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NEWSLETTER



NM FSA State Newsletter

New Mexico FSA Office

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State FSA Committee

James Bostwick
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Larry Burnett
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Member

New Mexico Farm Service Agency's primary mission is to help ensure the success of New Mexico's farmers and ranchers through various programs and technical assistance. The work that FSA continues to accomplish day to day is important not only to the agricultural producers around the State but also to the rural communities that depend on the agricultural industry.



Molly Manzanares

Take for example, Torrance County's Marilyn and Erik Simpson, who received a Microloan to continue their farming tradition (page 2); Eddy County's Taylor Martinez, who received a Rural Youth Loan to purchase a steer and sheep to show at the Eddy County fair (page 6); or FSA's annual pumpkin gleanings that provided over 8,500 pumpkins to schools and hospitals (page 6). I am proud to say that these are some of the many success stories

Over the last 5 years, FSA has distributed over \$508 million in program benefits and loans to New Mexico's agricultural producers. These investments in our State's rural economy are delivered through a network of 24 county offices and four (4) farm loan offices. These offices serve the State's 33 counties and are staffed with hard-working, dedicated employees that continue the strong tradition of providing excellent customer service to our producers.

As the State Executive Director of New Mexico FSA, I am committed to ensuring that agriculture across New Mexico continues to flourish throughout our rural communities.

Molly Manzanares
State Executive Director

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

For more information on FSA, please contact your local USDA Service Center or visit us online at www.fsa.usda.gov.



Marilyn and Erik Simpson

MICROLOAN HELPS NAVAJO COUPLE CONTINUE FARMING TRADITION

Marilyn Simpson grew up on the Navajo Reservation in Torreon, N.M., where she learned all about farming from her parents who raised sheep and cows. The youngest of eight children, Marilyn left the reservation, and her parents, to go to college in Arizona. That's also where she met her husband Erik. After graduating, she and Erik moved back to Torreon to help Marilyn's parents.

"We saw that my parents were getting older and they needed help with the animals," said Marilyn, whose parents only speak Navajo. "We eventually took over their operation." For 14 years the couple managed her parents' operation. Now, Marilyn, age 35 and Erik, 39, decided they wanted to start out on their own while still caring for her parents and living on the reservation.

The couple had heard about USDA's Microloan program. The program allows beginning, small and mid-sized farmers to access up to \$35,000 in loans using a simplified application process with up to seven years to repay.

Marilyn and Erik came up with a plan on how much they wanted to borrow and how they planned to back the loan before contacting a FSA loan officer. After deciding that the Microloan was the best option, they contacted the Torrance County FSA. Farm Loan Manager Allen Mackrain mailed a microloan application and then drove 2½ hours one way to their home on the reservation to meet with the couple, help answer questions, see the operation and close the loan.

"The Microloan is a great help because a lot of conventional lenders aren't able to make these loans on the tribal trust lands," said Mackrain. "A lot of tribal members have grazing and/or farming permits but no way to purchase animals or equipment to utilize the land. This gives them an opportunity to do that." The loan allowed the couple to purchase 25 bred cows and rent a bull. That helped expand their herd to 42 cows. They now also have five yearling heifers.

"We wanted something of our own but we also wanted to stay on the reservation and close to our culture," said Marilyn. The couple have three children, ages 13, 10 and 7, who are learning the Navajo language from their grandparents. "We have a lot of fun and the kids are learning a lot about the animals and their culture. It's good for them."

MICROLOAN PROGRAM

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) developed the Microloan (ML) program to better serve the unique financial operating needs of beginning, niche and small family farm operations.

FSA offers applicants a Microloan designed to help farmers with credit needs of \$35,000 or less. The loan features a streamlined application process built to fit the needs of new and smaller producers. 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 \$35,000 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. As financing needs increase, applicants can apply for a regular operating loan up to the maximum amount of \$300,000 or obtain financing from a commercial lender under FSA's Guaranteed Loan Program.

Individuals who are interested in applying for a microloan or would like to discuss other farm loan programs available should contact their local FSA office to set up an appointment with a loan official.

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.

