



# NEWSLETTER



June 2015

**Nebraska Farm Service Agency**

7131 A Street  
Lincoln, NE 68510

[www.fsa.usda.gov/ne](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ne)

**State Committee:**

Bill Armbrust  
Fred Christensen  
Susan Frazier, Chairperson  
Leo Hoehn  
Linda Kleinschmit

**Executive Director:**

Dan Steinkruger

**Administrative Officer:**

Mike Sander

**Division Chiefs:**

Cathy Anderson  
Doug Klein  
Greg Reisdorff  
Mark Wilke

Please contact your local FSA Office for questions specific to your operation or county

## Nebraska FSA Update

### USDA Opens Enrollment Period for Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Safety-Net Programs

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently announced that eligible producers may now formally enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for 2014 and 2015. The enrollment period for both years begins June 17, 2015, and will end Sept. 30, 2015.

Producers recently completed the process of base reallocation, yield update, and election into the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program. However, in order to be eligible for potential payments, producers must also annually enroll the farm into an ARCPLC contract. The contract reflects individuals or entities who have an interest in the farm and their share of base acres or covered commodities.

A final Notice of Bases and Yields is currently being mailed to all tenants and landowners. This information will reflect the decisions made to reallocate or retain bases, update or retain PLC payment yields, and the Historical Irrigated Percentage (HIP) that will be used to calculate ARC-County payments for applicable crops on the farm. Contact your local FSA Office within 30 days if you feel the information on this notice is incorrect.

It is important to notify FSA of any changes that occurred to your farming operation in 2014 or 2015 when completing ARCPLC enrollment. You will also need to complete documents establishing your eligibility for payments, including a CCC-902 Farm Operating Plan, an AD-1026 certifying your conservation compliance status, and a CCC-941 certifying your compliance with Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) limitations.

Nationwide, 96 percent of soybean farms, 91 percent of corn farms, and 66 percent of wheat farms elected ARC. 99 percent of long grain rice farms, 99 percent of peanut farms, and 94 percent of medium grain farms elected PLC. For data about other crops and state-by-state program election results go to [www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc).

For more information please contact your local FSA office <https://offices.usda.gov>.

## 2015 and 2016 Acreage Reporting Dates

Producers must file an accurate crop acreage certification by the applicable deadlines to maintain eligibility for most FSA programs. Additionally, acreage reports are also important to establish cropping history for future program uses. The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for Nebraska:

- July 15, 2015 - Spring seeded crops, CRP, and all other crops for the 2015 crop year
- November 16, 2015 - Fall seeded crops and perennial forage for the 2016 crop year
- January 2, 2016 - Initial reports of honey bee colonies and locations for the 2016 crop year

Producers are encouraged to submit 2016 fall acreage reports for perennial forage at the time the spring planted crops for 2015 are reported.

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## Farm Service Agency County Committee Nomination Period Began June 15

The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced that the nomination period for local Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees began on Monday, June 15, 2015.

It is important for county committees to reflect America's diversity, all eligible farmers and ranchers, including beginning farmers are encouraged to get involved in this year's elections. FSA has seen an increase in the number of nominations for qualified candidates, especially among women and minorities – a trend the Agency would like to see continue.

To be eligible to serve on a FSA county committee, a person must participate or cooperate in an agency administered program, be eligible to vote in a county committee election and reside in the local administrative area where they are nominated.

Farmers and ranchers may nominate themselves or others. Organizations representing minorities and women also may nominate candidates. To become a candidate, an eligible individual must sign an FSA-669A nomination form. The form and other information about FSA county committee elections are available at [www.fsa.usda.gov/elections](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections). Nomination forms for the 2015 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA Service Center by close of business on Aug. 3, 2015.

FSA will mail election ballots to eligible voters beginning Nov. 9, 2015. Ballots will be due back to the local county office either via mail or in person by Dec. 7, 2015. Newly elected committee members and alternates will take office on Jan. 1, 2016.

While FSA county committees do not approve or deny farm ownership or operating loans, they make decisions on disaster and conservation programs, emergency programs, commodity price support loan programs and other agricultural issues. Members serve three-year terms. Nationwide, there are about 7,800 farmers and ranchers serving on FSA county committees. Committees consist of three to 11 members that are elected by eligible producers.

