

February 2016



Missouri FSA Newsletter

Missouri Farm Service Agency

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Please [contact](#) your local FSA Office for questions specific to your operation or county.

Check out our [State Events](#) page for upcoming agricultural events.

Sales Closing Date Quickly Approaching for Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

The Farm Service Agency encourages producers to examine available USDA crop risk protection options, including federal crop insurance and Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage, before the applicable crop sales deadline. Crops not covered by traditional crop insurance may be eligible for NAP.

The following sales closing dates apply to Missouri for 2016 NAP coverage:

- Feb. 28, 2016 – Rice
- March 15, 2016 – Most spring-seeded crops; pecans, forage and pasture

The 2014 Farm Bill expanded NAP to include higher levels of protection. For all coverage levels, the NAP service fee is the lesser of \$250 per crop or \$750 per producer per administrative county, not to exceed a total of \$1,875 for a producer with farming interests in multiple counties. There is an additional premium for additional levels of coverage. ***Beginning, underserved and limited resource farmers are now eligible for free catastrophic level coverage, as well as discounted premiums for additional levels of protection.***

Federal crop insurance covers crop losses from natural adversities such as drought, hail and excessive moisture. NAP covers losses from natural disasters on crops for which no permanent federal crop insurance program is available, including perennial grass forage and grazing crops, fruits, vegetables, mushrooms, floriculture, ornamental nursery, aquaculture, turf grass, ginseng, honey, syrup, bioenergy, and industrial crops.

An online tool at www.fsa.usda.gov/nap allows producers to determine whether their crops are eligible for federal crop insurance or NAP and to explore the best level of protection for their operation. NAP basic coverage is available at 55 percent of the average market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of expected production, with higher levels of coverage, up to 65 percent of

their expected production at 100 percent of the average market price, including coverage for organics and crops marketed directly to consumers.

To learn more about NAP visit www.fsa.usda.gov/nap or contact your local USDA Service Center.

CRP Sign Up Ends February 26th

Did you know the 49th **Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) General Sign Up ends on February 26, 2016**? Participants in CRP establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees to control soil erosion. CRP improves water quality and develops wildlife habitat on marginally productive agricultural lands. In return, FSA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance.

Some eligibility requirements include:

- Producer must have owned or operated the land for at least 12 months prior to the end of this CRP enrollment period;
- Land must be cropland (including field margins) that was planted, or considered planted, to an agricultural commodity four of the six crop years from 2008 to 2013, and be physically and legally capable of being planted;

Land that is not currently enrolled in CRP may be offered for enrollment during the general enrollment period. In addition, CRP participants with contracts expiring on Sept. 30, 2016, may submit offers. Contact our county office as soon as possible if you have an interest in this CRP sign-up.

Don't Forget - 2016 ARC/PLC Sign Up

Burr... It's Cold! Maybe you could use a break. Have you signed up for your safety net coverage yet with FSA? It's time to sign your **2016 ARC/PLC contract. This is an annual program requirement.** For the ARC/PLC program, you must sign contracts annually. The ARC/PLC programs authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill offer a safety net when there is a substantial drop in prices or revenues for covered commodities.

Call your local office to set up a time to sign your 2016 ARC/PLC contracts. You don't want to be left out in the cold!

FSA Issues Fiscal Year 2015 Impacts Report

2015 marks the 20th anniversary of USDA's Farm Service Agency, but FSA's roots date back nearly 80 years, to the days of the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl, when the rural economy was in crisis and America's farmers and ranchers needed assistance. At that time, Congress empowered USDA to provide a strong safety-net for farm families, helping them navigate the unpredictability of natural disasters and volatile market conditions.

Today, technological advancements in equipment, crop and veterinary sciences, soil and water conservation, and pest and nutrient management, all have resulted in agriculture becoming stronger than we've ever known - - certainly far stronger than the days of our grandparents and great-grandparents. But the unpredictability of weather and markets remain. That means the FSA mission is as important as it's ever been to ensure the domestic agriculture sector continues to deliver an abundant, safe, and affordable food and fiber supply for the American people.