NEW FARM BILL OFFERS INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRODUCERS

The 2014 Farm Bill offers increased opportunities for producers including farm loan program modifications that create flexibility for new and existing farmers.

The Farm Bill expands lending opportunities for thousands of farmers and ranchers to begin and continue operations, including greater flexibility in determining eligibility, raising loan limits, and emphasizing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers.

Changes that will take effect immediately include:

- Elimination of the 15 year term limit for guaranteed operating loans.
- Modification of the definition of beginning farmer, using the average farm size for the county as a qualifier instead of the median farm size.
- Modification of the Joint Financing Direct Farm Ownership Interest Rate to 2 percent less than regular Direct Farm Ownership rate, with a floor of 2.5 percent. Previously, the rate was established at 5 percent.
- Increase of the maximum loan amount for Direct Farm Ownership Down Payment Loan Program from \$225,000 to \$300,000.
- Elimination of rural residency requirement for Youth Loans, allowing urban youth to benefit.
- Debt forgiveness on Youth Loans, which will not prevent borrowers from obtaining additional loans from the federal government.
- Increase of the guaranteed percentage on Conservation Loans from 75 to 80 percent and 90 percent for socially disadvantaged borrowers and beginning farmers.
- Microloans will not count toward direct operating loan term limits for veterans and beginning farmers.

Additional modifications must be implemented through the rulemaking processes.

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.

DIRECT LOAN CHANGES

Changes were made to the interest rate charged on loans where FSA provides 50 percent or less on jointly financed purchases of real estate also called Direct Farm Ownership Participation Loans. The interest rate will be the greater of 2.5 percent or the current interest rate for direct Farm Ownership loans minus 2 percent, as a fixed rate for the duration of the loan. At present, the June direct Farm Ownership rate is 4.00 percent. Because the 2.5 percent floor is greater than subtracting 2 percent from the current direct farm ownership loan rate, the rate for Direct Farm Ownership Participation Loans in June is 2.50 percent.

MANY NEW MEXICO COUNTIES ARE ELIGIBLE FOR EMERGENCY LOANS

Many New Mexico Counties have been declared a primary and/or contiguous disaster area due to drought, heat, severe storms, flooding, and mudslides using the new, streamlined Disaster Designation process. Under this designation, producers with operations in any primary or contiguous county are eligible to apply for low interest emergency loans.

Emergency loans help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding, severe storms, and other natural disasters or quarantine.

Producers have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for emergency loan assistance. FSA will consider each loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability. Producers can borrow up to 100 percent of actual production or physical losses, to a maximum amount of \$500,000.

Producers with operations in counties that did not receive a disaster designation could be eligible for emergency loan assistance if they suffered at least a 30 percent loss in crop production or a physical loss to livestock, livestock products, real estate or chattel property.



FSA ALLOWS LENDERS TO USE EVALUATIONS INSTEAD OF APPRAISALS FOR LOANS OF \$250,000 OR LESS

Lenders that originate FSA guaranteed loans may now use internal real estate “collateral evaluations” to support loan requests of \$250,000 or less, rather than appraisals.

This policy change will allow lenders more flexibility and a faster underwriting process, and is consistent with industry standards. Lenders must follow their regulator’s “Interagency Appraisal and Evaluation Guidelines” and apply these same policies to FSA guaranteed loans as non-guaranteed loans. In addition, lenders should request an appraisal when they would do so for unguaranteed loans even if the loan is under the threshold, such as when the expected loan-to-value is above their established standards.

A description of the method of establishing the real estate value – whether appraisal or evaluation – needs to be described to FSA in their credit presentation.

GUARANTEED LOAN PROGRAM

The Farm Service Agency loan limit for the Guaranteed Loan Program is \$1,355,000. The limit is adjusted annually based on data compiled by the National Agricultural Statistics Service. The maximum combined guaranteed and direct farm loan indebtedness is \$1,655,000. As a reminder, the one-time loan origination fee charged on FSA guaranteed farm ownership and operating loans is 1.5 percent of the guaranteed portion of the loan.

GUARANTEED LOAN ELIGIBILITY

Changes to FSA regulations have removed Guaranteed Operating Loan term limits. Previous and current guaranteed loan borrowers who were not eligible for further guaranteed loans due to the previous 15 year eligibility term limit may now be eligible for further guaranteed loans through their commercial lender.

