

March 2020



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

GovDelivery

Missouri FSA Newsletter

Missouri Farm Service Agency

Parkade Center Suite 225
601 Bus. Loop 70 West
Columbia, MO 65203

Phone: 573-876-0925
Fax: 855-830-0680

www.fsa.usda.gov/mo

Acting State Executive Director:

Kim Viers

State Committee:

Julie Hurst - Chair
Marc Allison
Cindy Schroeder
Will Spargo
Barbara Wilson

To find contact information for your local office go to www.fsa.usda.gov/mo.

[Click here](#) for the Missouri Department of

Don't Forget! ARC/PLC & NAP Deadlines Quickly Approaching

The deadline to enroll in [Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage](#) (ARC and PLC) programs for 2019 is March 16, 2020. Producers who have not yet enrolled should contact their local FSA office today to schedule an appointment.

Producers are reminded that the crop sales deadline for 2020 [Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program](#) (NAP) coverage is March 16. NAP provides coverage for crop losses in which no permanent federal crop insurance program is available. The March 16 deadline applies to forage, pasture, and most fruits and vegetables, with the addition of hemp this year.

More information about 2019 ARC and PLC enrollment, 2020 NAP hemp coverage and provisions follows.

Monday, March 16 Is the Last Day to Schedule an Appointment with Your FSA Office For Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Enrollment

Call Today! 2019 Crop Year Eligibility at Stake.

Agricultural producers who have not yet completed their 2019 crop year elections for and enrollment in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs must schedule an

Conservation Covey
Headquarters newsletter.

appointment to do so with their local USDA Farm Service Agency
(FSA) by Monday, March 16.

To date, more than 1.4 million contracts have been signed for the 2019 crop year. This represents 89 percent of expected enrollment with less than a week left for producers to get on FSA's appointment books.

Producers who do not contact FSA for an appointment by close of business local time on Monday, March 16 will not be enrolled in ARC or PLC for the 2019 crop year and will be ineligible to receive a payment should one trigger for an eligible crop.

ARC and PLC provide income support to farmers from substantial drops in crop prices or revenues and are vital economic safety nets for most American farms.

The programs cover the following commodities: barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium and short grain rice, safflower seed, seed cotton, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

More Information

For more information on ARC and PLC, download our [program fact sheet](#) or our [2014-2018 farm bills comparison fact sheet](#). Online ARC and PLC election decision tools are available at www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc.

Visit farmers.gov/service-locator to find location and contact information for the nearest FSA county office.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for Hemp

NAP provides coverage against loss for hemp grown for fiber, grain, seed or CBD for the 2020 crop year where no permanent federal crop insurance program is available.

NAP basic 50/55 coverage is available at 55 percent of the average market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of expected production. Buy-up coverage is available in some cases. The 2018 Farm Bill allows for buy-up levels of NAP coverage from 50 to 65 percent of expected production in 5 percent increments, at 100 percent of the average market price. Premiums apply for buy-up coverage.

For all coverage levels, the NAP service fee is \$325 per crop or \$825 per producer per county, not to exceed \$1,950 for a producer with farming interests in multiple counties.

Eligibility Requirements

Under a regulation authorized by the 2018 Farm Bill and issued in October 2019, all growers must have a license to grow hemp and must comply with applicable state, tribal or federal regulations or operate under a state or university research pilot, as authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill.

Producers must report hemp acreage to FSA after planting to comply with federal and state law enforcement. The Farm Bill defines hemp as containing 0.3 percent or less tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) on a dry-weight basis. Hemp having THC above the federal statutory compliance level of 0.3 percent is an uninsurable or ineligible cause of loss and will result in the hemp production being ineligible for production history purposes.

For more information on USDA risk management programs for hemp producers, visit farmers.gov/hemp to read our [frequently asked questions](#). For more information on the U.S. Domestic Hemp Production Program, visit USDA's Agricultural Marketing Services' website to read their [frequently asked questions](#).

USDA's Conservation Reserve Program Grasslands Signup Begins March 16

Farmers and ranchers may apply to enroll grasslands in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Grasslands signup beginning March 16. The signup runs through May 15.

Through CRP Grasslands, participants retain the right to conduct common grazing practices, such as haying, mowing or harvesting seed from the enrolled land. Timing of some activities may be restricted by the primary nesting season of birds.

Participants will receive an annual rental payment and may receive up to 50 percent cost-share for establishing approved conservation practices. The duration of the CRP contract is either 10 or 15 years. FSA will rank applications using a number of factors including existence of expiring CRP land, threat of conversion or development, existing grassland, and predominance of native species cover, and cost.

