



# NEWSLETTER



May 12, 2014

## New Jersey State FSA Office

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NJ 08690

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

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## **Farm Storage Facility Loan Program (FSFL)**

The Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program allows producers of eligible commodities to obtain low-interest financing to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities. The maximum principal amount of a loan through FSFL is \$500,000. Participants are required to provide a down payment of 15 percent, with CCC providing a loan for the remaining 85 percent of the net cost of the eligible storage facility and permanent drying and handling equipment. Loan terms of 7, 10 or 12 years are available depending on the amount of the loan. The following commodities are eligible for farm storage facility loans: corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, oats, wheat, barley or minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain; For other than whole grain harvest—corn, grain sorghum, wheat, oats or barley; hay; renewable biomass; fruits and vegetables - cold storage facilities. **NEW:** In addition to the loan for a cold storage facility, a variety of supplies, including sorting bins, wash stations, hydro coolers, packing systems, graders, ice machines, food safety-related equipment and more is now eligible. Also, now all loans of up to \$100,000 (including outstanding current FSFL loan balances) can be secured by only a promissory note (without a lien taken on real estate). After the stored commodity has been marketed, the facility may, with prior approval, be used to temporarily store equipment and other agricultural items until the next harvest season. For more information about FSFL please give us a call or go to [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

## **Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)**

Sign up is underway! The 2014 Farm Bill now makes LIP a permanent program which covers livestock death losses due to eligible adverse weather events dating back to October 1, 2011. Eligible adverse weather events include: lightning; hurricanes; floods, blizzards; and extreme heat and cold. Eligible livestock include Beef cattle, Dairy cattle, Bison, Poultry, Sheep, Equine and Swine. Documentation of death and inventory records is required. January 30, 2015 is the final day to submit a notice of loss and application for payment for past losses, including 2014. For 2015 and future years, losses will need to be reported to our office within 30 days of when they are apparent. If you would like to apply or have any questions, please give us a call.



## **Tree Assistance Program (TAP)**

Sign up has begun! TAP provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters on or after October 1, 2011. Eligible Trees, bushes and vines are those from which an annual crop is produced for commercial purposes. Nursery trees include ornamental, fruit, nut and Christmas trees produced for commercial sale. Growers must have suffered losses in excess of 15% in addition to normal mortality. The trees, bushes or vines must be replaced within 12 months from the date the application is approved. January 30, 2015 is the final day to submit a notice of loss and application for payment for past losses, including 2014. For 2015 and future years, losses will need to be reported to our office within 90 days of when they are apparent.



## **ELAP - Honeybee Assistance**



The 2014 Farm Bill authorized the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP). It covers losses due to eligible damaging weather or loss as determined by the Secretary that occurred on or after October 1, 2011. ELAP provides for the loss of honeybee colonies in excess of normal mortality (17.5%). It covers damage to honeybee hives and honeybee feed that was purchased or produced for eligible honeybees including additional feed purchased above normal quantities to sustain honeybees until additional feed becomes available. Eligible loss conditions include: colony collapse disorder (CCD), eligible winter storm, excessive wind, flood, hurricane and lightning. For the 2012 and 2013 program year, you must apply by August 1, 2014. For the 2014 program year, you must apply by November 1, 2014. For 2015 and future years, losses will need to be reported to our office within 30 days of when they are apparent. If you would like to apply or have any questions, please give us a call.

## **Farm Record Changes**

For the 2014 crop year, will you be acquiring new parcels, no longer farming a current parcel, or have the owners changed on your current parcels? Verification proving you will be the operator for the 2014 crop year or a highly erodible land determination may be needed for newly acquired parcels. If you are no longer farming a parcel, a reconstitution may need to be completed. Please notify the county office to update your farm records.

## **Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)**

CREP allows farmers and ranchers to voluntarily enroll environmentally sensitive land into a program that decreases erosion, restores wildlife habitat and safeguards ground and surface water. CREP is a partnership with federal and state government and is limited to specific geographic areas. The following practices are included in CREP: Grass Waterways, Contour Grass Strips, Filter Strips and Riparian Buffers. Between Federal and State funding, most practices are fully installed at no cost to you with 100% cost share reimbursement! Rental payments are 100% to 150% greater than normal rates and most are over \$100 per acre! Also, a \$100 per acre sign-up incentive payment applies! (except for contour grass strips). Under CREP, program participants enroll in contracts of 10 to 15 years. Participants remove cropland or marginal pastureland from agricultural production and convert the land to grass, trees or other vegetation. Under the riparian buffer and filter strip practice, you may apply for permanent fencing and/or a watering facility, if you need to fence animals from a stream or pond. To qualify, you must have a cropping history on the land. (cropping history is not needed for riparian buffers on marginal pastureland.) Sign up is expected to start soon. Please call now for further details.

## **Acres Reporting**



After spring planting, producers should certify their 2014 acreage. Filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting, may prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs. **Reminder:** the deadline to report Spring forage seeding is June 15<sup>th</sup>. Perennial forage and fall seeded small grains were to have been reported by November 15<sup>th</sup>. All other crops are to be reported by July 15<sup>th</sup>. Failed acreage must be reported within fifteen (15) calendar days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than fifteen (15) calendar days after the final planting date. For crops enrolled in the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), acreage reports are to be completed by the earlier of November 15<sup>th</sup> for fall seeded small grains or perennial forage, June 15<sup>th</sup> for spring seeded small grains or forage, July 15<sup>th</sup> for all other crops, or fifteen (15) calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific crop being reported. Please contact the office to schedule an appointment.

