

May 26 is deadline to file claim in tobacco settlement case

Flue-cured tobacco settlement

Under a proposed \$24 million class-action settlement agreement in *Speaks v. U.S. Tobacco Cooperative, Inc.*, current and former tobacco farmers who were members of the U.S. Tobacco Cooperative, formerly known as Flue-Cured Tobacco Cooperative Stabilization Corporation, or their heirs or representatives may be eligible for payouts.

The order from the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina has been appealed, but any claims would still need to be filed by **May 26, 2018** to be eligible. If you do not file a claim, you will not get any payment from the settlement.

The class includes all individuals, proprietorships, partnerships, corporations and other entities that are or were shareholders and/or members of U.S. Tobacco at any time since the date of U.S. Tobacco's incorporation on June 1, 1946, including any heirs, representatives, executors, powers-of-attorney, successors, assigns or others acting on their behalf.

Tobacco growers who were or are members of the U.S. Tobacco Cooperative, or their heirs or representatives must file a claim online or by mail. Claim forms can be found online at <https://fluecuredtobaccosettlement.com> or by downloading a claim form from that website and submitting the completed form to:

Settlement Claims Administrator -5773
PO Box 2612
Fairbault, MN 55021-9612

There are two types of claims that may be filed, Group 1 and Group 2.

Group 1 claims will be based on total pounds of tobacco that a class member sold between June 1, 1946 and Sept. 13, 2017. Payments in this group would be capped at \$15,000. About 75 percent of the settlement funds are expected to be paid to Group 1 claims.

Group 2 claims will be based on the total number of crop years in which a class member sold tobacco between June 1, 1946 and Sept. 13, 2017, with claims paid on a pro rata basis.

More information and guidance on submitting claims can be found at <https://fluecuredtobaccosettlement.com> or by calling 1-866-458-3207.

Class counsel also can be contacted at:

Gary K. Shipman and William G. Wright
Shipman & Wright, LLP

575 Military Cutoff Road, Suite 106
Wilmington, NC 28405
1-910-762-1990

Leo Daughtry and Kelly Daughtry
Daughtry, Woodard, Lawrence & Starling, LLP
403 E. Market Street
Smithfield, NC 27577
1-919-300-6982