

June 2017



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

# NEWSLETTER

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## Nebraska FSA Newsletter

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### Nebraska Farm Service Agency

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

#### State Executive Director:

Mike Sander, Acting

### A Message from the Acting State Executive Director

As the daylight grows longer leading up to the summer solstice, the work day does too for thousands of farmers across Nebraska. Whether it is monitoring irrigation pumps, putting up hay before rain moves in, or checking cattle in the pasture, it can be some very late nights and early mornings.

For our 71 USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) local offices, the days right now can stretch long as well, as we strive to get you in the door for acreage

**State Committee:**

Susan Frazier, Chair  
Fred Christensen  
Leo Hoehn  
Linda Kleinschmidt  
Roy Stoltenberg

**Program Chiefs:**

Cathy Anderson  
Doug Klein  
Greg Reisdorff  
Mark Wilke

To find contact information  
for your local office go to  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/ne](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ne)

certification. It's the key thing we are working on as we lead up to the July 17 deadline. If you have not yet made an appointment to certify your 2017 spring-seeded crops, please contact your local office immediately to schedule a visit. Acreage certification is necessary in order to retain eligibility for some farm program benefits.

Last week USDA FSA began the 2017 County Committee election season by opening up the nomination process. What is an FSA County Committee, you might ask? FSA County Committees are comprised of locally-elected agricultural producers who help manage the fair and equitable administration of FSA programs in their counties. Those who hold a seat on the FSA County Committee play an important role in their local agriculture industry by making important decisions on the farm program delivery process. You can learn more about the County Committee elections in the article below; please take a look and consider filling out an application at your local office today.

From time to time I pass on to you agriculture educational opportunities that I believe can help you in your operation, while at the same time be relevant to USDA FSA programming. To that point, I want to highlight the University of Nebraska Extension's upcoming Weed Management and Cover Crop Field Day, set for June 28 in Clay Center. This day-long program includes on-site demonstrations of weed control for soybeans, corn, popcorn and sorghum. To learn more, visit [agronomy.unl.edu/fieldday](http://agronomy.unl.edu/fieldday). As you may recall, producers who are enrolled in farm safety net programs must protect cropland and noncropland from wind and water erosion and noxious weeds, or they could jeopardize program benefits.

Until next month,

-- Mike Sander

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## Biannual Newsletter Delivered to Your Mailbox

Twice a year the Nebraska Farm Service Agency publishes a newsletter highlighting deadlines and programs that farmers, ranchers and landowners will want to pay special attention to over the coming six months. The publication is called Nebraska FSA News, and it should have been delivered right to your U.S. Post Office mailbox within the past week. If you did not receive a copy, and would like one, please contact your local FSA Office. You also can find it online at: [www.fsa.usda.gov/ne](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ne).

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## **Nominations Open for the 2017 FSA County Committee Elections**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) encourages all farmers, ranchers and FSA program participants to take part in the County Committee election nomination process, which opened June 15.

FSA's county committees are a critical component of the day-to-day operations of FSA and allow grassroots input and local administration of federal farm programs.

Committees are comprised of locally-elected agricultural producers responsible for the fair and equitable administration of FSA farm programs in their counties. Committee members are accountable to the Secretary of Agriculture. If elected, members become part of a local decision making and farm program delivery process.

A county committee is composed of three to 11 elected members from local administrative areas (LAA). Each member serves a three-year term. One-third of the seats on these committees are open for election each year. County committees may have one or more appointed advisors to further represent the local interests of underserved farmers and ranchers. Underserved producers are beginning, women and other minority farmers and ranchers and land owners and/or operators who have limited resources. Other minority groups including Native American and Alaska Natives, persons under the poverty level, and persons that have disabilities, are also considered underserved.

All nomination forms for the 2017 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA service center by Aug. 1, 2017. For more information on FSA county committee elections and appointments, refer to the FSA fact sheet Eligibility to Vote and Hold Office as a COC Member, available online at [www.fsa.usda.gov/elections](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections).

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## **Producers Encouraged to Report Prevented Planting, Failed Acres**

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds producers to report prevented planting and failed acres in order to establish or retain FSA program eligibility for some programs.

Producers should report crop acreage they intended to plant, but due to natural disaster, were prevented from planting. Prevented planting acreage must be reported on form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date as established by FSA and the Risk Management Agency (RMA).

Contact your local FSA office for a list of final planting dates by crop.

If a producer is unable to report the prevented planting acreage within the 15 calendar days following the final planting date, a late-filed report can be submitted. Late-filed reports may only be accepted if FSA conducts a farm visit to assess the eligible disaster condition that prevented the crop from being planted. A measurement service fee will be charged in cases where a farm visit is necessary.

Additionally, producers with failed acres should also use form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, to report failed acres.

Producers with certain Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance (NAP) crops must notify FSA of damage or loss through the administrative County Office within 72 hours of the date of damage or loss first becomes apparent. This notification can be provided by filing a CCC-576, email, fax or phone. Producers who notify the County Office by any method other than by filing the CCC-576 are still required to file a CCC-576, Notice of Loss, within the required 15 calendar days. Contact your County FSA Office for details regarding these specific crops.

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## Producers Encouraged to Understand Process for Accessing Marketing Assistance Loans, LDPs for 2017 Crop

The 2014 Farm Bill authorized 2014-2018 crop year Marketing Assistance Loans (MALs) and Loan Deficiency Payments (LDPs).

In Nebraska, wheat prices are nearing a range where LDPs may be applicable, so producers should become familiar with the process to access this assistance.

MALs and LDPs provide financing and marketing assistance for wheat, barley and oats, as well as other commodities such as feed grains, soybeans and other oilseeds, pulse crops, rice, peanuts, cotton, wool and honey. MALs provide producers interim financing after harvest to help them meet cash flow needs without having to sell their commodities when market prices are typically at harvest-time lows.

A producer who is eligible to obtain a MAL, but agrees to forgo the loan, may obtain an LDP if such a payment is available.

To be eligible for a MAL or an LDP, producers must have a beneficial interest in the commodity, in addition to other requirements. A producer retains beneficial interest when control of and title to the commodity is maintained. For an LDP, the producer must retain beneficial interest in the commodity from the time of planting through the date the producer filed [Form CCC-633EZ \(page 1\)](#) in the FSA County Office. For more information, producers should contact their local FSA county office or view the [LDP Fact Sheet](#).

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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 hurricanes, floods, blizzards, wildfires, extreme heat or extreme cold.

For 2017, eligible losses must occur on or after Jan. 1, 2017, and no later than 60 calendar days from the ending date of the applicable adverse weather event or attack. 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 90 calendar days after the end of the calendar year in which the eligible loss condition occurred:

- 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) = 3%. These established percentages reflect losses that are considered expected or typical under "normal" conditions.

Producers who suffer livestock losses in 2017 must file both of the following:

- A notice of loss the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss was apparent
- An application for payment by March 31, 2018.

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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## Report Organic Crops

Producers who want to use the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) organic price and selected the "organic" option on their NAP application must report their crops as organic.

When certifying organic acres, the buffer zone acreage must be included in the organic acreage.

Producers must also provide a current organic plan, organic certificate or documentation from a certifying agent indicating an organic plan is in effect. Documentation must include:

- name of certified individuals
- address
- telephone number
- effective date of certification
- certificate number
- list of commodities certified
- name and address of certifying agent
- a map showing the specific location of each field of certified organic, including the buffer zone acreage.

Certification exemptions are available for producers whose annual gross agricultural income from organic sales totals \$5,000 or less. Although exempt growers are not required to provide a written certificate, they are still required to provide a map showing the specific location of each field of certified organic, transitional and buffer zone acreage.

For questions about reporting organic crops, contact your local FSA office. To find your local office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

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## Direct Loans Available

FSA offers direct farm ownership and direct farm operating loans to producers who want to establish, maintain or strengthen their farm or ranch. FSA loan officers process, approve and service direct loans.