USDA PREPARES TO ACCEPT MAL AND LDP REQUESTS; SETS 2014 MAL LOAN RATES

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) will begin accepting requests for marketing assistance loans (MALs) and loan deficiency payments (LDPs) for eligible 2014 commodities.

MALs and LDPs for the 2014 crop year become available to eligible producers beginning with harvest/shearing season and extending through a specific commodity’s final loan availability date. Sugar commodity loans for the 2014 crop will be available to sugar processors beginning Oct. 1, 2014.

MALs and LDPs provide financing and marketing assistance for wheat, feed grains, soybeans, and other oilseeds, pulse crops, rice, peanuts, cotton, wool, mohair 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. A producer who is eligible to obtain a loan, but agrees to forgo the loan, may obtain an LDP if such a payment is available. Marketing loan provisions and LDPs are not available for sugar and extra-long staple cotton.

The 2014 Farm Bill also establishes payment limitations per individual or entity not to exceed \$125,000 annually on certain commodities for the following program benefits: price loss coverage payments, agriculture risk coverage payments, marketing loan gains (MLGs) and LDPs. These payment limitations do not apply to MAL loan disbursements.

Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) provisions were modified by the 2014 Farm Bill, which states that a producer whose total applicable three-year average AGI exceeds \$900,000 is not eligible to receive an MLG or LDP.

National and county loans rates for 2014 crops are posted on the FSA website at: www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport.



FSA GOVDELIVERY The USDA Farm Service Agency offices have moved to a paperless news distribution system. Producers are asked to enroll in the new GovDelivery system, which provides notices, newsletters and electronic reminders instead of a hard copy through the mail.

Producers can now subscribe to receive free email updates by going to www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe.

USDA ENHANCES FARM STORAGE

FACILITY LOAN PROGRAM

USDA today announced the expansion of the Farm Storage and Facility Loan program, which provides low-interest financing to producers. The enhanced program includes 22 new categories of eligible equipment for fruit and vegetable producers.

Producers with small and mid-sized operations, and specialty crop fruit and vegetable growers, now have access to needed capital for a variety of supplies including sorting bins, wash stations and other food safety-related equipment. A new more flexible alternative is also provided for determining storage needs for fruit and vegetable producers, and waivers are available on a case-by-case basis for disaster assistance or insurance coverage if available products are not relevant or feasible for a particular producer.

Additionally, Farm Storage Facility Loan security requirements have been eased for loans up to \$100,000. Previously, all loans in excess of \$50,000 and any loan with little resale value required a promissory note/security agreement and additional security, such as a lien on real estate.

The low-interest funds can be used to build or upgrade permanent facilities to store commodities. Eligible commodities include grains, oilseeds, peanuts, pulse crops, hay, honey, renewable biomass commodities, fruits and vegetables. Qualified facilities include grain bins, hay barns and cold storage facilities for fruits and vegetables.

MAINTAINING THE QUALITY OF LOANED GRAIN

Bins are ideally designed to hold a level volume of grain. When bins are overfilled and grain is heaped up, airflow is hindered and the chance of spoilage increases.

Producers who take out marketing assistance loans and use the farm-stored grain as collateral should remember that they are responsible for maintaining the quality of the grain through the term of the loan.

MARKETING ASSISTANCE LOANS (MAL)

Short-term financing is available by obtaining low interest commodity loans for eligible harvested production. A nine-month Marketing Assistance Loan provides financing that allows producers to store production for later marketing. The crop may be stored on the farm or in the warehouse.

Loans are available for producers who share in the risk of producing the eligible commodity and maintain beneficial interest in the crop through the duration of the loan. Once beneficial interest in a commodity is lost, it is ineligible for a loan, even if you regain beneficial interest.

FSA will begin accepting MALs and applications for LDPs on the 2014 wool crop immediately. FSA will accept MAL/LDP requests for honey (produced and extracted) starting April 1, 2014. MAL/LDP requests for all other eligible commodities can be made after harvest. Sugar MALs will be available beginning October 1, 2014.

