



# NEWSLETTER



November 2014

## Idaho Farm Service Agency

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[www.fsa.usda.gov/id](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/id)

### State Committee:

Scott McLeod, Chair  
Bobbi Bodine  
Sherry Crutcher  
Matt Gellings  
Amy Manning

### Executive Director:

Mark Samson

### Farm Loan Chief

Aaron Johnson

### Farm Program Chief

Ron Abbott

To find contact information for your local office you can go to [www.fsa.usda.gov/id](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/id) and select County Offices.

## USDA EXTENDS DAIRY MARGIN PROTECTION PROGRAM DEADLINES

*Enrollment Continues Through Dec. 5*

USDA is extending the deadlines for the dairy Margin Protection Program. Farmers now have until Dec. 5, 2014, to enroll in the voluntary program, established by the 2014 Farm Bill. The program provides financial assistance to participating farmers when the margin – the difference between the price of milk and feed costs – falls below the coverage level selected by the farmer.

Producers are encouraged to use the online Web resource at [www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool) to calculate the best levels of coverage for their dairy operation. The secure website can be accessed via computer, smartphone or tablet.

## FARM SERVICE AGENCY COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTIONS BEGAN MONDAY, NOV. 3

USDA encourages farmers and ranchers to make their voices heard by voting in the upcoming Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Committee elections. Beginning Monday, Nov. 3, 2014, USDA mailed ballots for the 2014 elections to eligible producers across the country. Producers must return ballots to their local FSA offices by the Dec. 1, 2014, deadline to ensure that their vote is counted.

FSA County Committee members provide an important link between the local agricultural community and USDA. Farmers and ranchers elected to county committees help deliver FSA programs at the local level, applying their knowledge and judgment to make decisions on commodity support programs; conservation programs; indemnity and disaster programs; emergency programs and eligibility. County committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws.

To be an eligible voter, farmers and ranchers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm may also be eligible to vote.

Eligible voters who do not receive ballots in the coming week may pick one up at their local USDA Service Center or FSA office. The deadline to submit ballots is Dec. 1, 2014. Ballots returned by mail must be postmarked no later than Dec. 1, 2014. Newly elected committee members and their alternates will take office Jan. 1, 2015.

More information on county committees, such as the new 2014 fact sheet and brochures, can be found on the FSA website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/elections](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections). You may also contact your local USDA Service Center or FSA office. Visit <http://go.usa.gov/pYV3> to find an FSA office near you.

## LOANS FOR THE SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating type loans and/or purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for members of socially disadvantaged applicants.

A socially disadvantaged applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities.

For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

## KEY DATES FOR NEW 2014 FARM BILL SAFETY NET PROGRAMS

USDA announced key dates for farm owners and producers to keep in mind regarding the new 2014 Farm Bill established programs, Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC). The new programs, designed to help producers better manage risk, usher in one of the most significant reforms to U.S. farm programs in decades.

Dates associated with ARC and PLC that farm owners and producers need to know:

- **Sept. 29, 2014 to Feb. 27, 2015:** Land owners may visit their local Farm Service Agency office to update yield history and/or reallocate base acres.
- **Nov. 17, 2014 to March 31, 2015:** Producers make a one-time election of either ARC or PLC for the 2014 through 2018 crop years.
- **Mid-April 2015 through summer 2015:** Producers sign contracts for 2014 and 2015 crop years.
- **October 2015:** Payments for 2014 crop year, if needed.

USDA leaders will visit with producers across the country to share information and answer questions on the ARC and PLC programs.

Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, dry peas, rapeseed, safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

## PRODUCERS INVITED TO ATTEND FARM BILL MEETINGS

The Idaho Farm Service Agency in partnership with various groups including the U of I Extension Service will be hosting several Farm Bill meetings during November and December. The meetings are free and open to the public. For a list of all



meeting locations and times please visit the Idaho FSA web page and click on **State Events** in the left hand column.

There will be a demonstration of the online decision-making tools

that are available to producers to help make important enrollment decisions regarding the Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs. Learning more about ARC and PLC is extremely important for producers who must make a one-time decision about base and yield updates as well as ARC or PLC election and enrollment decisions. An FSA representative will be in attendance to answer any questions on ARC and PLC policy and procedure.

*Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in this meeting/event/function should contact their local county office or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 one week prior to the meeting date.*

## USDA REMINDS FARMERS OF 2014 FARM BILL CONSERVATION COMPLIANCE CHANGES

The 2014 Farm Bill implements a change that requires farmers to have a Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification (AD-1026) on file.

For farmers to be eligible for premium support on their federal crop insurance, a completed and signed AD-1026 certification form must be on file with the FSA. The Risk Management Agency (RMA), through the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC), manages the federal crop insurance program that provides the modern farm safety net for American farmers and ranchers.

Since enactment of the 1985 Farm Bill, eligibility for most commodity, disaster, and conservation programs has been linked to compliance with the highly erodible land conservation and wetland conservation provisions. The 2014 Farm Bill continues the requirement that producers adhere to conservation compliance guidelines to be eligible for most programs administered by FSA and NRCS. This includes most financial assistance such as the new price and revenue protection programs, the Conservation Reserve Program, the Livestock Disaster Assistance programs and Marketing Assistance Loans and most programs implemented by FSA. It also includes the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, the Conservation Stewardship Program, and other conservation programs implemented by NRCS.

Many FSA and Natural Resource Conservation (NRCS) programs already have implemented this requirement and therefore most producers should already have an AD-1026 from on file for their associated lands. If however an AD-1026 form has not been filed or is incomplete then farmers are reminded of the deadline of June 1, 2015.

When a farmer completes and submits the AD-1026 certification form, FSA and NRCS staff will review the associated farm records and outline any additional actions that may be required to meet the required compliance with the conservation compliance provisions.

FSA recently released a revised form AD-1026, which is available at USDA Service Centers and online at: [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov). USDA will publish a rule later this year that will provide details outlining the connection of conservation compliance with crop insurance premium support. Producers can also contact their local USDA Service Center for information. A listing of service center locations is available at

[www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/contact/local/](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/contact/local/).

## FILING FOR NAP LOSSES

The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. Timely filing a Notice of Loss is required for all crops including grasses. For losses on crops covered by the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and crop insurance, you must file a CCC-576, Notice of Loss, in the FSA County Office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent.

## **USDA'S FARM SERVICE AGENCY (FSA) OFFERS FARM BILL WEBSITE AND ONLINE OVERVIEW OF FARM BILL PROGRAMS**

The Agricultural Act of 2014 (the Act), also known as the 2014 Farm Bill, was signed by President Obama on Feb. 7, 2014. The Act repeals certain programs, continues some programs with modifications, and authorizes several new programs administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA). Most of these programs are authorized and funded through 2018.

For the latest on 2014 Farm Bill programs administered by FSA, please visit our Farm Bill website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/farmbill](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/farmbill) and for an FSA program overview please read, download and/or print our recently posted FSA Farm Bill Fact Sheet titled, *What's in the 2014 Farm Bill for Farm Service Agency Customers?*

For more information on FSA, please contact your local USDA Service Center or visit us online at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

## **LIVESTOCK DISASTER ASSISTANCE SIGN-UP UNDERWAY**

Livestock disaster program enrollment opened on April 15, 2014. These disaster programs are authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill as permanent programs and provide retroactive authority to cover losses that occurred on or after Oct. 1, 2011.

Eligible producers can sign-up for the following livestock disaster assistance programs:

### Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP):

LFP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that have suffered grazing losses due to drought on privately owned or cash leased land or fire on federally managed land. Eligible producers must physically be located in a county affected by a qualifying drought during the normal grazing period for the county. Producers who suffered eligible grazing losses should submit a completed CCC-853 and supporting documentation by January 30, 2015.

### Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP):

LIP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that have suffered livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law. Producers who suffered livestock death losses should submit a notice of loss and an application for payment to their local FSA office by January 30, 2015.

## **USDA ANNOUNCES CHANGES TO FRUIT AND VEGETABLE (FAV) PLANTING RULES**

Farm Service Agency (FSA) has announced fruit, vegetable and wild rice provisions that affect producers who intend to participate in certain programs authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014.

Producers who intend to participate in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs are subject to an acre-for-acre payment reduction when fruits and nuts, vegetables or wild rice are planted on the payment acres of a farm. Payment reductions do not apply to mung beans, dry peas, lentils or

chickpeas. Planting fruits, vegetables or wild rice on acres that are not considered payment acres will not result in a payment reduction. Farms that are eligible to participate in ARC/PLC but are not enrolled for a particular year may plant unlimited fruits, vegetables and wild rice for that year but will not receive ARC/PLC payments for that year. Eligibility for succeeding years is not affected.

Planting and harvesting fruits, vegetables and wild rice on ARC/PLC acreage is subject to the acre-for-acre payment reduction when those crops are planted on either more than 15 percent of the base acres of a farm enrolled in ARC using the county coverage or PLC, or more than 35 percent of the base acres of a farm enrolled in ARC using the individual coverage.

Fruits, vegetables and wild rice that are planted in a double-cropping practice will not cause a payment reduction if the farm is in a double-cropping region as designated by the USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation.

## **USDA EXPANDS ACCESS TO CREDIT TO HELP MORE BEGINNING AND FAMILY FARMERS**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced improvements to farm loan programs by expanding eligibility and increasing lending limits to help more beginning and family farmers. As part of this effort, USDA is raising the borrowing limit for the microloan program from \$35,000 to \$50,000; simplify the lending processes; updating required "farming experience" to include other valuable experiences; and expanding eligible business entities to reflect changes in the way family farms are owned and operated. The changes become effective Nov. 7.

The microloan changes will allow beginning, small and mid-sized farmers to access an additional \$15,000 in loans using a simplified application process with up to seven years to repay. Microloans are part of USDA's continued commitment to small and midsized farming operations.

In addition to farm related experience, other types of skills may be considered to meet the direct farming experience required for farm loan eligibility such as operation or management of a non-farm business, leadership positions while serving in the military, or advanced education in an agricultural field. Also, individuals who own farmland under a different legal entity operating the farm now may be eligible for loans administered by USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA). Producers will have an opportunity to share suggestions on the microloan process, and the definitions of farming experience and business structures through Dec. 8, 2014, the public open comment period.

FSA is also publishing a Federal Register notice to solicit ideas from the public for pilot projects to help increase the efficiency and effectiveness of farm loan programs. Comments and ideas regarding potential pilot projects will be accepted through Nov. 7, 2014.

For more information on farm loans, please visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) or contact your local Farm Service Agency office

## USDA FARM SERVICE AGENCY (FSA) ANNOUNCES ONLINE HAY AND GRAZING ACRES LOCATOR TOOL



For many years, FSA's Hay Net website [www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet) has been the "go to" online resource for agricultural producers to list information concerning the need for hay or the availability of hay.

Now, in response to requests from livestock producers and landowners, FSA has expanded the site to include the option to list a need for grazing acres or to list acres available for grazing.

If, due to extenuating circumstances, producers are in need of hay and/or grazing acres to support livestock, please use Hay Net to post an advertisement seeking these resources. Likewise, landowners who have hay and/or grazing acres available for livestock producers should post a Hay Net advertisement

as well.

A few things to remember when using the Hay Net website:

- There is a one-time registration process that should be completed by all users who want to post an ad online.
- Users who just want to browse ads DO NOT NEED to have an eAuthentication user id.
- Hay and grazing acre ads will be automatically removed after a period of 13 months.
- Please help your fellow farmer and rancher by keeping ads current and up to date and remove ads you no longer need or want advertised on *Hay Net*. Please, no corporate advertisements on this site.

**Hay Net** is brought to you by FSA as a public service. The sole purpose of this online resource is to provide a site for the exchange of information. FSA does not endorse, guarantee, or otherwise make representations of any kind regarding any user of this site and FSA is not responsible for defining the terms of grazing agreements or lease contracts.

For more information about Hay Net and other FSA services and programs, please contact your local FSA office. For local FSA Service Center contact information, please visit: <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>.

### DATES TO REMEMBER

Nov. 1	Deadline for ELAP Application for losses in 2014
Nov. 17	Crop Reporting Deadline for forage
Nov. 28	Registration period ends for 2014 and 2015 Margin Protection Program for Dairy
Dec. 1	Deadline to purchase NAP insurance on perennial crops, honey and fruit
Dec. 5	Deadline to enroll for MPP Dairy
Dec. 15	Crop reporting deadline for all fall seeded crops.

### Selected Interest Rates for November 2014

Farm Operating Loans — Direct	2.75%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	4.125%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency Loans	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years)	2.125%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (15 years)	2.625%

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To file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax at (202) 690-7442 or e-mail at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer