

April 2016



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## Nebraska FSA Newsletter

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### Nebraska Farm Service Agency

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Lincoln, NE 68510

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

#### State Committee:

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#### State Executive Director:

Dan Steinkruger

#### Division Chiefs:

Cathy Anderson  
Doug Klein

### Message from the State Executive Director

By now, tractors are rolling across the fields of Nebraska, with spraying, fertilizing and some tillage taking place. In a few areas, planting is already occurring. It's springtime in Nebraska, and our farmers are ready to take on a new season.

Even though field work gets placed ahead of most other tasks this time of year, the Nebraska Farm Service Agency (FSA) is encouraging its customers to be mindful of important reporting dates and plan ahead. Even if you can't stop by your local office right now, call in and make an appointment for May or June. This sets it as a priority for you and allows our county FSA offices to manage workflow in a way that helps ensure all

Greg Reisdorff  
Mike Sander  
Mark Wilke

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

Nebraska farmers and ranchers are taken care of in a timely fashion.

The main acreage reporting date for 2016 crops is July 15 for spring seeded crops and CRP acres, but there are exceptions and other specifications to be aware of, so checking in with your county office is advisable. You also can find a brief article on these deadlines in this issue of GovDelivery.

Also, farmers who are participating in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs have through Aug. 1, 2016, to sign contracts to enroll in coverage for this year. Again, as noted above, I strongly encourage you to set an appointment with your county office to complete this process. These programs make up the core of the commodity crop production safety net; if you miss the enrollment period, you will not be protected against further drops in crop prices or decreases in farm revenue.

As producers gear up for the bulk of their planting work, and weather windows open for that work to take place, sometimes the decision about whether tillage needs to occur on a piece of ground is rushed. I want to remind farmers that conservation compliance on Highly Erodible Land (HEL) is necessary in order to retain FSA safety net benefits, as well as crop insurance premium payment assistance. The consequences to violating your conservation plans on HEL can be financially significant, so please be sure to check with your local office before undertaking tillage activities.

Until next month, enjoy the warmer weather and the beauty of Nebraska in the spring. Stay safe out there.

-- Dan Steinkruger

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## 2016 Acreage Reporting Dates

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, producers must file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline.

The following acreage reporting dates for 2016 crops are applicable for Nebraska FSA:

- July 15, 2016 - 2016 spring seeded crops and CRP

- The deadline to report fall seeded and perennial forage crops for the 2016 crop year was November 15, 2015. If these crops were not reported timely with FSA last fall, they can still be reported though late-filing requirements must be met. Late-filing provisions include an FSA representative physically verifying the late-filed crop and the producer paying a late-filed measurement service fee.

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.
- If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of “cover only,” “green manure,” “left standing,” or “seed,” then the acreage must be reported by July 15th.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

FSA requires that a producer’s report of acreage and specific crop data be provided on a map showing FSA’s field boundaries and acres. In most cases, FSA provides producers with a map of their farming interest representing that crop year. To ensure that an accurate acreage report is filed producers are reminded to review the map to verify that the field boundaries are accurately delineated. Producers should notify FSA of any changes or corrections needed prior to filing the acreage report with FSA.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact the local county FSA office.

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## **Changing Administrative Counties**

Producers who wish to transfer their farm records to a different administrative county for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 must file a request no later than August 1, 2016. Restrictions do apply when transferring to an office other than the county in which the land is physically located. Contact your local FSA office for more information.

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## **Fruit, Vegetable Plantings May Impact ARC/PLC Payments**

Producers who intend to participate in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs are subject to an acre-for-acre payment reduction when fruits and nuts, vegetables or wild rice are planted on the payment acres of a farm. Payment reductions do not apply to mung beans, dry peas, lentils or chickpeas. Planting fruits, vegetables or wild rice on acres that are not considered payment acres will not result in a payment reduction. Farms that are eligible to participate in ARC/PLC but are not enrolled for a particular year may plant unlimited fruits, vegetables and wild rice for that year but will not receive ARC/PLC payments for that year. Eligibility for succeeding years is not affected.

Planting and harvesting fruits, vegetables and wild rice on ARC/PLC acreage is subject to the acre-for-acre payment reduction when those crops are planted on either more than 15 percent of the

base acres of a farm enrolled in ARC using the county coverage or PLC, or more than 35 percent of the base acres of a farm enrolled in ARC using the individual coverage.

It is important to contact your county FSA office if you intend to plant these crops in 2016 so that you are aware of how your ARC or PLC payments may be impacted.

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## Report Livestock Losses

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides assistance to eligible producers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law. LIP compensates livestock owners and contract growers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather, including losses due to floods, blizzards, wildfires, extreme heat or extreme cold.

For 2016, eligible losses must occur on or after Jan. 1, 2016, and before March 1, 2017. A notice of loss must be filed with FSA within 30 days of when the loss of livestock is apparent. Participants must provide the following supporting documentation to their local FSA office no later than 30 calendar days after the end of the calendar year for which benefits are requested:

- Proof of death documentation
- Copy of growers contracts
- Proof of normal mortality documentation

USDA has established normal mortality rates for each type and weight range of eligible livestock, i.e. Adult Beef Cow = 1.5% and Non-Adult Beef Cattle (less than 400 pounds) = 5%. These established percentages reflect losses that are considered expected or typical under “normal” conditions. Producers who suffer livestock losses in 2016 must file both of the following:

- A notice of loss the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss was apparent or by March 1, 2017
- An application for payment by March 31, 2017.

Additional information about LIP is available at your local FSA office or online at: [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

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## Maintaining the Quality of Farm-Stored Loan Grain

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.

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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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## Loans For Targeted Underserved Producers

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating type loans and/or to purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, FSA has provided priority funding for members of targeted underserved applicants. A targeted underserved applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities.

For purposes of this program, targeted underserved groups 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.

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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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## Fire Management on CRP Acres

Landowners who participate in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) are responsible for fire management on their CRP acreage. Fireguard technical practices should be outlined in the Conservation Plan of Operations (CPO).

Landowners must complete the necessary management activities outside of the Primary Nesting Season. In Nebraska, the Primary Nesting Season is May 1 through July 15. The goal is to suppress the amount of fuel in the event of a wildfire, while still promoting the diversity of the conservation cover.

FSA encourages producers to be proactive in preventing the spread of wildfire. Fire management includes installing firebreaks, which should be included in the contract support document and installed according to NRCS firebreak standards.

Barren firebreaks will only be allowed in high risk areas, such as transportation corridors, rural communities, and adjacent farmsteads. A conservationist must certify that there will not be an erosion hazard from the barren firebreak. If erosion becomes a problem, remedial action will be taken.

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## April Interest Rates

Farm Operating: 2.250%  
Microloan Operating: 2.250%  
Farm Ownership: 3.5%  
Farm Ownership - Joint Financing: 2.50%  
Farm Ownership - Down Payment: 1.50%  
Emergency - Actual Loss: 3.25%  
Farm Storage Facility Loan 7 year term: 1.625%  
Farm Storage Facility Loan 10 year term: 1.875%  
Farm Storage Facility Loan 12 year term: 2.000%  
Commodity Loan: 1.625%

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## Dates To Remember

**May 31, 2016** - Deadline to request 2015 MAL or LDP for corn, dry peas, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, safflower seed, chickpeas, soybeans, sunflower seed

**July 15, 2016** - Deadline to report all spring-seeded crops, including Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage, and all other crops for the 2016 crop year

**August 1, 2016** - Enrollment period for 2016 ARC/PLC ends; deadline to request farm transfers or reconstitutions for 2016

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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).