## **County Committee Election Nominations**



The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to ALL farmers and ranchers. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

County Committee members are a critical component of the operations of FSA. They help deliver FSA farm programs at the local level. Farmers and ranchers who serve on county committees help with the decisions necessary to administer the programs in their counties. They work to ensure FSA agricultural programs serve the needs of local producers.

FSA county committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws. Members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions. The COC nomination period runs from June 15, 2014 through August 1, 2014. If you are considering becoming a County Committee member, please contact your local FSA office to learn if your Local Administrative Area (LAA) is up for election. The nomination form is available at the office or online at [http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA\\_File/fsa0669a\\_english\\_form.pdf](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/fsa0669a_english_form.pdf) If you have any questions, please contact the office.

### **Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)**



NAP for the 2015 crop year will be expanded to include buy-up protection, similar to buy-up provisions offered under the federal crop insurance program. Producers may elect coverage for each individual crop between 50 and 65 percent, in 5 percent increments, at 100 percent of the average market price. Producers also pay a fixed premium equal to 5.25 percent of the liability. The waiver of service fees has been expanded from just limited

resource farmers to also, include beginning farmers and socially disadvantaged farmers. The premiums for buy-up coverage for these farmers are reduced by 50 percent.

**NAP Policyholders Reminder:** Please submit your prior year crop production records as soon as possible, if you have not done so already. They are due by July 15, 2014. If production records are not submitted, your NAP coverage will be reduced. Also, when reporting your 2014 crop acreage, please review your acreage reports carefully. If your reported acreage is off by more than 15%, plus or minus, you will be **ineligible** for NAP benefits. Paid for measurement service is available. If you suspect serious crop damage, you must report it to our office and file a notice of loss **within 15 calendar days** after the disaster occurrence or the date the damage is apparent. If your crop will not be taken to harvest or is handpicked, you will need to have an appraisal done. Please, **do not destroy your field until a loss adjuster has given the field a final appraisal.** In addition, if you have experienced prevented planting of crops on your policy, you may file a notice of loss. More than 35% of the total eligible acreage intended for planting must be prevented to qualify. Intention to plant must be established and a field visit required.

### **Price Loss Coverage (PLC) and Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC)**



The Direct payments that producers used to receive through base acreage on the farm have gone away. PLC and ARC are the new programs available and are designed to support farm revenue. Sign up is expected to take place in the Fall 2014 for the 2014-2018 crop years. Producers that participate in PLC or ARC programs will have a one-time opportunity to: (1) maintain the farm's 2013 bases through 2018; or (2) reallocate base acres. Covered commodities include wheat, oats, barley, corn, grain sorghum and soybeans.

A producer also has the opportunity to update the program payment yield for each covered commodity based on 90 percent of the farm's 2008-2012 average yield per planted acre, excluding any year when no acreage was planted to the covered commodity. Program payment yields are used to determine payment amounts for the Price Loss Coverage program. If the sum of the base acres on a farm is 10 acres or less, the producer on that farm may not receive PLC or ARC payments, unless the producer is a socially disadvantaged or limited resource farmer. Payments for PLC and ARC are issued after the end of the respective crop year, but not before Oct. 1.

### **Farm Ownership Loans**

Farm Ownership Direct and Guaranteed Loan Programs provide low-interest financing for producers to purchase farms and ranches and other real estate related needs. The 2014 Farm Bill revisions expand the types of entities eligible, provide favorable interest rates for joint financing arrangements, provide a larger percent guarantee on guaranteed conservation loans, increase the loan limits for the down payment program, and authorize a relending program to assist Native American producers purchase fractionated interests of land. Please call your local office for more information.

### **Emergency Loans**

A Secretarial disaster designation or a Presidential declaration provides producers with emergency loans to help cover the recovery costs for physical and production losses. Farm bill revisions expand the type of entities eligible for loans. For emergency loan eligibility in your area, please contact your local office.

**DATES TO REMEMBER:**

**June 15, 2014 – Final day to timely report Spring forage seeding**

**July 15, 2014 – Final day to timely report most crop acreages**

**July 15, 2014 – Final day to timely submit 2013 NAP production records**

**August 1, 2014 – Final day to purchase 2015 NAP insurance on Strawberries**

**August 1, 2014 – County Committee Nomination Period Ends**

**August 1, 2014 – Final day to apply for 2012 or 2013 ELAP-Honeybees**

**Farm Operating Loans and Microloans**

Farm Operating Direct and Guaranteed Loan Programs provide low-interest financing for producers to purchase farm and ranch operating inputs. FSA is authorized to implement the program through the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, also known as the Con Act. The Act revisions expand the types of entities eligible, provide favorable interest rates for joint financing arrangements, make youth loans available in urban areas, and eliminate term limits for guaranteed operating loans. Please call your local office for more information.

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**Informational FSA Program Meetings**

The Columbus Service Center will be conducting the following program informational sessions. Interested producers should contact Jim Mellor at 609 267-1639 ext. 105 by June 3, 2014.

**Tree Assistance Program (TAP)/Farm Loan Programs**

**June 10, 2014 @ 9:00 AM**

**Emergency Loss Assistance Program (ELAP)/ Farm Loan Programs**

**June 11, 2014 @ 9:00 AM**

**Livestock Indemnity Program/ Farm Loan Programs**

**June 12, 2014 @ 9:00 AM**

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