

July 2015



Kansas FSA Newsletter

Kansas Farm Service Agency State Office

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Please contact your local FSA Office for questions specific to your operation or county.

Farmers to Receive Documentation of USDA Services

Local Offices Issue Receipts for Services Provided

Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds agricultural producers that FSA provides a receipt to customers who request or receive assistance or information on FSA programs.

As part of FSA's mission to provide enhanced customer service, producers who visit FSA will receive documentation of services requested and provided. From December through June, FSA issued more than 327,000 electronic receipts.

The 2014 Farm Bill requires a receipt to be issued for any agricultural program assistance requested from FSA, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Rural Development (RD). Receipts include the date, summary of the visit and any agricultural information, program and/or loan assistance provided to an individual or entity.

In some cases, a form or document – such as a completed and signed program enrollment form – serves as the customer receipt instead of a printed or electronic receipt. A service is any information, program or loan assistance provided whether through a visit, email, fax or letter.

To learn more about FSA, visit www.fsa.usda.gov or to find your local USDA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

2015 Acreage Reporting Dates

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all Kansas producers are encouraged to visit your local FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline.

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable:

July 15, 2015: spring-seeded crops

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins. For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact your local FSA county office.

USDA Opens Enrollment Period for Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Safety-Net Programs

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that eligible producers may now formally enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for 2014 and 2015. The enrollment period began June 17, 2015, and will end Sept. 30, 2015.

The new programs, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, trigger financial protections for agricultural producers when market forces cause substantial drops in crop prices or revenues. More than 1.76 million farmers have elected ARC or PLC. Previously, 1.7 million producers had enrolled to receive direct payments (the program replaced with ARC and PLC by the 2014 Farm Bill). This means more farms have elected ARC or PLC than previously enrolled under previously administered programs.

Nationwide, 96 percent of soybean farms, 91 percent of corn farms, and 66 percent of wheat farms elected ARC. 99 percent of long grain rice farms, 99 percent of peanut farms, and 94 percent of medium grain rice farms elected PLC. For data about other crops and state-by-state program election results go to www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc.

Covered commodities under ARC and PLC include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium grain rice (which includes short grain and sweet rice), safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat. Upland cotton is no longer a covered commodity.

For more information please contact your local FSA office <https://offices.usda.gov>.

Beginning Farmer Loans

FSA assists beginning farmers to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's average size farm.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

Enrollment for 2016 Dairy Margin Protection Program Started July 1

FSA announced that as of July 1, 2015, dairy farmers can enroll in [Margin Protection Program](#) for **coverage in 2016**. The voluntary program, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, provides financial assistance to participating dairy operations when the margin – the difference between the price of milk and feed costs – falls below the coverage level selected by the farmer.

The Margin Protection Program gives participating dairy producers the flexibility to select coverage levels best suited for their operation. Enrollment begins July 1 and ends on Sept. 30, 2015, for coverage in 2016. Participating farmers will remain in the program through 2018 and pay a \$100 administrative fee each year. Producers also have the option of selecting a different coverage level during open enrollment each year. Margin Protection Program payments are based on an operation's historical production. An operation's historical production will increase by 2.61 percent in 2016 if the operation participated in 2015, providing a stronger safety net.

USDA also has an online resource available to help dairy producers decide which level of coverage will provide them with the strongest safety net under a variety of conditions. The enhanced Web tool, available at www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool, allows dairy farmers to quickly and easily combine their unique operation data and other key variables to calculate their coverage needs based on price projections. Producers can also review historical data or estimate future coverage based on data projections. The secure site can be accessed via computer, mobile phone, or tablet, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Dairy operations enrolling in the program must meet conservation compliance provisions. Producers participating in the Livestock Gross Margin insurance program may register for the Margin Protection Program, but this new margin program will only begin once their livestock dairy insurance coverage has ended. Producers must also submit form CCC-782 for 2016, confirming their Margin Protection Program coverage level selection, to the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office. If electing higher coverage for 2016, dairy producers can either pay the premium in full at the time of enrollment or pay a minimum of 25 percent of the premium by Feb. 1, 2016.

For more information, visit FSA online at www.fsa.usda.gov/dairy for more information, or stop by a local FSA office to learn more about the Margin Protection Program. To find a local FSA office in your area, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Filing a Notice of Loss

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), 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.

Producers of hand-harvested crops must notify FSA of damage or loss through the administrative County Office within 72 hours of the date of damage or loss first becomes apparent. This notification can be provided by filing a CCC-576, email, fax or phone. Producers who notify the County Office by any method other than by filing the CCC-576 are still required to file a CCC-576, Notice of Loss, within the required 15 calendar days.

If filing for prevented planting, an acreage report and CCC-576 must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

Loans for Targeted Underserved Producers

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 to purchase or improve farms or ranches.

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

A targeted underserved 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, targeted underserved 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.

USDA Begins Accepting Applications from States for \$100 Million Biofuels Infrastructure Partnership

Following an announcement by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Secretary Tom Vilsack on May 29, 2015, the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) announced that all 50 states, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C. may now apply for up to \$100 million in grants under the [Biofuels Infrastructure Partnership](#) (BIP). The funding is to support the infrastructure needed to make more renewable fuel options available to American consumers. The Farm Service Agency will administer BIP.

USDA continues to aggressively pursue investments in American-grown renewable energy to create new markets for U.S. farmers and ranchers, help Americans save money on their energy bills, support America's clean energy economy, cut carbon pollution and reduce dependence on foreign oil and costly fossil fuels. A typical gas pump delivers fuel with 10 percent ethanol, which limits the amount of renewable energy most consumers can purchase at the pump.

Through BIP, USDA will award competitive grants, matched by states, to expand the infrastructure for distribution of higher blends of renewable fuel. These competitive grants are available to assist states, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C. with infrastructure funding. States that offer funding equal to or greater than that provided by the federal government will receive higher consideration for grant funds. States may work with private entities to enhance their offer.

CCC funds must be used to pay a portion of the costs related to the installation of fuel pumps and related infrastructure dedicated to the distribution of higher ethanol blends, for example E15 and E85, at vehicle fueling locations. The matching contributions may be used for these items or for related costs such as additional infrastructure to support pumps, marketing, education, data collection, program evaluation and administrative costs.

This new investment seeks to double the number of fuel pumps capable of supplying higher blends of renewable fuel to consumers. This will expand markets for farmers, support rural economic growth and the jobs that come with it, and ultimately give consumers more choices at the pump.

Applications must be submitted by July 15, 2015, using www.grants.gov. To locate, search by funding opportunity number "USDA-FSA-2015-22."

Dates to Remember

07/15/2015 Final Acreage Reporting Deadline for Spring-seeded Crops
08/03/2015 Final Date for County Committee Nomination Forms to be Returned to County Offices
09/01/2015 Application Closing Date for NAP Coverage on Small Grain Crops
09/30/2015 Registration Period for MPP-Dairy Coverage Year 2016 Ends
09/30/2015 Final Date to Enroll for 2014 and 2015 ARC/PLC Programs

Selected Interest Rates for July 2015

Direct Farm Operating Loans - 2.50%
Direct Farm Ownership Loans - 3.75%
Direct Farm Ownership Loans — Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher - 1.50%
Direct Farm Ownership Loans — Joint Financing - 2.50%
Emergency Loans - 3.50%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years) - 2.00%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present - 1.25%

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write:
USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence
Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800)
877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).