Selected Interest Rates for June 2014	
90-Day Treasury Bill	.125%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	2.25%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	4.00%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency Loans	3.25%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years)	2.25%
Sugar Storage Facility Loans	3.00%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.125%

For more information about FSA Farm Loans, please contact one of the below Farm Loan Offices or visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

Clovis Farm Loan Office (575) 762-4769 <i>Services the following counties:</i> Colfax Curry De Baca Guadalupe Harding Roosevelt Mora Quay San Miguel Quay	Estancia Farm Loan Office (505) 384-2272 <i>Services the following counties:</i> Bernalillo Cibola McKinley Rio Arriba San Juan Santa Fe Sandoval Taos Torrance Valencia	Las Cruces Farm Loan Office (575) 522-8775 <i>Services the following counties:</i> Catron Dona Ana Grant Hidalgo Sierra Socorro	Roswell Farm Loan Office (575) 622-8745 <i>Services the following counties:</i> Chaves Eddy Lea Lincoln Otero
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TAYLOR'S TRAIL

Taylor Martinez son of Kandy Martinez in Eddy County is a member of the Brushpopper 4-H Club in Loving, New Mexico. Taylor is 11 years old and is very motivated to show his animals. Taylor first came to the Roswell Farm Loan Office last year for his first \$5,000 Rural Youth Loan to help purchase two (2) steers and a lamb. "I enjoy the challenge of showing my animals at the Eddy County Fair" said Taylor.

At the Eddy County Fair Taylor placed well "I get the chance to show everyone my hard work and how it pays off", he said. As a result Taylor was able to sell a steer and lamb in the Premium Auction.

He looks forward to earning more profits this season. He has now started his own bank account and learning the financial end of animal agriculture. Taylor is working with the Roswell Farm Loan team once again this year for his second Youth Loan.

The FSA Youth Loan Program has given him the opportunity to gain responsibility and knowledge about the cattle and sheep industry. In the end, Taylor stated, "All the late nights and early mornings are worth it for a country boy. Like they say, a country boy works until the day light ends".

Taylor's projects has expanded his friendships over the county. He makes a point to make all the 4-H dances at the fair and other area livestock shows.



ONE DAY OF GLEANING BRINGS JOY TO THOUSANDS OF CHILDREN

What started out with just a handful of FSA employees trying to do the right thing has turned into an annual event that spans six New Mexico counties. Ten years ago John Perea, county executive director for Torrance County, N.M., started a project to glean pumpkins from farmers John and Dianne Aday.

"We started it as an effort to take pumpkins that were left in the field and still in good shape, and try to get them to needy children," said Perea, who along with other FSA employees coordinates the event each year. "We try to find schools in areas, which demographically have families that are lower income and in neighborhoods with a history of drug abuse and various social problems."

Today, that effort has grown to include 200 volunteers from local Native American organizations - Isleta, Santa Clara, Zuni, San Ildefonso, Northern Jicarilla and Santo Domingo Pueblos - several youth organizations, students from the University of New Mexico and employees of the USDA Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service and Rural Development.

It took about 50 vehicles to hold more than 8,500 pumpkins gleaned this year. The pumpkins left in the field are still good, but left on the farm to rot because the farmer has either filled his contract obligations or the pumpkins didn't meet a certain class or size. "We go into the fields after commercial harvesting is completed and we physically pick the pumpkins and load them into trailers and pickup trucks," said Perea. "We have a great deal of success finding good pumpkins that will still make someone happy." About 1,500 students in the Torrance and Albuquerque County schools had smiles on their faces as trucks pulled up and delivered pumpkins to the students. The pumpkins also made their way to pediatric units at local hospitals, the St. Felix Pantry, a local food bank and youth centers in six counties around New Mexico. University of Mexico students carved and decorated the pumpkins and delivered them to sick children.

"One day the local FSA guy called us up and asked if they could [glean the pumpkins]" said John Aday. "If it's something that benefits the kids then I'm all for it." John and Dianne Aday have been farming their whole lives but have a commitment to making a positive impact in their community. They plant 60-80 acres of pumpkins annually and have opened their fields for the past 10 years to help support the project. John Aday said he usually isn't there when the actual gleaning takes place but he knows there are a lot of people participating because he sees plenty of vehicles. "I'm glad to help make a child happy," he said.



