

September 2015



Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a Web page.](#)

- [Ensure 2014/2015 ARCPLC Enrollment Is Complete](#)
- [Filing a Notice of Loss](#)
- [Enrollment for 2016 Dairy Margin Protection Program Ends September 30](#)
- [Grassland Conservation Reserve Program](#)
- [Conservation Reserve Program \(CRP\) General Signup Begins December 1, 2015](#)
- [USDA Offers Flood Impacted Nebraska Farmers and Ranchers Immediate Disaster Assistance](#)
- [Marketing Assistance Loans \(MAL\)](#)
- [Microloan \(ML\) Program](#)
- [Beginning Farmer Loans](#)
- [September FSA Interest Rates](#)
- [Dates to Remember](#)

Nebraska FSA Newsletter

Nebraska Farm Service Agency

7131 A Street
Lincoln, NE 68510

www.fsa.usda.gov/ne

State Committee:

Bill Armbrust
Fred Christensen
Susan Frazier,
Chairperson
Leo Hoehn
Linda Kleinschmit

State Executive Director:

Dan Steinkruger

Ensure 2014/2015 ARCPLC Enrollment Is Complete

Before harvest activities begin, take a few minutes to ensure that your 2014 and 2015 contracts for ARCPLC enrollment are complete and submitted to FSA. Although you may have visited the county office to reallocate bases, update yields, complete your program election and report your planted acres, it's critical to make sure steps were taken to also enroll your farms. Farms that are not enrolled will be ineligible for payments. If contracts were provided to landowners or other producers for signatures, it's important to make sure they have been returned. Contact your local FSA office immediately if you need an appointment to enroll, or if you need to verify that your contracts have been filed.

Division Chiefs:

Cathy Anderson
Doug Klein
Greg Reisdorff
Mike Sander
Mark Wilke

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

Filing a Notice of Loss

A Notice of Loss (CCC-576) for the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) 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 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 by 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.

Enrollment for 2016 Dairy Margin Protection Program Ends September 30

Dairy farmers are reminded that the enrollment deadline for the [Margin Protection Program](#) for coverage in 2016 is Sept. 30. 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 began 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 have until September 30, 2016 to pay 100 percent of the 2016 premium.

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>.

Grassland Conservation Reserve Program

Starting Sept. 1, farmers and ranchers could apply for financial assistance to help conserve working grasslands, rangeland and pastureland while maintaining the areas as livestock grazing lands.

The CRP-Grasslands initiative will provide participants who establish long-term, resource-conserving covers with annual rental payments up to 75 percent of the grazing value of the land. Cost-share assistance is available for up to 50 percent of the covers and other practices, such as cross fencing to support rotational grazing or improving pasture cover to benefit pollinators or other wildlife. Participants may still conduct common grazing practices, produce hay, mow, or harvest for seed production, conduct fire rehabilitation, and construct firebreaks and fences.

The Farm Service Agency will accept applications on an ongoing basis. The applications will be scored against published ranking criteria, and approved based on the competitiveness of the offer. The ranking period will occur at least once per year and be announced at least 30 days prior to its start. The end of the first ranking period will be Nov. 20, 2015.

To learn more about participating in CRP-Grasslands or SAFE, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/crp or consult with the local FSA office. To locate a nearby Farm Service Agency office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>. To learn more about the 30th anniversary of CRP, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/CRPis30 or follow on Twitter using #CRPis30.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) General Signup Begins December 1, 2015

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will accept new offers to participate in CRP under a general signup to be held Dec. 1, 2015, through Feb. 26, 2016. Eligible existing program participants with contracts expiring Sept. 30, 2015, will be granted an option for one-year extensions. Farmers and ranchers interested in removing sensitive land from agricultural production and planting grasses or trees to reduce soil erosion, improve water quality and restore wildlife habitat are encouraged to enroll.

Farmers and ranchers should also consider the various CRP continuous sign-up initiatives that may help target specific resource concerns. Financial assistance is offered for many practices including conservation buffers and pollinator habitat plantings, and initiatives such as the highly erodible lands, bottomland hardwood tree and longleaf pine.

Farmers and ranchers may visit their FSA office for additional information. The 2014 Farm Bill authorized the enrollment of grasslands in CRP and information on grasslands enrollment will be available after the regulation is published later this summer.

For more information on CRP and other FSA programs, please visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

USDA Offers Flood Impacted Nebraska Farmers and Ranchers Immediate Disaster Assistance

Nebraska Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds farmers and ranchers across the state of federal farm program benefits that may be available to help eligible producers recover from recent heavy rains and flooding.

