|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| |  | | --- | | April 2021 NL Masthead  Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a Web page](https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USFSA/bulletins/2ebfcc8).   * [Applying for Farm Storage Facility Loans](#link_1) * [Submit Loan Requests for Financing Early](#link_4) * [Getting Acreage Reporting Right](#link_2) * [Maintaining Good Credit History](#link_5) * [USDA Offers New Forest Management Incentive for Conservation Reserve Program](#link_3) * [Preauthorized Debit Available for Farm Loan Borrowers](#link_6)  Maine FSA Newsletter | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | Maine Farm Service Agency 967 Illinois Ave, Suite 2  Bangor, ME  04401  207-990-9140  [www.fsa.usda.gov/me](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fme%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7Cab153c57c1a94d33803908d95b639c54%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637641305821719905%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=9tsZHV%2FiJJuWy72APqX8wLsdJgIQVGI63Cj5GNnZqN4%3D&reserved=0)  **State Executive Director:**  Sherry Hamel,  Acting SED  **State Committee:**  Sue McCrum  Heath Miller  Nancy Ricker  Dave Tuttle  Fred Flewelling  To find contact information for your local office go to [www.fsa.usda.gov/me](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fme%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7Cab153c57c1a94d33803908d95b639c54%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637641305821729863%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=otOJb6APTZaxbbd8moE6906N3PrK%2B9UIp7V6yBqbcPs%3D&reserved=0) | Applying for Farm Storage Facility Loans The Farm Service Agency’s (FSA) Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program provides low-interest financing to help you build or upgrade storage facilities and to purchase portable (new or used) structures, equipment and storage and handling trucks.  Eligible commodities include corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley, minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain, pulse crops (lentils, chickpeas and dry peas), hay, honey, renewable biomass, fruits, nuts and vegetables for cold storage facilities, floriculture, hops, maple sap, rye, milk, cheese, butter, yogurt, meat and poultry (unprocessed), eggs, and aquaculture (excluding systems that maintain live animals through uptake and discharge of water). Qualified facilities include grain bins, hay barns and cold storage facilities for eligible commodities.  Loans up to $50,000 can be secured by a promissory note/security agreement, loans between $50,000 and $100,000 may require additional security, and loans exceeding $100,000 require additional security.  You do not need to demonstrate the lack of commercial credit availability to apply. The loans are designed to assist a diverse range of farming operations, including small and mid-sized businesses, new farmers, operations supplying local food and farmers markets, non-traditional farm products, and underserved producers.  For more information, contact your local] County USDA Service Center or visit [fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2Fpricesupport%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7Cab153c57c1a94d33803908d95b639c54%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637641305821729863%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=AT%2FS9i6%2BGRGKUq1oQEFEsX51rcUlRoihszT6I%2BQDejk%3D&reserved=0). Submit Loan Requests for Financing Early The Farm Loan teams in Maine are already working on operating loans for spring 2021 and asks potential borrowers to submit their requests early so they can be timely processed. The farm loan team can help determine which loan programs are best for applicants.  FSA offers a wide range of low-interest loans that can meet the financial needs of any farm operation for just about any purpose. The traditional **farm operating** **and farm ownership loans** can help large and small farm operations take advantage of early purchasing discounts for spring inputs as well expenses throughout the year.  **Microloans** are a simplified loan program that will provide up to $50,000 for both Farm Ownership and Operating Microloans to eligible applicants. These loans, targeted for smaller and non-traditional operations, can be used for operating expenses, starting a new operation, purchasing equipment, and other needs associated with a farming operation.  Loans to beginning farmers and members of underserved groups are a priority.  Other types of loans available include:  **Marketing Assistance Loans** allow producers to use eligible commodities as loan collateral and obtain a 9-month loan while the crop is in storage. These loans provide cash flow to the producer and allow them to market the crop when prices may be more advantageous.  **Farm Storage Facility Loans** can be used to build permanent structures used to store eligible commodities, for storage and handling trucks, or portable or permanent handling equipment. A variety of structures are eligible under this loan, including bunker silos, grain bins, hay storage structures, and refrigerated structures for vegetables and fruit. A producer may borrow up to $500,000 per loan**.** | | | Getting Acreage Reporting Right You have a lot at stake in making sure your crop insurance acreage reporting is accurate and on time. If you fail to report on time, you may not be protected. If you report too much acreage, you may pay too much premium. If you report too little acreage, you may recover less when you file a claim.  Crop insurance agents often say that mistakes in acreage reporting are the easiest way for producers to have an unsatisfactory experience with crop insurance. Don’t depend on your agent to do this important job for you. Your signature on the bottom of the acreage reporting form makes it, legally, your responsibility. Double-check it for yourself.  Remember - acreage reporting is your responsibility. Doing it right will save you money. Always get a copy of your report immediately after signing and filing it with your agent and keep it with your records. Remember, it is your responsibility to report crop damage to your agent within 72 hours of discovery. Never put damaged acreage to another use without prior written consent of the insurance adjuster. You don’t want to destroy any evidence of a possible claim. [Learn more by visiting RMA’s website](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.rma.usda.gov%2F%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7Cab153c57c1a94d33803908d95b639c54%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637641305821739819%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=mdBmdDeFPKc5ciER3gCgqzx6mVAay8gIB6oN5SptBqE%3D&reserved=0).   