Left to Right: Brenda Archuleta and Bob Ledingham

Second Annual Salomon E. Ramirez "Employee of the Year" Award

In memory and honor of Salomon E. Ramirez, former New Mexico FSA State Executive Director, NM FSA in 2012 established an annual "Salomon E. Ramirez, Employee of the Year Award" to recognize employees that portray the same outstanding, dedication, and commitment to public service to Farm Service Agency and to the producers of New Mexico.



Left to Right: Lawrence Rael, Roberta Jones, Rebecca Padilla, John Ledingham, Kimberly Dewbre and Brenda Archuleta

On September 11, 2013, 1st Annual Employee of the Year award recipient Brenda Archuleta presented the 2013 Employee of the Year Award to Bob Ledingham, Farm Loan Manager and the Clovis Farm Loan Team Roberta Jones, Farm Loan Officer; Rebecca Padilla, Farm Loan Officers and Kimberly Dewbre, Farm Loan Program Technician.

The Clovis Farm Loan Team fulfills the Agency's mission, internal and external vision, as well as the core values it was built on. The Clovis Farm Loan Team has a high morale in all aspects of the day to day functions due to the structure and cohesiveness exhibited by them. Customer service is extremely important to this team. The Clovis Farm Loan Team have been able to maintain a positive relationship with our agricultural producers of diverse backgrounds and the lending institutions that allow us to integrate our programs with theirs to further help the farming and ranching tradition/industry in New Mexico.

In 2013, the Clovis Farm Loan Team made over \$5,880,310 in direct and guaranteed loans to 62 producers which include beginning farmers and socially disadvantaged producers. This team provides assistance to ten eastern and northeastern New Mexico counties.

Regional Administrator's Award

The Farm Service Agency Administrator's Award for Service to Agriculture was established in an effort to create a working place where the extra efforts shown by individuals and teams are given due recognition. This year New Mexico had a recipient for this prestigious award;

Jordanna Gurule, Acting County Executive Director in Sierra County.

This award symbolized her continuous demonstration of professionalism, innovation, teamwork, leadership, a strong customer focus, and the quality in her work.



Left to Right: Lawrence Rael and Jordanna Gurule



Rebecca Padilla

Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers

The Agricultural Credit Improvement Act of 1992 required the Secretary of Agriculture to establish the Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Committee.

This year New Mexico will be represented on this National Committee by our own FSA Clovis Farm Loan Officer, Rebecca Padilla who was appointed to serve on the committee for two-years.

NEW MEXICO STRIKEFORCE

New Mexico's StrikeForce efforts have helped FSA, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and Rural Development (RD) improve our outreach efforts. "Though we have been successful in the past, recent progress has shown that there are more people to reach" said Molly Manzanares, State Executive Director. Many community based organizations, faith based organizations, and other groups have responded favorably to the FSA, NRCS, and RD working together.

GETTING INVOLVED: As USDA's StrikeForce for Rural Growth and Opportunity expands in 2014, we foresee many new partnerships ahead. You can learn more about the USDA StrikeForce for Rural Growth and Opportunity at www.usda.gov/strikeforce. You can also contact New Mexico's FSA StrikeForce coordinator: Veronica Tribbet at (505) 761-4900.

DAIRY INDEMNITY PAYMENT PROGRAM

The 2014 Farm Bill authorized the extension of the Dairy Indemnity Payment Program (DIPP) through September 30, 2018. DIPP provides payments to dairy producers and manufacturers of dairy products when they are directed to remove their raw milk or products from the market because of contamination.

USDA ANNOUNCES CHANGES TO FRUIT, VEGETABLE AND WILD RICE PLANTING RULES

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 ANNOUNCES THE EXTENSION OF THE MILK INCOME LOSS CONTRACT PROGRAM FOR 2014

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) recently announced the extension of the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program which protects dairy farmers against income loss through Sept. 1, 2014, or until a new Margin Protection Program for dairy producers (MPP) is operational.

