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Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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Indiana Farm Service Agency Program Updates

Indiana Farm Service Agency

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From the Desk of the State Executive Director

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced Monday, August 27, 2018, details of actions the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will take to assist farmers in response to trade damage from unjustified retaliation by foreign nations. You can read further program details in this newsletter.

Indiana FSA would like to welcome Allen Buchanan of Benton County, Indiana to the Indiana State Committee. Allen is a corn & soybean farmer with his father Bruce.

Buchanan will join the current State Committee who were appointed in January of this year; Ken Rulon (Chairperson), Bill Gelfius, Clint Orr and Kirk Perkins. The State Committee is responsible for the oversight of farm programs and county committee operations, resolving appeals from the agriculture community, and helping to keep producers informed about FSA programs.

Welcome aboard Allen!

Steve

USDA Announces Details of Assistance for Farmers Impacted by Unjustified Retaliation

USDA is taking action to assist farmers in response to trade damage from unjustified retaliation by foreign nations. As [announced last month](#), USDA will authorize up to \$12 billion in programs, consistent with our World Trade Organization obligations.

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These programs will assist agricultural producers to meet the costs of disrupted markets:

- USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will administer the Market Facilitation Program (MFP) to provide payments to corn, cotton, dairy, hog, sorghum, soybean, and wheat producers starting Sept. 4, 2018. An announcement about further payments will be made in the coming months, if warranted.
- USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) will administer a Food Purchase and Distribution Program to purchase up to \$1.2 billion in commodities unfairly targeted by unjustified retaliation. USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) will distribute these commodities through nutrition assistance programs such as The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and child nutrition programs.
- Through the Foreign Agricultural Service's (FAS) Agricultural Trade Promotion Program (ATP), \$200 million will be made available to develop foreign markets for U.S. agricultural products. The program will help U.S. agricultural exporters identify and access new markets and help mitigate the adverse effects of other countries' restrictions.

The Market Facilitation Program is established under the statutory authority of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) and administered by FSA. For each commodity covered, the payment rate will be dependent upon the severity of the trade disruption and the period of adjustment to new trade patterns, based on each producer's actual production.

Interested producers can apply after harvest is 100 percent complete and they can report their total 2018 production. Beginning Sept. 4 of this year, Market Facilitation Program applications will be available online at www.farmers.gov/mfp. Producers will also be able to submit their applications in person, by email, fax or by mail.

For detailed information, including initial payment rates and to view U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue's video message on the Market Facilitation Program read the full [USDA press release](#).

2018 Acreage Reporting Dates

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

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 below or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for Indiana:

January 2 - Honey

January 15 - Apples

June 15 - Cucumbers (Planted 5/1-5/31 in Knox County)

July 15 - Cucumbers (Planted 5/10-6/15 in all counties), all other crops

August 15 - Cucumbers (Planted 6/16-8/5 in Fulton, LaPorte, Porter, and St. Joseph Counties)
September 15 - Cucumbers (Planted 6/1-8/15 in Knox County)
September 30 - Value Loss and Controlled Environment Crop (for the coming program year)
November 15 - Perennial Grazing and Forage Crops (alfalfa, grass, mixed forages, clover, etc.)
December 15 - Fall Mint, Fall-Seeded Small Grains

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.
- Cucumbers and crops for NAP coverage may have dates not included on the chart above. Visit your local county office for details.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact your local county FSA office.

Elections for the 2018 County Committee

Elections for USDA's Farm Service Agency's (FSA) county committees are underway.

It is important that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the USDA.

County committee members are a critical component of FSA operations. Committees should be comprised of members who reflect the diversity of producers involved in production agriculture. This means that producers representing underserved groups or communities should be on the committee to speak on behalf of their constituency.

Underserved producers are beginning, women and other minority farmers and ranchers and land owners and/or operators who have limited resources. Other minority groups including Native American and Alaska Natives; persons under the poverty level, and persons that have disabilities are also considered underserved.

County committee election ballots will be mailed to eligible voters on Nov. 5, 2018. The last day to return completed ballots to your local FSA office is Dec. 3, 2018.

For more information on eligibility to serve on FSA county committees, visit:
www.fsa.usda.gov/elections.