The [FSA Impacts Report](#) shows selected highlights for fiscal year 2015. This report highlights the achievements of FSA and will ensure that the path forward continues to demonstrate our commitment to rural America.

USDA Expands Microloans to Help Farmers Purchase Farmland & Improve Property

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

USDA will begin offering farm ownership microloans, creating a new financing avenue for farmers to buy and improve property. These microloans will be 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, which recently celebrated its third anniversary, 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).

This microloan announcement is another USDA resource for America's farmers and ranchers to utilize, especially as new and beginning farmers and ranchers look for the assistance they need to get started. To learn more about the FSA microloan program visit www.fsa.usda.gov/microloans, or contact your local FSA office. To find your nearest office location, please visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

USDA to Offer Certificates for Farm Commodities Pledged to Marketing Loans

Producers who have crops pledged as collateral for a marketing assistance loan can now purchase a commodity certificate that may be exchanged for the outstanding loan collateral. The authority is provided by the 2016 Consolidated Appropriations Act, legislation enacted by Congress in December. Commodity certificates are available beginning with the 2015 crop in situations where the applicable marketing assistance loan rate exceeds the exchange rate. Currently, the only eligible commodity is cotton.

FSA routinely provides agricultural producers with marketing assistance loans that provide interim cash flow without having to sell the commodities when market prices are at harvest time lows. The loans allow the producer to store and delay the sale of the commodity until more favorable market conditions emerge, while also providing for a more orderly marketing of commodities throughout the marketing year.

These loans are considered "nonrecourse" because the loan can be redeemed by delivering the commodity pledged as collateral to the government as full payment for the loan upon maturity. Commodity certificates are available to loan holders having outstanding nonrecourse loans for wheat, upland cotton, rice, feed grains, pulse crops (dry peas, lentils, large and small chickpeas), peanuts, wool, soybeans and designated minor oilseeds. These certificates can be purchased at the posted county price (or adjusted world price or national posted price) for the quantity of commodity under loan, and must be immediately exchanged for the collateral, satisfying the loan.

Producers may contact their FSA office that maintains their loan or their loan service agent for additional information. Producers who do business with Cooperative Marketing Associations (CMA) or Designated Marketing Associations (DMA) may contact their respective associations for additional information. To learn more about commodity certificates, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport.

Upcoming Events

Mid-Missouri Grazing Conference

Don't miss out on this year's Mid Missouri Grazing conference coming up on Feb 25, 2016, in Jefferson City, Mo.

This year's conference will cover current technology and some of today's hot topics related to livestock grazing and care, through a large variety of breakout sessions in the morning, and keynote message along with lunch.

[Click here](#) to view a full description of the conference and topics and registration form.

32nd Annual Spring Forage Conference

The 32nd Annual Southwest Missouri Forage Conference will be held on March 1, 2016, at the University Plaza Hotel in Springfield, Mo. The keynote speaker this year will be radio personality and columnist, Trent Loos. The conference will also feature several breakout sessions throughout the day with topics including understanding forage tests, forage quality versus quantity, how to graze 300 days a year, using annual forages, the new antibiotic rules, how to get started with livestock grazing, ranching tips for making a profit, preparing the next generation to farm, retaining versus buying heifers, the benefits of trees in a grazing system, and tips for managing a successful grazing system.

Additionally, there the conference will feature a trade show. Registration begins at 8 a.m. The cost is \$35 per person in advance or \$45 at the door. To pre-register (by Feb. 18), or to get more information, contact the Laclede County USDA office at 417-532-6305, ext. 3.

To learn more, or to register for the conference, [click here](#).

Interest Rates and Dates to Remember

Selected Interest Rates for February 2016	
90-Day Treasury Bill	.125%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	2.625%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	3.875%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency Loans	3.625%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years)	2.00%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (10 years)	2.125%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (12 years)	2.250%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.625%

Dates to Remember	
Feb. 15	George Washington's Birthday. FSA offices are closed.
Feb. 26	Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) general sign-up ends.
Feb. 28	NAP application closing date for rice.
Mar. 15	NAP application closing date for many spring-seeded crops, pecans, forage & pasture.
Mar. 31	Final availability date for 2015 Marketing Assistance Loans & LDPs for small grains & honey.

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).