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Montana FSA: January 2015 eNewsletter

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Jan. 14th Deadline to Purchase NAP Buy-Up Coverage on 2015 Perennial Forage, Fall Seeded Annual Crops and Honey

Montana producers are reminded of an important Jan. 14th deadline for the 2015 Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). Because 2015 application closing dates for some crops have already passed before FSA published the regulations and made buy-up coverage available, producers may still obtain buy-up coverage for those crops for the 2015 crop year retroactively by Jan. 14, 2015, by submitting a NAP application for coverage requesting buy-up coverage

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Montana USDA Directories:

[Online Directory of FSA Offices](#)

[PDF of Montana FSA Directory](#)

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Reasonable Accommodations:

People with disabilities who require accommodations to participate in FSA programs should contact the County Executive Director in the FSA Office in your area or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339. Alternatively, you may also contact Montana FSA Civil Rights Coordinator Jennifer Cole at (406) 587-6786 or jennifer.cole@mt.usda.gov

and paying the applicable administrative service fee. These crops include, perennial forage, fall seeded annual crops, and honey.

Producers who purchased the basic NAP catastrophic (CAT) level of coverage (50/55) by the fall application closing deadlines of Sept. 30th for perennial forage and fall seeded annual crops, and Dec. 1st for honey, may contact their administrative FSA county office and elect an additional buy-up level of coverage.

Producers who did not purchase the basic NAP CAT level of coverage by the fall sales closing dates previously mentioned, may contact their administrative county office and elect a buy-up level of coverage only by Jan. 14, 2015. These producers will also be required to either pay the applicable NAP administrative service fee or request a service fee waiver if applicable.

Previously NAP offered coverage at 55 percent of the average market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of the expected production. Producers can now choose higher levels of coverage, up to 65 percent of their expected production at 100 percent of the average market price.

The expanded protection will be especially helpful to beginning and traditionally underserved producers, as well as producers with limited resources. These producers may request a waiver of the administrative service fee. In addition, buy-up premiums for these producers will also be reduced.

Greater protection is now available under NAP for crops that traditionally have been ineligible for federal crop insurance. The new buy-up options, created by the 2014 Farm Bill, provided greater coverage for losses when natural disasters affect crops such as, but not limited to vegetables, fruits, ornamental nursery, aquaculture, turf grass sod, honey, grass intended for hay, and industrial crops grown as feedstock for renewable biofuel, etc. Additional crops are now eligible for NAP, including expanded aquaculture production practices and sweet and biomass sorghum. In addition, a range of crops used to produce bioenergy will also be eligible for NAP.

Producers with crops for which the NAP sales closing date has passed, will have until Jan. 14, 2015 to file a NAP application for coverage for additional buy-up levels of coverage, and pay the applicable service fee or file a service fee waiver if applicable. For more information regarding NAP or other FSA programs, contact your local FSA office and/or visit Montana FSA online at www.fsa.usda.gov/mt.

Round Two FSA/MSU Farm Bill Meetings – First Meeting is This Week (Tues., Jan. 13th in Deer Lodge)

Montana FSA and Montana State University (MSU) Extension are hosting another series of agricultural producer meetings across Montana this month to cover important new programs authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014. The meetings will involve a more in-depth presentation on the FSA's Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs, new 2015 program changes to the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Program (NAP) Buy-Up Option. MSU Extension will present an analysis of Farm Bill programs and an explanation of several Farm Bill Decision Tools available to producers in understanding options under ARC, PLC, and NAP-Buy-Up.

January 2015 Farm Bill Meeting Schedule (RSVPs are NOT needed):

- **Jan. 13: DEER LODGE**, 1:30 to 4 p.m., Powell County Community Center (416 Cottonwood Ave.)
- **Jan. 20: LIVINGSTON**, 2 to 4:30 p.m., MSU Park County Extension Office (119 South 3rd St.)
- **Jan. 21: TOWNSEND**, 8 to 10:30 a.m., 4-H Building, Townsend Fairgrounds (189 Hwy 12 East)
- **Jan. 21: DILLON**, 1:30 to 4 p.m., USDA Service Center Conference Room (420 Barrett Street)
- **Jan. 22: COLUMBUS**, 8 to 10:30 a.m., Columbus Fire Hall (944 East Pike Ave.)
- **Jan. 22: RYEGATE**, 1:30 to 4 p.m., Ryegate Fire Hall Training Room (105 Kemp Street)
- **Jan. 22: LEWISTOWN**, 7 to 9:30 p.m., Yogo Inn (211 E. Main)
- **Jan. 23: JORDAN**, 9 to 11:30 a.m., Old Grade School Building (208 Main Street)
- **Jan. 26: KALISPELL**, 1:30 to 4 p.m., Hampton Inn (1140 U.S. 2)
- **Jan. 27: CUT BANK**, 8 to 10:30 a.m., Cut Bank Elks Lodge (18 S Central)
- **Jan. 27: CONRAD**, 1:30 to 4 p.m., Pondera Golf Course (847 Conrad-Dupuyer Rd.)
- **Jan. 27: FORT BENTON**, 7 to 9:30 p.m., Ag Center (1205 20th St.)
- **Jan. 28: CHESTER**, 8 to 10:30 a.m., Our Savior's Lutheran Church (10 East Madison Ave.)
- **Jan. 28: CHINOOK**, 1:30 to 4 p.m., Blaine County Library (94 4th St.)
- **Jan. 28: GLASGOW**, 7 to 9:30 p.m., Cottonwood Inn (45 1st Ave. NE)
- **Jan. 29: SCOBEEY**, 8 to 10:30 a.m., Scobey Lutheran Education Center (202 Timmons)
- **Jan. 29: CULBERTSON**, 1:30 to 4 p.m., Dry Prairie Rural Water Office (5998 Highway 16)
- **Jan. 29: GLENDIVE**, 7 to 9:30 p.m., Dawson County Courthouse Community Room (207 Bell Street)
- **Jan. 30: FORSYTH**, 8 to 10:30 a.m., Haugo Center (1 Rosebud Drive)
- **Jan. 30: HARDIN**, 1:30 to 4 p.m., Big Horn County Courthouse (121 3rd St. West)

Schedule of Upcoming Local FSA Farm Bill Meetings

Producers are invited to attend any of the upcoming Farm Bill public informational meetings hosted by local FSA offices to learn about the PLC and ARC programs. Additional meetings continue to be scheduled. For questions about a meeting in your area, contact your local FSA office.

Upcoming Local Meetings:

- **Jan. 13 at 1 to 3 p.m. in HAVRE** at the USDA Service Center (206 25th Ave. W) **Pre-Registration Required. Contact the Havre FSA office at 406.265.6792, ext.2.*
- **Jan. 15 at 1 to 3 p.m. in HAVRE** at the USDA Service Center (206 25th Ave. W) **Pre-Registration Required. Contact the Havre FSA office at 406.265.6792, ext. 2.*
- **Jan. 15 at 2 to 6 p.m. in RICHEY** at the Stockman Bank (102 S. Main St.)
- **Jan. 21 at 1 to 5 p.m. in TERRY** at the Prairie County Courthouse (217 W. Park St.)
- **Jan. 21 at 2 to 4:30 p.m. in SIDNEY** at the Richland County Extension Office Conference Room (1499 N. Central Ave.)

2012 Livestock Forage Program – Deadline Jan. 30, 2015

Livestock producers who graze eligible livestock in Beaverhead, Big Horn, Broadwater, Carbon, Carter, Cascade, Custer, Fallon, Fergus, Gallatin, Garfield, Golden Valley, Jefferson, Judith Basin, Madison, Meagher, Musselshell, Park, Petroleum, Powder River, Rosebud, Silver Bow, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Treasure, Wheatland and Yellowstone counties may be eligible for benefits under the 2012 Livestock Forage Program (LFP). The deadline to complete the LFP application is **Jan. 30, 2015**.

2013 Livestock Forage Program – Deadline Jan. 30, 2015

Livestock producers who graze eligible livestock in Beaverhead, Big Horn, Broadwater, Carbon, Gallatin, Jefferson, Madison, Silver Bow, Stillwater and Yellowstone counties may be eligible for benefits under the 2013 Livestock Forage Program (LFP). The deadline to complete the LFP application is **Jan. 30, 2015**.

Livestock Indemnity Program – Jan. 30th Deadlines Nearing

The deadline to file an application for 2011, 2012, 2013 or 2014 Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) is Jan. 30, 2015. Producers who suffered livestock deaths due to adverse weather from Oct. 1, 2011 through Dec. 30, 2014 may submit a notice of loss and application for payment with their local FSA County Office by the Jan. 30, 2015 deadline. The late passage of the 2014 Farm Bill allowed FSA to take LIP applications retroactively from Oct. 1, 2011. For 2015 livestock deaths, the notice of loss **MUST** be filed within 30 calendar days from when the loss was apparent. Livestock producers suffering livestock losses may submit the notice of loss by phone, fax, email or in person.

Key Dates for New 2014 Farm Bill – ARC and PLC Programs

FSA announced key dates for farm owners and producers to keep in mind regarding the new 2014 Farm Bill established programs, Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC). The new programs are designed to help producers better manage risk for price losses or revenue losses. Dates associated with ARC and PLC that farm owners and producers need to know:

- **September 29, 2014 to February 27, 2015:** Land owners may visit their local Farm Service Agency office to update yield history and/or reallocate base acres.
- **November 17, 2014 to March 31, 2015:** Producers make a one-time election of either ARC or PLC for the 2014 through 2018 crop years.
- **Spring 2015 through summer 2015:** Producers sign contracts for 2014 and 2015 crop years. **(Dates TBA)**
- **October 2015:** ARC or PLC payments for the 2014 crop year are issued, if triggered.

To learn more about which safety net options are most appropriate for specific farming operations, farmers can use new Web tools at www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc, which can be accessed from the convenience of a home computer or a mobile device at any time. To learn more about upcoming educational meetings, farmers can contact their local Farm Service Agency county office at <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>.

ADDITIONAL ONLINE RESOURCES: For more information, visit MSU Extension's Farm Bill website at <http://www.montana.edu/farmbill>, FSA's national Farm Bill website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/farmbill>, Montana FSA's website at www.fsa.usda.gov/mt and RMA's national Farm Bill website at <http://www.rma.usda.gov/news/currentissues/farmbill/>.

Yield Update for Farm Bill – RMA Yield Data Available

FSA offers farmers new information to update program payment yields that will help them better select protections offered by the Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs. The new programs, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, are cornerstones of the commodity farm safety, offering farmers protection when market forces cause substantial drops in crop prices and revenues.

The Farm Bill provides landowners with the option of updating their farm program payment yields and this is the first time that many producers have been able to update yields since 1986. FSA has worked with the Risk Management Agency (RMA) to make available certified yield data that producers can use to better calculate how the new safety net programs can offer the best protection against market swings.

Producers can check with their local FSA county office to see if data is available for them. This data belongs to the producer and only the producer associated with the crop insurance records will be provided this service. Updating yield history or reallocating base acres can occur until Feb. 27, 2015.

2015 ELAP Program

The Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP), re-authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill, provides disaster relief to livestock, honeybee, and farm-raised fish producers for losses not covered by other agricultural disaster assistance programs. Eligible losses may include losses to grazing land, mechanically harvested and purchased forage or feed stuff, additional cost of purchasing livestock feed above normal quantities, certain costs associated with transporting livestock feed to eligible livestock, and additional cost of transporting water to eligible livestock caused as a result of excessive heat or winds, flooding, blizzards, hail, wildfires, lightning strikes, and diseases, or in the case of honeybees, losses due to colony collapse disorder, physical losses to hives, and purchased and harvested honeybee feed. The 2015 ELAP program year began Oct. 1, 2014 and continues through Sept. 30, 2015.

Producers must file a notice of loss for 2015 losses the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent or no later than Nov. 2, 2015. An application for payment must also be filed no later than Nov. 2, 2015.

IRS Reporting For Tax Year 2014

Producers which are recipients of program payments during calendar year 2014 will receive form IRS-1099-G detailing payments producers have received from the Commodity Credit Corporation. The annual report of program payments on IRS-1099-G is a service intended to help our customers report taxable income. It is not intended to replace producer's responsibilities to report income to IRS. The mailing of form IRS-1099-G will occur in late January 2015. CCC will not issue form IRS 1099-G when CCC program payments total less than \$600. In addition, producers which receive program payments from multiple counties will receive only one IRS Form 1099-G showing all payments from all counties.

FSA staff cannot interpret IRS regulations or advise producers about which payments to report on their income tax returns. However, county office staff can review payments for accuracy. Although refund information is not shown on the IRS 1099-G, a Customer's financial data including refund information, program payment amounts, and prior year CCC-1099 information is conveniently available via the internet through the FSA "Financial Inquiries" database (FSA-FI). Instructions for obtaining a FSA-FI user ID and password are available on the FSA web site at: <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov/eauthWhatIsAccount.html>.

Suspension of Marketing Assistance Loans (MALs) and LDPs for Mohair

Effective Dec. 17, 2014, the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act of 2015 excludes funding for mohair MAL's and LDP's through the balance of FY 2015 (Sept. 30, 2015).

2014 Wool

Wool producers are reminded that the deadline to apply for loans or LDP's on wool shorn in calendar year 2014 is Jan. 31, 2015.

Recently, only graded wool with a micron level less than 18.6 was in an LDP status. Graded wool with other microns and ungraded wool currently are not in LDP status. To be considered graded wool, the wool must be tested by a CCC approved testing facility and a copy of the core test results from the approved facility showing the laboratory analysis must be provided before benefits will be issued.