Low Interest Emergency Physical Loss Loans Available for Producers in Harrison, Crawford, Floyd and Washington Counties

Agricultural producers in Harrison, Crawford, Floyd and Washington Counties who lost property due to recent natural disasters are eligible for physical loss loans from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers these loans for losses caused by high winds, hail and multiple tornadoes that occurred on July 20, 2018.

FSA is offering these low-interest emergency loans to producers with a qualifying loss. Approval is limited to applicants who suffered severe physical losses only, including the loss of buildings and livestock. The deadline for producers in designated primary and contiguous counties to apply for loans for physical losses is April 8, 2019.

Physical loss loans can help producers repair or replace damaged or destroyed physical property essential to the success of the agricultural operation, including livestock losses. Examples of property commonly affected include essential farm buildings, fixtures to real estate, equipment, livestock, perennial crops, fruit and nut bearing trees, and harvested or stored crops and hay.

Please contact your local FSA office for more information on loan eligibility and the application process. FSA office information is available at <http://offices.usda.gov>. Additional FSA disaster assistance program information is available at <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov>.

CRP Participants Must Maintain Approved Cover on Acreages Enrolled in CRP and the Farm Programs

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) participants are responsible for ensuring adequate, approved vegetative and practice cover is maintained to control erosion throughout the life of the contract after the practice has been established. Participants must also control undesirable vegetation, weeds (including noxious weeds), insects and rodents that may pose a threat to existing cover or adversely impact other landowners in the area.

All CRP maintenance activities, such as mowing, burning, disking and spraying, must be conducted outside the primary nesting or brood rearing season for wildlife, which for Indiana is April 1 through August 1 each year for contracts which started in 2008. If your contract was approved prior to 2008, then the primary nesting season is March 1 through July 15. However, spot treatment of the acreage may be allowed during the primary nesting or brood rearing season if, left untreated, the weeds, insects or undesirable species would adversely impact the approved cover. In this instance, spot treatment is limited to the affected areas in the field and requires County Committee approval prior to beginning the spot treatment. The County Committee will consult with NRCS to determine if such activities are needed to maintain the approved cover.

Annual mowing of CRP for generic weed control, or for cosmetic purposes, is prohibited at all times.

Maintaining the Quality of Farm-Stored Loan 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.

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.

Timely Filing a Notice of Loss

Timely filing a Notice of Loss is required for all crops including grasses. For losses on crops covered by the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), producers must timely report damage or loss to their administrative County Office. For all low yield and value-loss crop claims, a CCC-576 Part B Notice of Loss must be filed within 15 calendar days of earlier of the date disaster occurs (or becomes apparent) or the normal harvest date. However, all producers should be aware that deadlines to provide initial notice to FSA do now vary by method of harvest and crop.

Crops that are either hand-harvested or other crops determined by FSA to deteriorate quickly and therefore need prompt appraisal must notify FSA within 72 hours of the date of damage or loss first

becomes apparent. This initial notice may be by the filing of the CCC-576 Part B, e-mail, FAX, or a phone call. When initial notice is by email, FAX, or phone, County Offices will provide a Receipt for Service with additional requirements. A CCC-576 Notice of Loss will still be required within 15 calendar days of earlier of date of occurrence/appearance of damage or harvest date.

Other crops, such as forages and grains, continue to have the 15 day requirement to file a required CCC-576, Notice of Loss, to report failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. This Notice of Loss must be filed within 15 calendar days of the earlier of date of occurrence/appearance of damage or harvest date.

If filing for prevented planting, an acreage report and CCC-576 Part B must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

Further, to receive NAP assistance for claimed losses producers **must** timely file an Application for Payment on CCC-576 (Parts D through H) along with all required production records. Each producer on the unit must file their own application for payment. The deadline to apply for payment is 60 calendar days after the end of coverage for the crop year on the unit. There are no late-file provisions for NAP Applications for Payment.

Update Your Records

FSA is cleaning up our producer record database. If you have any unreported changes of address or zip code or an incorrect name or business name on file they need to be reported to your local office. Changes in your farm operation, like the addition of a farm by lease or purchase, need to be reported to our office as well. Producers participating in FSA and NRCS programs are required to timely report changes in their farming operation to the County Committee in writing and update their CCC-902 Farm Operating Plan.