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## Filing a Notice of Loss

It is important to notify FSA timely if a crop has failed or if a crop is prevented from being planted. A prevented planting claim for crops not covered by Federal Crop Insurance must be submitted within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop. Prevented planting claims for crops with coverage through Federal Crop Insurance can be filed with FSA at any time if the claim was timely filed with the crop insurance provider. Failed acreage on crops covered by the

## **Dates to Remember**

**July 1, 2015** – 2016 Margin Protection Program (MPP) for dairy producers registration and premium selection begins

**July 15, 2015** - Deadline to report all spring-seeded crops, including Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage, and all other crops for the 2015 crop year

**August 3, 2015** – Deadline to request a reconstitution or farm transfer for 2015

**September 30, 2015** – 2016 Margin Protection Program (MPP) for dairy producers registration and premium selection deadline

**November 1, 2014** – 2015 ELAP application for payment deadline

**November 16, 2015** - Deadline to report all fall seeded crops and perennial forage for the 2016 crop year

**January 2, 2016** - Deadline to report Initial reports of honey bee colonies and locations for the 2016 crop year

## **Filing a Notice of Loss (Cont.)**

Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) must be filed within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent. In all other cases, the failed acreage must be reported prior to disposition of the crop. For hand harvested crops producers must notify the County Office within 72 hours of the loss or damage becomes apparent.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, or to request an appointment to report acreage, contact the local FSA office.

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## **Continuous CRP Sign-Up – Grass Waterways**

The practice of the month is CP8A, Grass Waterways. The purpose of this practice is to convey runoff from terraces, diversions, or other water concentrations without causing erosion or flooding and improve water quality. This practice needs to be established on eligible cropland (cropped 4 out of 6 years between 2008 and 2013). The grass waterway shall be installed to meet the minimum criteria to convey water off a field and constructed to a width up to 2 times the minimum design standard to meet the producer's objectives, not to exceed a width of 100 feet.

CRP program benefits include:

- Calculated annual rental rates plus an additional 20 percent incentive.
- Fifty percent cost share of eligible costs to establish the practice
- Practice Incentive Payment (PIP) of 40 percent of eligible costs
- Signing Incentive Payment (SIP) calculated at \$100 per acre paid up front.

Environmentally sensitive land devoted to certain conservation practices may be enrolled in CRP at any time under continuous sign-up. Offers are automatically accepted provided the land and producers meet certain eligibility requirements. Offers for continuous sign-up are not subject to competitive bidding. Continuous sign-up contracts are 10 to 15 years in duration.

To learn the details and offer land for continuous sign-up, producers should contact their local FSA office.

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## **USDA Announces Restart of Biomass Crop Assistance Program for Renewable Energy**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that incentives will resume this summer for farmers, ranchers and forest landowners interested in growing and harvesting biomass for renewable energy. The support comes through the Biomass Crop Assistance Program

(BCAP), which was reauthorized by the 2014 Farm Bill. BCAP provides financial assistance to establish and maintain new crops of energy biomass, or who harvest and deliver forest or agricultural residues to a qualifying energy facility.

Financial assistance is available through BCAP for costs associated with harvesting and transporting agriculture or forest residues to facilities that convert biomass crops into energy. Eligible crops may include corn residue, diseased or insect infested wood materials, or orchard waste. \$11.5 million of federal funds will be allocated to support the delivery of biomass materials through December 2015. Last year, more than 200,000 tons of dead or diseased trees from National Forests and Bureau of Land Management lands were removed and used to produce renewable energy, while reducing the risk of forest fire. Nineteen energy facilities in 10 states participated in the program.

Farmers, ranchers and forest landowners can also receive financial assistance to grow biomass crops that will be converted into energy in selected BCAP project areas. New BCAP project area proposals will be solicited beginning this summer and accepted through fall 2015, with new project area announcements and enrollments taking place in early spring 2016. The extended proposal submission period allows project sponsors time to complete any needed environmental assessments and allows producers enough lead time to make informed decisions on whether or not to pursue the BCAP project area enrollment opportunity. This fiscal year USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will allocate up to \$8 million for producer enrollment to expand and enhance existing BCAP project areas. Additionally, in accordance with the 2014 Farm Bill, underserved farmers are eligible for a higher establishment cost share. BCAP projects have supported over 50,000 acres across 74 counties in 11 different project areas.

For more information, visit [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov).

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## Farm Loan Information Chart

A Farm Loan Information Chart Fact Sheet containing information on maximum loan amounts, loan terms, and use of proceeds is available. The fact sheet can be accessed by clicking [here](#). Additional details on available Farm Loan Programs can be obtained at local FSA offices and on FSA's website: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>.

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## 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](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)

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## Microloan (ML) Program

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) developed the ML program to better serve the unique financial operating needs of beginning, niche and the smallest of family farm operations. This loan program will also be useful to specialty crop producers and operators of community supported agriculture (CSA). Eligible applicants can apply for a maximum amount of \$50,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses to extend the growing season, essential tools, irrigation and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing, and distribution expenses. For more information contact your local FSA Office or view the [Microloan Program Fact Sheet](#) on the FSA website.

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## June FSA Interest Rates

Farm Operating: 2.375%

Microloan: 2.375%

Farm Ownership: 3.5%

Farm Ownership - Joint Financing: 2.5%

Farm Ownership - Down Payment: 1.50%

Emergency - Actual Loss: 3.375%

Farm Storage Facility Loan 7 year term: 1.875%

Farm Storage Facility Loan 10 year term: 2.125%

Farm Storage Facility Loan 12 year term: 2.250%

Commodity Loan: 1.25%

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USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay).