

July 2017



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

GovDelivery

- [Youth Loans](#)
- [Loan Interest Rates](#)
- [Organic Certification Cost Share Program](#)
- [Agriculture Meetings & Program Deadlines](#)
- [Producers are Encouraged to Report Prevented Planting and Failed Acres](#)
- [USDA Microloans Help Farmers Purchase Farmland and Improve Property](#)

Connecticut FSA July Newsletter

Connecticut Farm Service Agency

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Doris Ostrowski, Acting
State Executive Director

State Committee:

Vincent Malerba, Chair

Theresa Freund, Member

Stephen Jarmoc, Member

Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency makes loans to youth to establish and operate agricultural income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5000.

Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

- Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien
- Be 10 years to 20 years of age
- Comply with FSA's general eligibility requirements
- Be unable to get a loan from other sources
- Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above
- Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a

Edward Kasheta, Member

project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the youth loan applicant, along with providing adequate supervision.

Office Staff:

Doris Ostrowski,
Administrative Officer

Stop by the county office for help preparing and processing the application forms.

Ross Eddy,
District Director

Sarah Fournier,
GS Program Technician

Randy Kleiner,
Farm Loan Chief

Dawn Pindell,
Outreach Specialist

Loan Interest Rates

- Farm Operating - Direct 2.875%
- Farm Ownership: Direct 3.875%
- Farm Ownership: Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer 1.50%
- Farm Storage Facility Loan (3 years) 1.5%
- Farm Storage Facility Loan (7 years) 2.0

Organic Certification Cost Share Program

The Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) provides cost share assistance to producers and handlers of agricultural products who are obtaining or renewing their certification under the National Organic Program (NOP). Certified operations may receive up to 75 percent of their certification costs paid from Oct. 1, 2016, through Sept. 30, 2017, not to exceed \$750 per certification scope.

Eligible costs include application fees, inspection costs, fees related to equivalency agreement/arrangement requirements, travel/per diem for inspectors, user fees, sales assessments and postage.

Ineligible costs include equipment, materials, supplies, transitional certification fees, late fees and inspections necessary to address National Organic Program regulatory violations.

Producers and handlers may submit OCCSP applications to FSA county offices or they may apply through participating State Agencies, which will be listed at <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/occsp/index> as their agreements to administer the program are finalized.

The FSA OCCSP application form is available at [USDA's eForms site](#), by selecting "Browse forms" and entering "OCCSP" in the "title or keywords" field on the search page.

Agriculture Meetings & Program Deadlines

July 17 - Acreage Reporting Deadline

If planting is delayed due to wet weather which prevents you from being able to complete your acreage report by the deadline, call your county office by **COB July 17th** to request that you be placed on the register and given an appointment to report. The appointment to report your acres must be between July 17th and July 31st.

July 19 - Twilight Barn Meeting, 5:30 to 9 pm, Walnut Hill Farm, 39 Koebke Road, Dudley, MA

July 21 - Soil Health Workshop, Growing More with Less, 9 am to 3 pm, \$25, Registration Required, Valleyside Farm LLC, 210 Child Hill Road, Woodstock, CT; info at www.CTRCD.org

August 1 – All County Committee Election Nominations must be submitted to the County Office

August 1 - 2017 ARC/PLC sign up deadline

August 2 - 107th Plant Science Day, 10 to 4, Lockwood Farm, 890 Evergreen Avenue, Hamden, CT

August 5 - 8th Annual Young Farmers Lamb & Pig Roast, 5 pm Farm Tour, 6 pm; \$20; Pleasant View Café, 452 South Road, Somers, CT; www.cfba.org

Producers are Encouraged to Report Prevented Planting and Failed Acres

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds producers to report prevented planting and failed acres in order to establish or retain FSA program eligibility for some programs. Producers should report crop acreage they intended to plant, but due to natural disaster, were prevented from planting. Prevented planting acreage must be reported on form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date as established by FSA and Risk Management Agency (RMA).

If a producer is unable to report the prevented planting acreage within the 15 calendar days following the final planting date, a late-filed report can be submitted. Late-filed reports will only be accepted if FSA conducts a farm visit to assess the eligible disaster condition that prevented the crop from being planted. A measurement service fee will be charged.

Additionally, producers with failed acres should also use form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, to report failed acres.

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 or office visit. The CCC-576 must be filed within the required 15 calendar days.

For losses on crops covered by the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), producers must file a Notice of Loss within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent. Producers must timely file a Notice of Loss for failed acres on all crops including grasses.

USDA Microloans Help Farmers Purchase Farmland and Improve Property

Producers, Including Beginning and Underserved Farmers, Have a New Option to Gain Access to Land

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is offering farm ownership microloans, creating a new financing avenue for farmers to buy and improve property. These microloans are especially helpful to beginning or underserved farmers, U.S. veterans looking for a career in farming, and those who have small and mid-sized farming operations.

The microloan program has been hugely successful, providing more than 16,800 low-interest loans, totaling over \$373 million to producers across the country. Microloans have helped farmers and ranchers with operating costs, such as feed, fertilizer, tools, fencing, equipment, and living expenses since 2013. Seventy percent of loans have gone to new farmers.

Now, microloans will be available to also help with farm land and building purchases, and soil and water conservation improvements. FSA designed the expanded program to simplify the application process, expand eligibility requirements and expedite smaller real estate loans to help farmers strengthen their operations. Microloans provide up to \$50,000 to qualified producers, and can be issued to the applicant directly from the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).

To learn more about the FSA microloan program visit www.fsa.usda.gov/microloans, or contact your local FSA office.

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).