If you have any updates or corrections, please call your local FSA office to update your records.

Payments to Deceased Producers

In order to claim a Farm Service Agency (FSA) payment on behalf of a deceased producer, all program conditions for the payment must have been met before the applicable producer's date of death.

If a producer earned a FSA payment prior to becoming deceased, the following is the order of precedence of the representatives of the producer:

- administrator or executor of the estate
- the surviving spouse
- surviving sons and daughters, including adopted children
- surviving father and mother
- surviving brothers and sisters
- heirs of the deceased person who would be entitled to payment according to the State law

In order for FSA to release the payment, the legal representative of the deceased producer must file a form FSA-325, to claim the payment for themselves or an estate. The county office will verify and determine that the application, contract, loan agreement, or other similar form requesting payment issuance, was signed by the applicable deadline for such form, by the deceased or a person legally authorized to act on their behalf at that time of application.

If the application, contract or loan agreement form was signed by someone other than the participant who is deceased, FSA will determine whether the person submitting the form has the legal authority to submit the form to compel FSA to pay the deceased participant.

Payments will be issued to the respective representative's name using the deceased program participant's tax identification number. Payments made to representatives are subject to offset regulations for debts owed by the deceased.

FSA is not responsible for advising persons in obtaining legal advice on how to obtain program benefits that may be due to a participant who has died, disappeared or who has been declared incompetent.

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 Loans

FSA offers direct farm ownership and direct farm operating loans to producers who want to establish, maintain or strengthen their farm or ranch. FSA loan officers process, approve and service direct loans.

Direct farm operating loans can be used to purchase livestock and feed, farm equipment, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance and other costs including family living expenses. Operating loans can also be used to finance minor improvements or repairs to buildings and to refinance some farm-related debts, excluding real estate.

Direct farm ownership loans can be used to purchase farmland, enlarge an existing farm, construct and repair buildings, and to make farm improvements.

The maximum loan amount for both direct farm ownership and operating loans is \$300,000 and a down payment is not required. Repayment terms vary depending on the type of loan, collateral and the producer's ability to repay the loan. Operating loans are normally repaid within seven years and farm ownership loans are not to exceed 40 years.

Please contact your local FSA office for more information or to apply for a direct farm ownership or operating loan.

Dates to Remember

September 1: 2018 MPP-Dairy premiums due

September 1: NAP application closing date for value loss crops for the following year (flowers for fresh cut, onion sets, turfgrass sod, Christmas trees, aquaculture, ginseng, mushrooms, etc.)

September 3: Offices closed in observance of Labor Day

September 4: Signup begins for Market Facilitation Program (MFP)

September 15: Reporting date for cucumbers (planted 6/1-8/15 in Knox County)

September 28: Deadline to enroll in 2018 Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) Programs

September 30: Reporting date for value loss and controlled environment crop (for the coming program year)

September 30: Deadline to report changes in interest on ARC or PLC contracts

September 30: NAP application closing date for garlic, wheat, barley, rye and mint for the following year's crop

October 8: Offices closed in observance of Columbus Day

November 1: Final application for payment for 2018 ELAP for losses occurring 10/1/2017 to 9/30/2018

November 4: Final date to submit a prevented planting claim for 2019 fall wheat with 10/20 final plant date

November 12: Offices closed in observance of Veteran's Day

November 15: Reporting date for 2019 perennial grazing and forage crops (alfalfa, grass, mixed forages, clover, etc.)

November 15: Final date to submit a prevented planting claim for 2019 fall wheat with 10/31 final plant date

November 15: NAP application closing date for perennial grazing and forage crops (alfalfa, grass, mixed forages, clover, etc.)

November 20: NAP application closing date for apples, apricots, aronia (chokeberry), asparagus, blueberries, caneberries, cherries, grapes, hops, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums, strawberries

November 22: Offices closed in observance of Thanksgiving Day

December 1: NAP application closing date for honey for the following year

December 15: Reporting date for 2019 fall mint, fall-seeded small grains

December 25: Offices closed in observance of Christmas Day

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).