

May 2019



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

# NEWSLETTER

**GovDelivery**

Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a Web page.](#)

- [A Message from the State Executive Director](#)
- [FSA Loan Servicing, Other Organization Resources Available During Financial Stress](#)
- [Disaster Set-Aside Program Aids Those Impacted by Severe Weather](#)
- [Several Nebraska Counties Eligible for Emergency Loans Following Presidential Disaster Declarations](#)
- [Producers Encouraged to Report Prevented Planting, Failed Acres](#)
- [Emergency Conservation Program A Tool to Assist With Flood, Blizzard Repair Costs](#)
- [Producers Encouraged to Complete Acreage Reporting Process Immediately Following Planting](#)
- [USDA Inviting Producers in 19 Nebraska Counties to Participate in Precision Ag Data Acreage Reporting Pilot Project](#)
- [Dairy Producers Encouraged to Review Decision Tool for Dairy Margin Coverage Program](#)
- [Opportunity to Request a Referendum: Soybean Promotion, Research, and Information Program](#)
- [May FSA Interest Rates](#)
- [Dates to Remember](#)

---

## Nebraska State FSA Newsletter

---

### Nebraska Farm Service Agency - State Office

7131 A Street Lincoln, NE  
68510

Phone: (402) 437-5581  
Fax: (844) 930-0237

**State Executive Director:**  
Nancy Johner

### A Message from the State Executive Director

With it being such a challenging start to 2019 for our farmers and ranchers, it is encouraging to see planters in action as I travel across the state. I know there are still plenty of field corners and low spots not in shape yet to receive seed, but it is good that some progress is being made. Please keep safety in mind as you rush to work around the weather.

**State Committee:**

Scott Spilker, *chair*  
Geoff Ruth  
Hilary Maricle  
Mark Jagels

**Program Chiefs:**

Cathy Anderson,  
*Production/Compliance*  
Doug Klein,  
*Conservation/Price Support*  
Mark Wilke, *Farm Loans*  
Tim Divis, *Executive Officer*

To find more information about FSA programming or contact information for your local office, go to [www.fsa.usda.gov/ne](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ne).

Our FSA offices across the state continue to maintain a steady, speedy pace, to deliver programs to you, our customers. The newsletter below is worth your quick read because there are a number of important program deadlines on the horizon of which you should be aware. Here's a couple highlights:

- Sign-up for the new Dairy Margin Coverage program, initiated by the 2018 Farm Bill, begins June 17. There are decisions to be made in enrolling for this program, and USDA has rolled out a web-based decision support tool to help you out. Read more below.
- Acreage reporting is required to establish or maintain FSA program eligibility. In order to assist us with getting everyone through this process by the mid-July deadline, we need to see you in our office soon after you are done planting. Your county office will work with you to schedule an appointment. Please note we also need to know about any acres you are unable to plant due to the extreme weather circumstances. More information on both these subjects can be found below.

I want to close by acknowledging the stress I know our farming and ranching community is experiencing right now. Farm Service Agency does have some options for existing customers through loan servicing, and individuals who find themselves in difficult financial circumstances should contact their FSA farm loan office to learn more. In addition, for those who were impacted by the early spring extreme weather, we also have other loan programs that may be a tool to assist. More information can be found below.

Finally, I want to call your attention to the confidential, free Rural Response Hotline. The hotline number is (800) 464-0258. The folks at the other end of the phone provide a variety of referral and support services for farmers, ranchers and rural residents.

Until next time.

Nancy

---

## **FSA Loan Servicing, Other Organization Resources Available During Financial Stress**

There are options for Farm Service Agency loan customers during financial stress. If you are a borrower who is unable to make payments on a loan, contact your local FSA Farm Loan Manager to learn about the options available to you.

Farmers and ranchers also can access assistance through other entities in Nebraska that offer services during financially challenging times. The Rural Response Hotline provides referral and

support services for farmers, ranchers and rural residents and their families. The number to call is (800) 464-0258.

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture manages the Negotiations Program, which offers mediation services for agricultural borrowers, creditors and USDA program participants. Through this program, participants also can access free one-on-one education on agricultural financial and legal matters. For information, call (402) 471-4876.

---

## **Disaster Set-Aside Program Aids Those Impacted by Severe Weather**

FSA borrowers with farms located in designated primary or contiguous disaster areas who are unable to make their scheduled FSA loan payments should consider the Disaster Set-Aside (DSA) program.

DSA is available to producers who suffered losses as a result of a natural disaster and is intended to relieve immediate and temporary financial stress. FSA is authorized to consider setting aside the portion of a payment/s needed for the operation to continue on a viable scale.

Borrowers must have at least two years left on the term of their loan in order to qualify.