The 2018 Farm Bill set aside 2 million acres for CRP Grassland enrollment. CRP is one of the largest conservation programs at USDA. CRP marks its 35-year anniversary in 2020 with 22 million acres currently enrolled.

For more information or to enroll in CRP Grasslands, contact your local FSA county office or visit fsa.usda.gov/crp. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

USDA Opens Signup March 23 for Added Causes of Loss Under WHIP+ and Announces Disaster Assistance for Sugar Beet Producers

USDA announced additional disaster assistance available to agricultural producers, including producers impacted by drought and excess moisture as well as sugar beet growers. Through WHIP+, USDA is helping producers recover from losses related to 2018 and 2019 natural disasters.

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will open signup on March 23 for producers to apply for eligible losses of drought (D3 or above) and excess moisture. USDA is also entering into agreements with six sugar beet processing cooperatives to distribute \$285 million to grower members of those cooperatives who experienced loss.

In June 2019, more than \$3 billion was made available through a disaster relief package passed by Congress and signed by President Trump. In December 2019, Congress passed, and President Trump signed the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020 that provides an additional \$1.5 billion for the continuation of disaster assistance program delivery.

WHIP+ New Qualifying Disaster Events

The bill added excessive moisture and D3 and D4 drought as qualifying losses for WHIP+ assistance.

Beginning March 23, producers who suffered either of these types of loss in 2018 and/or 2019 can apply for WHIP+ assistance at their local FSA office. For drought, a producer is eligible if any area of the county in which the loss occurred was rated D3 (Extreme Drought) or higher on the U.S. Drought Monitor during calendar years 2018 or 2019.

WHIP+ Sugar Beet Loss Assistance

As also directed in the bill, USDA will provide \$285 million through sugar beet processing cooperatives to compensate grower members for sugar beet crop losses in 2018 and 2019. Details will be finalized in agreements between USDA and participating sugar beet processing cooperatives. Sugar beet producers who are members of these cooperatives and experienced losses may contact their cooperative for more information about how this sugar beet crop assistance will be administered.

WHIP+ for Quality Loss

In addition, producers have reported widespread crop quality loss from eligible disaster events that results in price deductions or penalties when marketing the damaged crops. The Appropriations bill expands WHIP+ to include assistance for crop quality loss. FSA is gathering data and input from producers and stakeholders regarding the extent and types of quality loss nationwide.

Eligibility

To be eligible for WHIP+, producers must have suffered losses of certain crops, trees, bushes, or vines in counties with a Presidential Emergency Disaster Declaration or a Secretarial Disaster Designation (primary counties only) for the following named natural disaster events; hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, typhoons, volcanic activity, snowstorms, wildfires, and now excessive moisture that occurred in 2018 or 2019. Also, losses located in a county not designated by the Secretary as a primary county may be eligible if the producer provides documentation showing that the loss was due to a qualifying natural disaster event.

For drought, counties having a D3 or D4 Drought Monitor classification in any portion of the county anytime during calendar year 2018 or 2019 will also be eligible.

A list of counties that received qualifying hurricane declarations and designations is available at farmers.gov/recover/whip-plus. The U.S. Drought Monitor is available at <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>.

Because livestock losses are covered by other disaster recovery programs offered through FSA, these losses are not eligible for WHIP+.

Maintaining the Quality of Farm-Stored Loan Grain and Unauthorized Disposition

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.

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.

USDA Announces Updates for Honeybee Producers

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced updates to the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP). These updates include changes required by the 2018 Farm Bill as well as discretionary changes intended to improve the administration of the program and clarify existing program requirements. ELAP was previously administered based on FSA's fiscal year but will now run according to the calendar year. Producers are still required to submit an application for payment within 30 calendar days of the end of the program year. This is not a policy change but will affect the deadline. The sign-up deadline for calendar year 2020 losses is January 30, 2021.

Starting in 2020, producers will have 15 days from when the loss is first apparent, instead of 30 days, to file a honeybee notice of loss. This change provides consistency between ELAP and the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program, which also has a 15-day notice of loss period for honey. For other covered losses, including livestock feed, grazing and farm-raised fish losses, the notice of loss deadline for ELAP will remain 30 days from when the loss is first apparent to the producer.

Program participants who were paid for the loss of a honeybee colony or hive in either or both of the previous two years will be required to provide additional documentation to substantiate how current year inventory was acquired.

