

October 2016



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Colorado FSA eNewsletter

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State Committee;
Armando Valdez, Chairman
Marsha Daughenbaugh
Anita Nein
Bill Warren
James Hume

**Next State Committee
Meeting:** Dec. 5 & 6

[Online directory of FSA
Offices](#)

Reasonable

USDA Issues Safety-Net Payments to Farmers in Response to 2015 Market Downturn

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that beginning today, many of the 1.7 million farms that enrolled in either the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs will receive safety-net payments due to market downturns during the 2015 crop year.

This fall, USDA will be making more than \$7 billion in payments under the ARC-County and PLC programs to assist participating producers, which will account for over 10 percent of USDA's projected 2016 net farm income. These payments will help provide reassurance to America's farm families, who are standing strong against low commodity prices compounded by unfavorable growing conditions in many parts of the country.

Unlike the old direct payment program, which issued payments during both weak and strong market conditions, the 2014 Farm Bill authorized the ARC-PLC safety net to trigger and provide financial assistance only when decreases in revenues or crop prices, respectively, occur. The ARC and PLC programs primarily allow producers to continue to produce for the market by making payments on a percentage of historical base production, limiting the impact on production decisions.

Nationwide, producers enrolled 96 percent of soybean base acres, 91 percent of corn base acres and 66 percent of wheat base acres in the ARC-County coverage option. Producers enrolled 99 percent of long grain rice and peanut base acres and 94 percent of medium grain rice base acres in the PLC option. Overall, 76 percent of participating farm base acres are enrolled in ARC-County, 23 percent in PLC and one percent in ARC-Individual. For other program information including frequently asked

Accommodations: People with disabilities who require accommodations to participate in FSA programs should contact the County Executive Director in the FSA Office in your area or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339. Alternatively, you may also contact Colorado FSA Civil Rights Coordinator Patti Finke at (720) 544-2889 or patti.finke@co.usda.gov

questions, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc.

Payments are made to producers who enrolled base acres of barley, corn, grain sorghum, lentils, oats, peanuts, dry peas, soybeans, wheat and canola. In the upcoming months, payments will be announced after marketing year average prices are published by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service for the remaining covered commodities. These include long and medium grain rice (except for temperate Japonica rice), which will be announced in November, remaining oilseeds and chickpeas, which will be announced in December, and temperate Japonica rice, which will be announced in early February 2017. Upland cotton is no longer a covered commodity.

The Budget Control Act of 2011, passed by Congress, requires USDA to reduce 2015 ARC and PLC payments by 6.8 percent. For more information, producers are encouraged to visit their local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office. To find a local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Nov. 1 ELAP Application Deadline

Eligible livestock, honeybee, and farm-raised fish producers who experienced losses due to disease, adverse weather or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires, not covered by other agricultural disaster assistance programs, have until Nov. 1, 2016, to submit an application and notice of loss under the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP).

Eligible livestock losses include grazing losses not covered under the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), loss of purchased feed and/or mechanically harvested feed due to an eligible adverse weather event, additional cost of transporting water because of an eligible drought and additional cost associated with gathering livestock to treat for cattle tick fever.

Eligible honeybee losses include loss of purchased feed due to an eligible adverse weather event, cost of additional feed purchased above normal quantities due to an eligible adverse weather condition, colony losses in excess of normal mortality due to an eligible weather event or loss condition, including CCD, and hive losses due to eligible adverse weather.

Eligible farm-raised fish losses include death losses in excess of normal mortality and/or loss of purchased feed due to an eligible adverse weather event.

Producers who suffer eligible livestock, honeybee, or farm-raised fish losses from October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016 must file:

- A notice of loss the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent or by November 1, 2016
- An application for payment by November 1, 2016

The Farm Bill caps ELAP disaster funding at \$20 million per federal fiscal year.

The following ELAP Fact Sheets (by topic) are available online:

- ELAP for Farm-Raised Fish Fact Sheet
- ELAP for Livestock Fact Sheet
- ELAP for Honeybees Fact Sheet

To view these and other FSA program fact sheets, visit the FSA fact sheet web page at www.fsa.usda.gov/factsheets.

USDA Accepting More Farmland for Wildlife Habitat in Colorado

The initiative, known as State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE), is part of the USDA Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), a federally-funded voluntary program that for 30 years has assisted agricultural producers with the cost of restoring, enhancing and protecting certain grasses, shrubs and trees to improve water quality, prevent soil erosion and reduce loss of wildlife habitat. In return, USDA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. CRP has helped farmers and ranchers prevent more than 8 billion tons of soil from eroding, reduce nitrogen and phosphorous runoff relative to cropland by 95 and 85 percent respectively, and even sequester 43 million tons of greenhouse gases annually, equal to taking 8 million cars off the road.

In total, up to 400,000 acres of additional agricultural land will be eligible for wildlife habitat restoration funding through this SAFE announcement. The additional acres are part of an [earlier CRP wildlife habitat announcement](#) made by Secretary Vilsack. Currently, more than 1 million acres, representing 98 projects, are enrolled in SAFE nationwide.

Here in Colorado, approximately 69,050 acres have been designated in 4 SAFE programs that are designed to increase specific threatened, endangered or species of interest species habitat. Some of these species include but are not limited to the; Lessor prairie chicken, Plains sharp-tailed grouse, Columbian sharp tailed grouse, Great sage grouse and Gunnison sage-grouse. Colorado currently has approximately 41,000 acres enrolled in the various SAFE programs offered. The 4 SAFE programs offered in Colorado are:

1. Colorado Short Grass Prairie Buffer SAFE
2. Colorado Plains Sharp-Tailed Grouse SAFE
3. Colorado Western Slope Grouse Conservation SAFE
4. Lessor Prairie Chicken Habitat Enhancement SAFE

Colorado is now offering interested farmers and ranchers the opportunity to enroll approximately 28,000 acres into the 4 various SAFE projects.

Interested producers can offer land for enrollment in SAFE and other CRP initiatives by contacting their local FSA county office at <http://offices.usda.gov>. To learn more the 30th anniversary of CRP and to review 30 success stories throughout the year, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/CRPis30 or follow Twitter at #CRPis30. And for more information about FSA conservation programs, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation.

Upcoming Acreage Reporting Deadline

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

The following acreage reporting dates are as follows:

- **November 15, 2016** - Apiculture, PRF/Perennial Forage and Fall-Seeded Small Grains
- **January 15, 2017** - Applies, Grapes and Peaches

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 producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.
- 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 15th.

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 Office.

Unauthorized Disposition of Grain

If loan grain has been disposed of through feeding, selling or any other form of disposal without prior written authorization from the county office staff, it is considered unauthorized disposition. The financial penalties for unauthorized dispositions are severe and a producer's name will be placed on a loan violation list for a two-year period. Always call before you haul any grain under loan.

Farm Loan Graduation Reminder

FSA Direct Loans are considered a temporary source of credit that is available to producers who do not meet normal underwriting criteria for commercial banks.

FSA periodically conducts Direct Loan graduation reviews to determine a borrower's ability to graduate to commercial credit. If the borrower's financial condition has improved to a point where they can refinance their debt with commercial credit, they will be asked to obtain other financing and partially or fully pay off their FSA debt.

By the end of a producer's operating cycle, the Agency will send a letter requesting a current balance sheet, actual financial performance and a projected farm budget. The borrower has 30 days to return the required financial documents. This information will be used to evaluate the borrower's potential for refinancing to commercial credit.

If a borrower meets local underwriting criteria, FSA will send the borrower's name, loan type, balance sheet and projected cash flow to commercial lenders. The borrower will be notified when loan information is sent to local lenders.

If any lenders are interested in refinancing the borrower's loan, FSA will send the borrower a letter with a list of lenders that are interested in refinancing the loan. The borrower must contact the lenders and complete an application for commercial credit within 30 calendar days.

If a commercial lender rejects the borrower, the borrower must obtain written evidence that specifies the reasons for rejection and submit to their local FSA farm loan office.

If a borrower fails to provide the requested financial information or to graduate, FSA will notify the borrower of noncompliance, FSA's intent to accelerate the loan, and appeal rights.

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.

