



January 29, 2004

OKLAHOMA BULLETIN NO. OK120-4-1

SUBJECT: ADS – Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)

Purpose: To provide further guidance on release of information related to clients participating in Farm Bill programs.

Expiration Date: September 30, 2004

Several questions have been asked about providing Technical Service Providers (and others) with contract information. After consultation with FOIA officer Brigitte Beaton, the following guidance is provided.

Certain contract information is releasable, but only through the FOIA process. **FOIA requests are to be forwarded to the State FOIA Officer, Leslie R. Conner. Mr. Conner will review the request utilizing the following guidelines:**

What may be released:

1. Names of persons who have been awarded a contract
2. Dollar amount of the contract
3. State, county and/or city in which the contract is located
4. If a requestor asks for a list of contracts that contain a certain practice (for example, a list of all contracts that have the CNMP practice) the information will be released;
 - a) If you maintain your records in this manner, or:
 - b) If you can query your records easily to provide this information. However, you do not need to create records that do not exist if it creates a burden on you. In the event records are not maintained or available through queries, field staff will notify Mr. Conner that no records exist.

Note: The information in the four items above is only released after a contact with the State FOIA Officer.

What may NOT be released:

- * Street address of contract holder
- * Phone number of contract holder
- * Acres of an individual contract
- * Practices to be applied
- * Other information found in the contract
- * List of applicants (those that were not funded)

The lists above are not intended to be all-inclusive lists. Field staff will be asked to provide records to Leslie Conner for review and determination of releasable information.

In general, information provided to USDA for the purpose of providing technical or financial assistance to an owner, operator or producer with respect to any natural resources conservation program administered by NRCS or FSA is **not considered public information.**

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Further guidance has been issued through the General Manual Section 120 Part 408, and Oklahoma Bulletins 120-3-4 and 120-3-9. Questions regarding this bulletin should be directed to the ASTC (FO) or Leslie Conner.

/s/ - (Les Conner – Acting)

M. DARREL DOMINICK
State Conservationist

DIST: AE