Farm Loan Program Availability

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agricultural production. As a farmer or rancher, whether you are just starting out or have many years of experience, loans are available for farm operating purposes and/or to purchase or improve a farm or ranch. All qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs. As the "Lender of First Opportunity" FSA targets some of the direct and guaranteed loan funds for beginning and/or socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers. For purposes of this program, a beginning farmer/rancher is defined as someone who started in farming or ranching less than 10 years ago; socially disadvantaged individuals are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

Newly Elected FSA County Committee Members

Congratulations to the newly elected and re-elected County Committee members, who took office on Jan. 1, 2015. For a complete list of 2014 Montana election results click on the following link: http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/14_mtcocresults.pdf. FSA appreciates all of these individuals – new and existing members - for serving the area farmers and ranchers on the county committees. FSA thanks all of the voters for taking the time to complete the election ballot. The county committee system works only because of your participation. This month, the committee members are holding organizational meeting to determine who will serve as the county committee chair and vice-chair. Contact your county office for more information.

Montana's Next Generation Conference Jan. 30 and 31 in Shelby, MT

There is still time to register for Montana's Next Generation Conference Friday and Saturday, Jan. 30 and Jan. 31, 2015, in Shelby, Montana! Hosted by the Glacier and Toole County USDA Farm Service Agency, local MSU Extension, Marias River Livestock Association and the Front Range Counties Farm Bureau, this comprehensive conference including succession planning and production workshops is one you won't want to miss.

Friday's events will feature Kevin Spafford of Legacy by Design, LLC. Spafford will lead participants through the succession planning process with hands-on activities for all generations as they learn how to make a successful transition of the farming or ranching operation. The evening's keynote address will be Sandra Hare, "Understanding the Personalities of the Generations." Hare, a talented human resources

executive, has provided expertise to companies such as Wheat Montana and Kalispell Regional Healthcare and comes with a wealth of experience. The evening will conclude with entertainment by the talented Halladay Quist. Saturday's events feature an outstanding lineup of industry speakers and professionals offering a total of 36 workshops for attendees to select from. Each hour will have workshops for crop and livestock producers with a portion of workshops aimed each towards beginning producers and for those who have

Registration forms are available online at been involved in agriculture for many years and want to learn about what's new in the industry. http://www.mariasriverlivestock.com/next_generation_conference.html or by calling the Glacier County Extension office at 406-873-2239. Conference updates will be available via the Facebook page, Montana's Next Generation Conference. Cost is \$20/individual/day, or \$30/couple/day, and registrations are due by Jan. 23. Participants are encouraged to bring the entire family as daycare is available and additional family members will be eligible for the couple discount. Discounted motel rates of \$75/night are available at the Best Western Shelby Inn & Suites (406-424-4560) or the Comfort Inn (406-434-2212) at \$70/night for a single room or \$75/night for a double room if booked in advance of the conference.

If you have any questions, please contact Lacy Roberts at 406-873-5618, ext. 2 or Kari Lewis at 406-873-2239. Don't miss this great opportunity to plan for the future and learn from some outstanding professionals!

Important FSA Dates to Remember

- **Jan. 14:** Deadline for NAP Buy-Up Expanded Coverage for 2015 Perennial Forage, Fall Seeded Annual Crops, and Honey
- **Jan. 15:** 2015 Acreage Reporting Deadline for Cherries, Established Stand Alfalfa Seed, Fall Alfalfa Seed
- **Jan. 30:** 2011, 2012, 2013 & 2014 Livestock Forage Program (LFP), Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) Notice of Loss and Application for Payment Deadline
- **Jan 30:** Deadline to submit Tree Assistance Program (TAP) Application for Payment and Supporting Documentation for Loss for 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 (or 90 days after disaster event or loss was apparent)
- **Jan. 30:** Deadline to request early CRP contract termination
- **Feb. 2:** Final Loan/LDP Availability Date for 2014 Wool, Mohair and Loan Deficiency Payment only for unshorn pelts
- **Feb. 27:** Deadline for Land Owners to Update Yield History and/or Reallocate Base Acres.
- **March 16:** Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Sales Closing Date for 2015 Spring Seeded Crops
- **March 31:** Deadline for Producers to Make a One-time Election of Either ARC or PLC for the 2014 through 2018 Crop Years.
- **March 31:** Final Loan/LDP Availability Dates for Barley, Canola, Crambe, Flaxseed, Honey, Oats, Rapeseed, Sesame seed and Wheat

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