AgrAbility Winter Workshops 2016-2017

Below is a list of upcoming workshops that will be presented by Dr. Norman L. Dalsted, CSU Extension and by Candiss Leathers and James Craig, Goodwill Industries of Denver. "AgrAbility, How to Work Well with Agricultural Lenders and Bankers" and "Mental Wellness for Rural America" will be the topics. The workshops are for Colorado farm and ranch families who are dealing with barriers created by illnesses, conditions, or limitations, and for professionals who work with them. Workshops are from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. with a free box lunch provided for those who pre-register at least one week prior to the workshop. If you want to participate, please call or email Candiss Leathers ([720-539-4435](tel:720-539-4435)); cleathers@goodwilldenver.org, or Norm Dalsted ([970-222-5657](tel:970-222-5657)); Norman.Dalsted@ColoState.EDU or the Extension agent listed below for more information no later than one week prior to the workshop.

- **Buena Vista:** October 27th, 2016, Sangre De Cristo Electric Association, 29780 North Highway 24, Buena Vista, CO, with Kurt Jones (719-539-6447).
- **Trinidad:** November 19th, 2016, Pioneer Room in the Sullivan Student Center at Trinidad State Junior College, 600 Prospect St, Trinidad, CO, with Dean Oatman (719-846-6881).
- **Pueblo:** November 16th, 2016, County Extension Office, 701 Court St., Pueblo, CO, with Tom Laca (719-583-6566).
- **Walden:** November 29th, 2016, Jackson County Fairgrounds, Wattenberg Center, 686 CR 42, Walden, CO, with Debbie Alpe (970-723-4298).
- **Delta:** January 18th, 2017, County Courthouse, 501 Palmer St. Rm #234, Delta, Co, with Doug Dean, (970-244-1834)
- **Aurora:** February 8th, 2017, 25690 E Quincy Ave, Aurora, CO, with Jonathan Vrabec, (719-661-2286)
- **Yuma:** February 14th, 2017, Concession Building at the Yuma County Fairgrounds, 410 W. Hoag Ave., Yuma, CO, with Dennis Kaan, (970- 345-2287, Mobile: 970-520-1826).
- **Sterling:** February 15, 2017, County Extension Office, 508 South 10th Ave. Sterling, CO, with Dennis Kaan (Voice: 970-345-2287, Mobile: 970-520-1826)

Important Dates to Remember and Interest Rate for October

Important FSA Dates to Remember:

- **Nov. 13** - all hay or biomass shall be removed from CRP field
- **Nov. 15** - Deadline to certify; Apiculture, PRF/Perennial forage and fall-seeded small grains
- **Nov. 20** - 2017 NAP application closing date for Apples, Apricots, Cherries, Grapes, Hops, Nectarines, Peaches, Pears, Plums and Prunes
- **Nov. 1** - Deadline to submit application for ELAP
- **Oct 1 - Nov. 30** - First grazing period on CRP for FY 17
- **Dec. 1** - 2017 NAP application closing date for Alfalfa, Clover, Grass, Honey, Mixed Forage, Mustard and

Vetch

- **Jan. 15** - Deadline to certify; Apples, Grapes and Peaches

For more information about FSA programs, contact your local FSA office.

Ongoing Notice of Loss Requirements:

- **NAP:** Submit Notice of Loss within 15 calendar days of the earlier of a natural disaster occurrence, the final planting date if planting is prevented by a natural disaster, the date that damage to the crop or loss of production becomes apparent; the normal harvest date.
- **ELAP:** Submit Notice of Loss the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent or Nov. 1st after the end of the program year in which the loss occurred.
- **Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP):** Submit Notice of Loss within 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent

October FSA Interest Rate:

- Farm Operating: 2.125%
- Microloan Operating: 2.125%
- Farm Ownership: 3.125%
- Farm Ownership - Joint Financing: 3.125%
- Farm Ownership - Down Payment: 1.50%
- Emergency - Actual Loss: 3.125%
- Farm Storage Facility Loan 3 year term: 0.875%
- Farm Storage Facility Loan 5 year term: 1.1250%
- Farm Storage Facility Loan 7 year term: 1.50%
- Farm Storage Facility Loan 10 year term: 1.625%
- Farm Storage Facility Loan 12 year term: 1.625%

Commodity Loan: 1.625%

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. 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).