency review.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: This feature should be obtained as long as the customer does not over-write or edit any material in the system and FSA has the ability to view/copy/edit the info submitted.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Currently customers are not requesting to provide us this information through FBP.

Resolution 40

CONCERN: Pulling files for credit quality reviews can be difficult as there is no report currently available which provides the loan approval official; therefore, files must be reviewed manually to determine the official that actually completed the credit presentation.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: The DLM application report should be modified to allow the free form entry of the loan approval official that could be reviewed for credit quality.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE: Move to non-adopt by convention delegates.

Resolution 41

CONCERN: Maintaining physical forms and documents generated by loan application and servicing requirements necessitates a substantial amount of space in the county office and in the Federal Records Centers.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Establish a methodology by which to scan documents for storage and physically keep only the originals of those documents needed to meet legal requirements, such as promissory notes, security agreements, mortgages, applications, etc.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Logistical reasons

Resolution 42

CONCERN: When you are viewing Special Servicing in DLS, the screen does not show or cross reference the flow charts when a borrower is being serviced in 5-FLP. You have to leave DLS and go to the borrower history report to obtain the chart/activity which shows the current stage of servicing.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Revise DLS to include the applicable chart/activity number to show where servicing is on the open activity screen.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Activity number is already there.

Resolution 43

CONCERN: When a lender makes a protective advance under 2-FLP paragraph 359 E, there is no requirement that the lender report this default on FSA-2248. Without the FSA-2248 there is no way to track when a protective advance has been completed. Also the FSA-2248 does not have a field for a protective advance but when entered in GLS there is a field for a protective advance.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Revise FSA-2248 to include a separate field for protective advances.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Move to Farm Loan due to it concerning the changing of a FSA form.

Resolution 44

CONCERN: When updating workflow for a YEA there isn't an option for completing a YEA due to doing a YEA.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Add another radio button with the option "For completion of YEA".

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Further clarification necessary.

Resolution 45

CONCERN: As required annually, FLP is to send a mass mailing to all potential purchasers. Currently we are inputting the purchasers into DLS at FLP loan closing. Currently there is no way to do a mail merge for mass letters pertaining to EM Disaster declarations, purchaser letters, potential payment reminder letters, YEAs etc.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Please open a mail merge or data merge option in DLS to be able to print and pull names and addresses of FLP borrowers, co-borrowers or linked applicants, potential purchaser names and addresses. This would be useful when required to mail out any type of Mass FLP type mailing such as EM disaster declaration letters, Potential purchaser letters as required in June, potential producer payment reminder letters, YEA's and etc. The less manual spread sheets we have to maintain from the county level, the more efficient and effective we can become, with the lack of personnel.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE:

There is already a Purchaser Report that can currently be exported.

Resolution 46

CONCERN: A lot of information is duplicated in FBP Assessment and Credit Presentation.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Combine the Farm Assessment with the Credit Presentation.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Should be Farm Loan Program due to it requiring handbook changes in order for it to happen.

Resolution 47

CONCERN: Equitable treatment requires the review of all withdrawn applications; however, there is no withdrawn application report in DLM.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Either create a report similar to the Rejected Application report; or, add a sort function within the application report to sort by application status.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE:

This is already available

Resolution 48

CONCERN: There is no report available to the county office to determine the remaining eligible years for guaranteed OL loans. The national office has provided a report for the last several years; however, it is limited in its scope and usability. Determining the years of eligibility can be burdensome at times when determining the number of years a LOC has been advanced

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Develop a tracking tool/report available to the local office which allows the loan official to determine the numbers of years that have been used and remaining. Local offices currently review and authorize the re-advance of the LOC for each SEL and this review is entered in GLS. This can potentially be expanded for use in determining the number of years remaining.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE:

This is already available in Hyperion

Resolution 49

CONCERN: Eliminate the AD-2047 form that producer's have to sign in order to sign up for electronic newsletters. This form is a waste of paper/postage/etc...

PROPOSED SOLUTION: For FLP possibly add this option to our FSA-2001 to assist.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE:

This is a forms issue that should be addressed by FLP

Resolution 50

CONCERN: Currently we have a fairly good way to review and read handbooks online. They are always current and accurate. The red box link is a handy way to move or jump to a section, exhibit, attached form or subparagraph of the handbook. Notices are available online and even the list of current notices can be reviewed and individually selected. But this is more problematic to read sequentially with the handbook, it takes time to download, review, go back to the webpage, select and open another notice to search for a topic. The handbooks have no easy way to return to the index from any section being read at the moment. State notices are even more difficult. Some state sites are very good and are used as a resource by other states.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: As to the handbook itself: put a link on each page (a red box) that returns to the index. As to the notices: put all current notices in one linear document, with and index at the beginning. As one notice expires it would be removed and when a new one is published it would be added to the linear document. There would be a link back to the index.

This would allow rapid searching of notices for issues addressed in the notices. Individual notices would also be available. STO's would be provided instructions as to: 1. Acceptable practice for writing and publishing notices on the web. 2. Provided instructions of how to place links in notices. National Office should consult with qualified technical writers, the associations, and STO's for best practice, ease of use, appropriate standards and readability.

EXPLANATION FOR NON-ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE:

Logistical implementation due to complexity of process. Currently FLP offices still maintain their paper handbooks and will solve the issues stated above.

Respectfully submitted by the 2011/2012 Information Technology Committee,

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