Contracts for eligible producers enrolled in MILC on or before Sept. 30, 2013, are automatically extended until the termination date of the MILC program. Dairy operations with approved MILC contracts will continue to receive monthly payments if a payment rate is in effect.

Producers who want to select a different production start month must visit their local FSA office between April 14, 2014, and May 30, 2014.

BANK ACCOUNT CHANGES: Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into a bank account. In order for timely payments to be made, producers need to notify the FSA county office when an account has been changed or if another financial institution purchases the bank where payments are sent. Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to bank accounts and routing numbers.

USDA ANNOUNCES RESTART OF THE BIOMASS CROP ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) was reauthorized by the 2014 Farm Bill and will resume on a limited basis [on June 9] upon the publication of a Notice of Funding Availability.

BCAP employs three types of biomass assistance primarily through approved BCAP project areas. For growing new biomass, BCAP provides financial assistance with 50 percent of the cost of establishing a perennial crop. To maintain the crop as it matures until harvest, BCAP provides an annual payment for up to 5 years for herbaceous crops, or up to 15 years for woody crops. To collect existing agriculture or forest residues that are not economically retrievable, BCAP provides assistance with mitigating the cost of harvesting and transporting the materials to the end-use facility.

The 2014 Farm Bill authorizes \$25 million annually for BCAP, requiring between 10 and 50 percent of the total funding to be used for harvest and transportation of biomass residues. Traditional food and feed crops are ineligible for assistance. The 2014 Farm Bill also enacted several modifications for BCAP, including higher incentives for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, and narrower biomass qualifications for matching payments, among other changes.

Only the matching payments portion of the BCAP, with narrower biomass qualifications, will resume this summer. Additional information will be provided as the updated BCAP regulations and policies are implemented. With the 2014 Farm Bill requiring several regulatory updates to BCAP, the resumption of establishment and annual payments has been deferred until a later date.

For forest residues, this year's matching payments are targeted for energy generation while reducing fire, insect and disease threats on Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands. Agriculture residues for energy are also eligible for matching payments.

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA), which administers BCAP, will coordinate the BCAP enrollments. For more information on BCAP and other FSA programs, visit a local FSA office or go online to www.fsa.usda.gov.

USDA AWARDING \$6 MILLION TO PREPARE FARMERS FOR NEW FARM BILL PROGRAMS

USDA is awarding \$6 million to universities and cooperative state extension services to develop online decision tools and other materials and train experts to educate producers about several key farm bill programs. The new Web tools will help farmers and ranchers determine what participation in programs established by the 2014 Farm Bill will mean for their businesses.

The University of Illinois (lead for the National Coalition for Producer Education), along with the Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute (FAPRI) at the University of Missouri and the Agricultural and Food Policy Center at Texas A&M (co-leads for the National Association of Agricultural and Food Policy), will receive a total of \$3 million to develop the new online tools and train state-based extension agents who can in turn help educate farmers.

The new resources will help farmers and ranchers make an educated choice between the new Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) program and the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program. Using the new online tools, producers will be able to use data unique to their specific farming operations combined with factors like the geographical diversity of crops, soils, weather and climates across the country to test a variety of financial scenarios before officially signing up for the new program options later this year. Once a producer enrolls in the ARC or PLC program, he or she must remain in the program through the 2018 crop year.

New tools will be provided for other programs as well. Sign-up for the newly established Margin Protection Program for Dairy (MPP) begins late this summer and enrollment for "buy-up" provisions under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) will begin early next year. An online MPP tool will be available when sign up begins and the NAP buy-up provision resource will become available to producers in the fall for the 2015 crop year.

USDA will also award \$3 million to state cooperative extension services—a nationwide network of experts based at land-grant universities—for outreach and education on the new Farm Bill programs. Funds will be used to conduct public education outreach meetings where producers can speak with local extension agents and Farm Service Agency (FSA) staff. Outreach meetings will begin late this summer to help farmers and ranchers understand the new programs and their options.

While universities work to create new online tools, producers now have access to a preliminary website that gives them a chance to begin familiarizing themselves with the new programs and the type of information they will need to consider when deciding which program options work better for them. At this site, farmers and ranchers can view ARC and PLC projected payments, ARC guarantees, and PLC payment rate projections.