FSA offers disaster assistance and low-interest loan programs to assist agricultural producers in their recovery efforts following floods or similar qualifying natural disasters. Available programs and loans include:

- **Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)** - provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters (includes native grass for grazing). Eligible producers must have purchased NAP coverage for 2015 crops.
- **Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)** - offers payments to eligible producers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather. Eligible losses may include those determined by FSA to have been caused by hurricanes, floods, blizzards, wildfires, tropical storms, tornados lightning, extreme heat, and extreme cold. Producers will be required to provide verifiable documentation of death losses resulting from an eligible adverse weather event and must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent.
- **Tree Assistance Program (TAP)** – provides assistance to eligible orchardists and nursery tree growers for qualifying tree, shrub and vine losses due to natural disaster.
- **Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP)** - provides emergency relief for losses due to feed or water shortages, disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, which are not adequately addressed by other disaster programs. ELAP covers physically damaged or destroyed livestock feed that was purchased or mechanically harvested forage or feedstuffs intended for use as feed for the **producer's** eligible livestock. In order to be considered eligible, harvested forage must be baled; forage that is only cut, raked or windrowed is not eligible. Producers must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent.

ELAP also covers up to 150 lost grazing days in instances when a producer has been forced to remove livestock from a grazing pasture due to floodwaters.

For beekeepers, ELAP covers beehive losses (the physical structure) in instances where the hive has been destroyed by a natural disaster including flooding, high winds and tornadoes.

The deadline to apply for an 2015 ELAP payment along with all supporting documentation is November 2, 2015.

- **Emergency Loan Program** – Available to producers with agriculture operations located in a county under a primary or contiguous **Secretarial Disaster designation**. These low interest loans help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding, etc.

- **Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)** - provides emergency funding for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate land severely damaged by natural disasters; includes fence loss.
- **HayNet** - is an Internet-based Hay and Grazing Net Ad Service allowing farmers and ranchers to share 'Need Hay' ads and 'Have Hay' ads online. Farmers also can use another feature to post advertisements for grazing land, specifically ads announcing the availability of grazing land or ads requesting a need for land to graze. www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet.

To establish or retain FSA program eligibility, farmers and ranchers must report prevented planting and failed acres (crops and grasses). Prevented planting acreage must be reported on form FSA-576, Notice of Loss, no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date as established by FSA and Risk Management Agency (RMA).

For more information on disaster assistance programs and loans visit www.fsa.usda.gov or contact your local FSA Office. To find your local FSA county office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Marketing Assistance Loans (MAL)

MALs provide financing and marketing assistance for wheat, feed grains, soybeans, and other oilseeds, pulse crops, wool and honey. MALs provide producers interim financing after harvest to help them meet cash flow needs without having to sell their commodities when market prices are typically at harvest-time lows.

FSA is now accepting requests for 2015 MALs for all eligible commodities.

For more information and additional eligibility requirements, please visit a nearby USDA Service Center or FSA's website www.fsa.usda.gov

Microloan (ML) Program

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) developed the ML program to better serve the unique financial operating needs of beginning, niche and the smallest of family farm operations. This loan program will also be useful to specialty crop producers and operators of community supported agriculture (CSA). Eligible applicants can apply for a maximum amount of \$50,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses to extend the growing season, essential tools, irrigation and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing, and distribution expenses. For more information contact your local FSA Office or view the [Microloan Program Fact Sheet](#) on the FSA website.

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

September FSA Interest Rates

Farm Operating: 2.625%
Microloan: 2.625%
Farm Ownership: 4.00%
Farm Ownership - Joint Financing: 2.50%
Farm Ownership - Down Payment: 1.50%
Emergency - Actual Loss: 3.625%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 7 year term: 2.000%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 10 year term: 2.250%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 12 year term: 2.250%
Commodity Loan: 1.375%

Dates to Remember

September 30, 2015 - Deadline to register and elect buy-up coverage for 2016 MPP-Dairy Program; Deadline to file a 2015 acreage report without a late-filed fee; 2016 sales closing date for fall-seeded annual crops (NAP)

November 2, 2015 - Deadline to submit 2015 ELAP application for payment and supporting documentation

November 16, 2015 - Deadline to report 2016 perennial forage or fall-seeded crops

November 20, 2015 – CRP Grassland first ranking signup cutoff

December 1, 2015 - 2016 sales closing date for honey, apples, cherries, plums, strawberries, asparagus, and grapes (NAP)

December 1, 2015 - CRP General signup begins

December 7, 2015 - Deadline for ballots postmarked or returned to County Office for COC elections

January 2, 2016 – NAP deadline for 2016 honey

January 4, 2016 - 2016 initial reports for honeybee colonies and locations

February 1, 2016 - Deadline to submit 2015 LIP application for payment and supporting documentation

February 1, 2016 - Deadline to request 2015 MAL or LDP for mohair, unshorn pelts (LDP Only), and wool

February 26, 2016 - Deadline for CRP General signup

March 15, 2016 - 2016 sales closing date for alfalfa, mixed forage, spring-seeded annual crops, grass, and sorghum forage (NAP)

March 31, 2016 - Deadline to request 2015 MAL or LDP for barley, canola, crambe, flaxseed, honey, oats, rapeseed, wheat, and sesame seed

May 31, 2016 - Deadline to request 2015 MAL or LDP for corn, dry peas, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, safflower seed, chickpeas, soybeans, sunflower seed

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).