If the honeybee colony loss incurred was because of Colony Collapse Disorder, program participants must provide a producer certification that the loss was a direct result of at least three of the five symptoms of Colony Collapse Disorder, which include:

- the loss of live queen and/or drone bee populations inside the hives;
- rapid decline of adult worker bee population outside the hives, leaving brood poorly or completely unattended;
- absence of dead adult bees inside the hive and outside the entrance of the hive;
- absence of robbing collapsed colonies; and
- at the time of collapse, varroa mite and Nosema populations are not at levels known to cause economic injury or population decline.

For honeybees, ELAP covers colony losses, honeybee hive losses (the physical structure) and honeybee feed losses in instances where the colony, hive or feed has been destroyed by a natural disaster or, in the case of colony losses, because of Colony Collapse Disorder. Colony losses must be in excess of normal mortality.

ELAP also provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock and farm-raised fish including for feed and grazing losses. It covers losses because of eligible adverse weather or loss conditions, including blizzards and wildfires on federally managed lands. ELAP also covers losses resulting from the cost of transporting water to livestock due to an eligible drought.

For more information on ELAP visit farmers.gov/recover or contact your FSA County Office. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

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.

USDA, Missouri FSA to Provide Job Opportunities in 2020

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is looking for bright individuals with a passion for helping others to apply for a variety of open positions. On April 8, USDA will host a job fair from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Adam's Mark Hotel, 9103 E. 39th Street, Kansas City, MO to fill vacancies in its agencies that deliver farm programs. These agencies have nearly three thousand offices nationwide that are offering job opportunities across the country.

One of USDA's goals is to be a welcoming and diverse workplace, where employees take pride in their positions. As a USDA employee, you'll have a full career supporting agriculture and America's farmers. USDA staff works one-on-one with farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners to help them recover from natural disasters, manage risk, conserve natural resources, and get access to many resources. At the same time, you'll enjoy the benefits of federal employment, including numerous health and life insurance options, retirement savings, and generous annual and sick leave.

A few of the job openings include Accountants, Economists, Engineers, Farm Loan Assistants, Farm Loan Program Technicians, Management Analysts, Rangeland Management Specialists, Risk Management Specialists, Soil Conservationist Technicians, Soil Conservationists, Soil Scientists, and Statisticians.

In addition, the Missouri Farm Service Agency (FSA) is actively recruiting highly-motivated individuals to fill vacancies in our Farm Program and Farm Loan Program areas. FSA works to

serve Missouri farmers and ranchers. Our employees work to deliver farm programs that assist producers in Missouri. The office environment is high energy and challenging. Computer skills are required. Selected applicants will be working with the public daily, therefore, communication and people skills are a must. All applications must be completed and submitted online at www.usajobs.gov. Position compensation will be based on education, work experience, and background. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

MDC Now Requires Landowner Registration for Free and Discounted Permits

The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) reminds Missouri resident and nonresident landowners who qualify to receive free or discounted deer and turkey hunting permits to register their properties in MDC's new Landowner Permit Registry either online or by completing a paper application.

Starting this year, resident landowners with 20 or more contiguous acres and nonresident landowners with 75 or more contiguous acres qualify for landowner deer and turkey permits and must submit their property information to the MDC Landowner Registry to receive them.

The new landowner registry will provide MDC and permit vendors with secure records of landowners and members of their households who qualify for the free and discounted permits, along with proof of land ownership and boundaries of the properties for which the free and discounted permits apply.

According to MDC, the landowner registry is needed by both the Department and permit vendors to help eliminate misuse of landowner permits and privileges. Conservation agents around the state find several hundred violations each year related to the misuse of landowner permits and privileges.

Learn more about the MDC Landowner Registry and apply online through the secure MDC webpage at mdc.mo.gov/landownerpermits. The page also provides answers to common questions.

Interest Rates and Dates to Remember

Selected Interest Rates for March 2020

90-Day Treasury Bill	1.500%
Farm Operating Loans - Direct	2.625%
Farm Ownership Loans - Direct	3.250%
Farm Ownership Loans - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.500%
Emergency Loans	3.625%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (3 years)	1.375%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (5 years)	1.375%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years)	1.500%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (10 years)	1.625%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (12 years)	1.625%
Commodity Loans (1996-Present)	2.500%

Dates to Remember

March 15, 2020	NAP application closing date for many NAP crops, including forage and pasture.
March 15, 2020	Deadline to complete election & enrollment for 2019 Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) & Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs.
March 31, 2020	Final availability date for 2019 Marketing Assistance Loans & LDPs for small grains & honey.
May 1, 2020	NAP application closing date for ornamental nursery for subsequent year.
May 1, 2020	Beginning of the primary nesting season for Missouri. No maintenance (mowing, spraying, burning, or disking) on CRP acreage.
May 15, 2020	CRP Grasslands signup ends.

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).