USDA SEEKS SPONSORS FOR SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM (SFSP)

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is looking for sponsors to ensure that low-income children continue to receive nutritious meals when school is not in session. SFSP is administered by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), an agency of the USDA.

SFSP reimburses approved sponsors for serving meals that meet Federal nutritional guidelines. Sponsors receive payments from USDA based on the number of meals they serve. All meals are served free to eligible children, who are 18 years old and under at approved SFSP sites in areas with significant concentrations of low-income children.

Sponsors are organizations that manage SFSP feeding sites. Sponsors must be organizations that are fully capable of managing a food service program. To be a sponsor, you must follow regulations and be responsible, financially and administratively, for running your program.

The following types of organizations can be sponsors:

- Public or private nonprofit schools
- Units of local, municipal, county, tribal, or State government
- Private nonprofit organizations
- Public or private nonprofit camps
- Public or private nonprofit universities or colleges

A sponsor may prepare its own meals, purchase meals through an agreement with an area school, or contract for meals with a food service management company (vendor).

For questions or to apply, visit <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/summer-food-service-program-sfsp>.

USDA FARM SERVICE AGENCY ANNOUNCES TREE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP) SIGN-UP

As of Tuesday, April 15, 2014, orchardists and nursery tree growers who experienced losses from natural disasters that occurred on or after Oct. 1, 2011, can sign up for the Tree Assistance Program (TAP). TAP was authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014 as a permanent disaster program. TAP provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters.

Eligible tree types include trees, bushes or vines that produce an annual crop for commercial purposes. Nursery trees include ornamental, fruit, nut and Christmas trees that are produced for commercial sale. Trees used for pulp or timber are ineligible.

To qualify for TAP, orchardists must suffer a qualifying tree, bush or vine loss in excess of 15 percent mortality from an eligible natural disaster. The eligible trees, bushes or vines must have been owned when the natural disaster occurred; however, eligible growers are not required to own the land on which the eligible trees, bushes and vines were planted.

If the TAP application is approved, the eligible trees, bushes and vines must be replaced within 12 months from the date the application is approved. The cumulative total quantity of acres planted to trees, bushes or vines, for which a producer can receive TAP payments, cannot exceed 500 acres annually.

NEW FARM BILL OFFERS INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRODUCERS

The 2014 Farm Bill offers increased opportunities for producers including farm loan program modifications that create flexibility for new and existing farmers.

The Farm Bill expands lending opportunities for thousands of farmers and ranchers to begin and continue operations, including greater flexibility in determining eligibility, raising loan limits, and emphasizing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers.

HAY NET

Producers are encouraged to use Hay Net on the FSA website (<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet>). This online service allows producers with hay and those who need hay to post ads so they can make connections. Hay Net is a popular site for farmers and ranchers who have an emergency need. Individual ads can be posted free of charge by producers who complete a simple online registration form the first time they use the site.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the county FSA office staff directly or by phone.

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 October 1, 2011.

To expedite applications, all producers who experienced losses are encouraged to bring records documenting those losses to their local FSA Office. Producers should record all pertinent information of natural disaster consequences, including:

- Documentation of the number and kind of livestock that have died, supplemented if possible by photographs or video records of ownership and losses
- Dates of death supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts
- Costs of transporting livestock to safer grounds or to move animals to new pastures
- Feed purchases if supplies or grazing pastures are destroyed
- Crop records, including seed and fertilizer purchases, planting and production records

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.

Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP)

ELAP provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish that have losses due to disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires. ELAP assistance is provided for losses not covered by LFP and LIP. Producers who suffered eligible livestock, honeybee or farm-raised fish losses during 2012 and 2013 program years must submit a notice of loss and application for payment to their local FSA office by August 1, 2014. For 2014 program year losses, the notice of loss and an application for payment must be submitted by November 1, 2014.

2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 AND 2013 AVERAGE ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME COMPLIANCE REVIEW

The AGI verification and compliance reviews for 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 are conducted on producers who the IRS indicates may have exceeded the adjusted gross income limitations described in [7 CFR 1400.500]. Based on this review, producers will receive determinations of eligibility or ineligibility.