Maintaining Good Credit History Farm Service Agency (FSA) loans require applicants to have a satisfactory credit history. A credit report is requested for all FSA direct farm loan applicants. These reports are reviewed to verify outstanding debts, see if bills are paid timely and to determine the impact on cash flow.  Information on your credit report is strictly confidential and is used only as an aid in conducting FSA business.  Our farm loan staff will discuss options with you if you have an unfavorable credit report and will provide a copy of your report. If you dispute the accuracy of the information on the credit report, it is up to you to contact the issuing credit report company to resolve any errors or inaccuracies.  There are multiple ways to remedy an unfavorable credit score:   * Make sure to pay bills on time   + Setting up automatic payments or automated reminders can be an effective way to remember payment due dates. * Pay down existing debt * Keep your credit card balances low * Avoid suddenly opening or closing existing credit accountsFSA’s farm loan staff will guide you through the process, which may require you to reapply for a loan after improving or correcting your credit report.  For more information on FSA farm loan programs, local County USDA Service Center or visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2F%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7Cab153c57c1a94d33803908d95b639c54%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637641305821739819%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=N4SbzoKj3wMpRTfVznpkZLB5ZqD10FkcMdtLn%2B0F0G0%3D&reserved=0).  USDA Offers New Forest Management Incentive for Conservation Reserve Program The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is making available $12 million for use in making payments to forest landowners with land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) in exchange for their implementing healthy forest management practices. Existing CRP participants can now sign up for the Forest Management Incentive (FMI), which provides financial incentives to landowners with land in CRP to encourage proper tree thinning and other practices.  Right now, less than 10% of land currently enrolled in CRP is dedicated to forestland. But, these nearly 2 million acres of CRP forestland, if properly managed, can have enormous benefits for natural resources by reducing soil erosion, protecting water quality, increasing water quantity, and diversifying local farm operations and rural economies.  Only landowners and agricultural producers with active CRP contracts involving forest cover can enroll. However, this does not include active CRP contracts that expire within two years. Existing CRP participants interested in tree thinning and prescribed burning must comply with the standards and specifications established in their CRP contract.  CRP participants will receive the incentive payment once tree thinning and/or other authorized forest management practices are completed.  The incentive payment is the lower of:   * The actual cost of completing the practice; or * 75% of the payment rate offered by USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) if * the practice is offered through NRCS conservation programs.   CRP signup is currently open. FSA will announce deadline later this year. Interested producers should contact their [local FSA county office](https://www.farmers.gov/service-center-locator?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery).   Preauthorized Debit Available for Farm Loan Borrowers USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) has implemented pre-authorized debit (PAD) for Farm Loan Program (FLP) borrowers. PAD is a voluntary and alternative method for making weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual payments on loans.  PAD payments are pre-authorized transactions that allow the National Financial and Accounting Operations Center (NFAOC) to electronically collect loan payments from a customer’s account at a financial institution.  PAD may be useful if you use nonfarm income from regular wages or salary to make payments on loans or adjustment offers or for payments from seasonal produce stands. PAD can only be established for future payments.  To request PAD, customers, along with their financial institution, must fill out form RD 3550-28. This form has no expiration date, but a separate form RD 3550-28 must be completed for each loan to which payments are to be applied. A fillable form can be accessed on the USDA Rural Development (RD) website at [rd.usda.gov/publications/regulations-guidelines](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.rd.usda.gov%2Fpublications%2Fregulations-guidelines%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7Cab153c57c1a94d33803908d95b639c54%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637641305821749780%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=eo8om30ZAGHjV0Lwcw4k9jWiEGf4S4h%2BSmeeOTQWxfc%3D&reserved=0). Click forms and search for “Form 3550-28.”  If you have a “filter” on the account at your financial institution, you will need to provide the financial institution with the following information: Origination ID: 1220040804, Agency Name: USDA RD DCFO.  PAD is offered by FSA at no cost. Check with your financial institution to discuss any potential cost. Preauthorized debit has no expiration date, but you can cancel at any time by submitting a written request to your local FSA office. If a preauthorized debit agreement receives three payment rejections within a three-month period, the preauthorized debit agreement will be cancelled by FSA. The payment amount and due date of your loan is not affected by a cancellation of preauthorized debit. You are responsible to ensure your full payment is made by the due date.  For more information about PAD, contact your local USDA Service Center or visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsa.usda.gov%2F%3Futm_medium%3Demail%26utm_source%3Dgovdelivery&data=04%7C01%7C%7Cab153c57c1a94d33803908d95b639c54%7Ced5b36e701ee4ebc867ee03cfa0d4697%7C0%7C0%7C637641305821749780%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=cRDxrlAJ%2FY9iQhqtKL8tm4dJOqjn4MXFqKRrIjodq9o%3D&reserved=0).    Service Center staff continue to work with agricultural producers via phone, email, and other digital tools. Because of the pandemic, [USDA Service Centers](http://www.farmers.gov/service-locator?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery) are open to limited visitors. Contact your Service Center to set up an in-person or phone appointment. Additionally, more information related to USDA’s response and relief for producers can be found at[farmers.gov/coronavirus](https://www.farmers.gov/coronavirus?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery).  Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in any meeting/event/function should contact Mary Anne Coffin at 207-990-9140 or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339.  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). | |