

(e) The official record of a State committee decision on an appeal will be the decision letter that is issued following disposition of the appeal.

(f) Deliberations shall be in confidence except to the extent that a State committee may request the assistance of FSA employees during deliberations.

**§ 780.11 Appeals of NRCS determinations.**

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, a determination of NRCS issued to a participant pursuant to Title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended, including a wetland determination, may be appealed to the county committee in accordance with the procedures in this part.

(b) If the county committee hears the appeal and believes that the challenge to the NRCS determination is not frivolous, the county committee shall refer the case with its findings on other issues to the NRCS State Conservationist to review the determination, or may make such a referral in advance of resolving other issues.

(c) A decision of the county committee not to refer the case with its findings to the NRCS State Conservationist may be appealed to the State Committee.

(d) The county or State committee decision must incorporate, and be based upon, the results of the NRCS State Conservationist's review and subsequent determination.

**§ 780.12 Appeals of penalties assessed under the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act of 1978.**

(a) Requests for appeals of penalties assessed under the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act of 1978 must be addressed to: Administrator, Farm Service Agency, Stop 0572, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-0572.

(b) Decisions in appeals under this section are not subject to reconsideration and are administratively final.

**§ 780.13 Verbatim transcripts.**

(a) Appellants and their representatives are precluded from making any electronic recording of any portion of a hearing or other proceeding conducted

in accordance with this part. Appellants interested in obtaining an official recording of a hearing or other proceeding may request a verbatim transcript in accordance with paragraph (b) of this section.

(b) Any party to an appeal or request for reconsideration under this part may request that a verbatim transcript be made of the hearing proceedings and that such transcript be made the official record of the hearing. The party requesting a verbatim transcript shall pay for the transcription service, provide a copy of the transcript to FSA free of charge, and allow any other party in the proceeding desiring to purchase a copy of the transcript to order it from the transcription service.

**§ 780.14 [Reserved]**

**§ 780.15 Time limitations.**

(a) To the extent practicable, no later than 10 business days after an agency decision maker renders an adverse decision that affects a participant, FSA will provide the participant written notice of the adverse decision and available appeal rights.

(b) A participant requesting an appealability review by the State Executive Director of an agency decision made at the county, area, district or State level that is otherwise determined by FSA not to be appealable must submit a written request for an appealability review to the State Executive Director that is received no later than 30 calendar days from the date a participant receives written notice of the decision.

(c) A participant requesting reconsideration, mediation or appeal must submit a written request as instructed in the notice of decision that is received no later than 30 calendar days from the date a participant receives written notice of the decision.

(d) Notwithstanding the time limits in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section, a request for an appealability review, reconsideration, or appeal may be accepted if, in the judgment of the reviewing authority with whom such request is filed, exceptional circumstances warrant such action. A participant does not have the right to see an exception under this paragraph.