Direct farm operating loans can be used to purchase livestock and feed, farm equipment, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance and other costs including family living expenses. Operating loans can also be used to finance minor improvements or repairs to buildings and to refinance some farm-related debts, excluding real estate.

Direct farm ownership loans can be used to purchase farmland, enlarge an existing farm, construct and repair buildings, and to make farm improvements.

The maximum loan amount for both direct farm ownership and operating loans is \$300,000 and a down payment is not required. Repayment terms vary depending on the type of loan, collateral and the producer's ability to repay the loan. Operating loans are normally repaid within seven years and farm ownership loans are not to exceed 40 years.

Please contact your local FSA office for more information or to apply for a direct farm ownership or operating loan.

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## **Guaranteed Loans an Option for Producers**

FSA guaranteed loans allow lenders to provide agricultural credit to farmers who do not meet the lender's normal underwriting criteria. Farmers and ranchers apply for a guaranteed loan through a lender, and the lender arranges for the guarantee. FSA can guarantee up to 95 percent of the loss of principal and interest on a loan. Guaranteed loans can be used for both farm ownership and operating purposes.

Guaranteed farm ownership loans can be used to purchase farmland, construct or repair buildings, develop farmland to promote soil and water conservation or to refinance debt.

Guaranteed operating loans can be used to purchase livestock, farm equipment, feed, seed, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance and other operating expenses.

FSA can guarantee farm ownership and operating loans up to \$1,399,000. Repayment terms vary depending on the type of loan, collateral and the producer's ability to repay the loan. Operating loans are normally repaid within seven years and farm ownership loans are not to exceed 40 years.

Please contact your lender or local FSA farm loan office for more information on guaranteed loans.

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## **Document the Drought: USDA U.S. Drought Monitor Offers Producers a Voice to Report Drought Impacts**

*The U.S. Drought Monitor's reporting feature offers producers an opportunity to submit drought impact and condition reports*

The USDA, in partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, produced the U.S. Drought Monitor to include a reporting feature that allows producers to report local drought impacts and conditions.

The report allows producers to:

- Provide a written description of drought impacts on livelihood, activities, etc.
- Select categories to show losses and gains as a result of the drought

- Report on the duration of drought event
- Select affected places – geographic areas ranging from an entire state to a small area within a state
- Submit images that document the drought and its impact
- Provide contact information (includes an option to keep information confidential).

The reporting tool for producers to record the effects of the drought can be accessed at the following link: <http://droughtreporter.unl.edu/submitreport/>.

More information, including state-specific drought impact maps, can be found on the U.S. Drought Monitor homepage: <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/Home.aspx>.

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## Dates to Remember

**July 1, 2017** – Enrollment period opens for 2018 coverage for Margin Protection Program for Dairy

**July 4, 2017** – USDA Farm Service Agency Offices closed in observance of Independence Day

**July 17, 2017** – Acreage reporting deadline for all spring-seeded crops, including Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage, and all other crops for the 2017 crop year

**July 17, 2017** – \*\*NAP acreage reporting deadline for millet and spring-seeded mixed forage, oats, peas and sorghum forage

**Aug. 1, 2017** – Enrollment period for ARC/PLC ends

**Aug. 1, 2017** – Deadline to request farm transfers or reconstitutions for 2017

**Dec. 15, 2017** – Enrollment period closes for 2018 coverage for Margin Protection Program for Dairy

**\*\*Please note the above NAP calendar reference may not be inclusive for all NAP-covered crops; NAP participants should contact their County FSA Office to confirm important program deadlines.**

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## June FSA Interest Rates

Farm Operating: 2.875%

Microloan Operating: 2.875%

Farm Ownership: 3.875%

Farm Ownership - Joint Financing: 2.50%

Farm Ownership - Down Payment: 1.50%

Emergency - Actual Loss: 3.75%

Farm Storage Facility Loan 3 year term: 1.5%

Farm Storage Facility Loan 5 year term: 1.875%

Farm Storage Facility Loan 7 year term: 2.125%

Farm Storage Facility Loan 10 year term: 2.375%

Farm Storage Facility Loan 12 year term: 2.375%

Commodity Loan: 2.125%

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