If the producer is determined to have exceeded the AGI limitation of \$500,000 of nonfarm income, \$750,000 of farm income, \$1 million of conservation program benefits or the \$1 million total AGI, then receivables will be established for payments earned directly or indirectly by the producer subject to the applicable limitation. The New Mexico FSA State Office will begin notifying producers selected for review next month. If you have any questions about the review process or determination, please contact the New Mexico FSA State Office at 505-761-4900. Producers who receive initial debt notification letters may only appeal the amount of the debt to their local FSA office. Adverse determinations become administratively final if not timely appealed and can only be reopened if exceptional circumstances exist that prevented the producer from timely filing the appeal.

HIGHLY ERODIBLE LAND AND WETLAND COMPLIANCE

Landowners and operators are reminded that in order to receive payments from USDA, they must be compliant with Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions. Farmers with HEL determined soils must apply tillage, crop residue and rotation requirements as specified in their conservation plan.

Producers should notify FSA prior to conducting land clearing or drainage projects to ensure compliance. If you intend to clear any trees to create new cropland, these areas will need to be reviewed to ensure any work will not jeopardize your

eligibility for benefits.

Landowners and operators can complete form AD-1026 Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification to determine whether a referral to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is necessary.

For more information on Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation provisions, contact a FSA County Office or visit the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE

Any person convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium, poppies and other drug producing plants.

ASKFSA

AskFSA is an online resource that helps you easily find information and answers to your FSA questions no matter where you are or what device you use. It is for ALL customers, including underserved farmers and ranchers who wish to be enrolled in FSA loans, farm, and conservation programs.

2013 ACRE

Participation in 2013 ACRE requires production reports for planted acres that must be submitted for the covered commodities and peanuts planted on the farm by July 15, 2014. Failure to report production for those covered commodities and peanuts planted on ACRE farms may result in contract termination. If the contract is terminated, all payments, including direct payments previously received plus interest will be required to be refunded.

2014 ACREAGE REPORTING

Producers who file accurate and timely reports for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage can prevent the potential loss of FSA program benefits. Please pay close attention to the acreage reporting dates below, as some dates have changed for 2014.

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

The following acreage reporting dates are:

January 15	Apples
March 15	Pistachios
May 15	Spring Barley, Onions, Pecans, Potatoes, Spring Wheat
July 15	All Other Crops
August 15	Beans
November 15	Apiculture, PRF, Perennial Forage (all grasses, Alfalfa, Mixed Forage, etc.)
December 15	Fall-Seeded Small Grain

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of "cover only," "green manure," "left standing," or "seed," then the acreage must be reported by July 15.

After September 15, 2013, late-file fees will be assessed for 2013 and 2014 late-file acreage reports.

SAVE TIME – MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH FSA

As we roll out the Farm Bill programs administered by FSA, there will be related signups and in some cases multiple management decisions that need to be made by you, the producer, in consult with FSA staff. To insure maximum use of your time and to insure that you are afforded our full attention to your important business needs, please call our office ahead of your visit to set an appointment and to discuss any records or documentation that you may need to have with you when you arrive for your appointment.

County FSA Office	Phone Number
Chaves	(575) 622-8745
Colfax	(575) 445-9471
Curry	(575) 762-4769
De Baca	(575) 355-2448
Dona Ana	(575) 522 8775
Eddy	(575) 887-3506
Guadalupe	(575) 472-5402
Harding	(575) 485-2294
Hidalgo	(575) 542-3241
Lea	(575) 396-5857
Luna-Grant	(575) 546-9291
McKinley	(505) 722-9060

County FSA Office	Phone Number
Otero-Lincoln	(575) 437-3100
Quay	(575) 461-3612
Rio Arriba	(505) 753-3508
Roosevelt	(575) 356-6629
San Juan	(505) 334-3090
San Miguel-Mora	(505) 425-7812
Sierra	(575) 894-2563
Socorro-Catron	(575) 835-1710
Taos	(575) 758-3863
Torrance-Santa Fe	(505) 384-2272
Union	(575) 374-9461
Valencia-Cibola-Bernalillo-Sandoval	(505) 865-4643

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).