Borrowers have eight months from the date of the disaster designation to submit a complete application. The application must include a written request for DSA signed by all parties liable for the debt along with production records and financial history for the operating year in which the disaster occurred. FSA may request additional information from the borrower in order to determine eligibility.

All farm loans must be current or less than 90 days past due at the time the DSA application is complete. Borrowers may not set aside more than one installment on each loan.

The amount set-aside, including interest accrued on the principal portion of the set-aside, is due on or before the final due date of the loan.

For more information, contact your local FSA farm loan office.

---

## **Several Nebraska Counties Eligible for Emergency Loans Following Presidential Disaster Declarations**

Several counties in Nebraska have been declared a disaster due to flooding, severe winter storms and straight-line winds. Under this designation, producers with operations in any primary or contiguous county are eligible to apply for low-interest emergency loans.

Emergency loans can help producers recover from production and physical losses due to the disaster.

Producers have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for emergency loan assistance. FSA will consider each loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent

of losses, security available and repayment ability. Producers can borrow up to 100 percent of actual production or physical losses, to a maximum amount of \$500,000.

For more information about emergency loans, please contact your local FSA office or visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov). To find your nearest office, click [here](#). To view a list of counties and disaster designations, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/ne](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ne) and scroll down on the front page to "Disaster Assistance Information."

---

## 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 Risk Management Agency (RMA).

In Nebraska, the final plant date for corn is May 25, and the final plant date for soybeans is June 10. Contact your local FSA office for a list of final planting dates for other crops.

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 will 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.

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

Producers of hand-harvested/perishable 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.

For losses on crops covered by the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), producers must file a *Notice of Loss* within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent. Producers must timely file a *Notice of Loss* for failed acres on all crops including grasses.

---

## Emergency Conservation Program A Tool to Assist With Flood, Blizzard Repair Costs

Farms and ranches that have damage from the March flooding and blizzard may be eligible for assistance under the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA) in approved counties. To view the counties approved for this program, [click here](#).

Each county FSA office determines its own application deadline. Most counties have deadlines within the last two weeks of May. For application deadline details, contact your county FSA office.

For land to be eligible for ECP, the natural disaster must create new conservation problems that, if untreated, would:

- be so costly to rehabilitate that Federal assistance is or will be needed to return the land to productive agricultural use
- is unusual and is not the type that would recur frequently in the same area
- affect the productive capacity of the farmland
- impair or endanger the land

A producer qualifying for ECP assistance may receive cost-share levels not to exceed 75 percent of the eligible cost of restoration measures. Producers who qualify as beginners, limited resource or underserved can receive up to 90 percent of the eligible cost of restoration. No producer is eligible for more than \$500,000 cost sharing per natural disaster occurrence.

The following activities are eligible:

- removing debris from farmland
- grading, shaping, or releveling severely damaged farmland
- restoring permanent fences
- restoring conservation structures and other similar installations
- shelterbelt rehabilitation

Producers with damage must apply for assistance prior to beginning reconstructive work in order to qualify for cost-share resources. This allows FSA offices to assess the need for on-site inspection and environmental compliance requirements, taking into consideration the type and extent of the damage. Please note FSA does have streamlined processes in place for debris removal and fence work, under certain conditions.

For more information about ECP, please contact your county FSA office. To find your nearest office, click [here](#).

---

## **Producers Encouraged to Complete Acreage Reporting Process Immediately Following Planting**

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit their local FSA office as soon as they finish spring planting to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline.

Producers who file accurate and timely acreage certification reports, including failed and prevented planted acreage, can prevent the potential loss of FSA program benefits. The acreage reporting deadline for all spring-seeded crops, Conservation Reserve Program acres and perennial grass is July 15, 2019. Nebraska FSA county offices are scheduling acreage certification appointments now in order to complete this process by the deadline for all producers.

The following exceptions apply to acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the applicable 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 applicable 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 15.

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

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

---

## **USDA Inviting Producers in 19 Nebraska Counties to Participate in Precision Ag Data Acreage Reporting Pilot Project**

Producers in 19 Nebraska counties may be eligible for a pilot program to test their ability to use precision ag data for reporting acreage to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) agencies.

Nebraska USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) and USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA) are looking for producers to test the transfer of data collected by their planting equipment as part of a streamlining initiative. The data will be processed by an approved third-party provider and transmitted directly to FSA and RMA as part of the Acreage Crop Reporting Streamlining Initiative (ACRSI).

Crop acreage reporting is an important step farmers and ranchers take to be eligible for many USDA programs and services, such as federal crop insurance administered by RMA and farm programs administered by FSA. The acreage reporting deadline for spring-planted crops is July 15, 2019.

The Nebraska county FSA offices participating in the pilot include Box Butte, Cheyenne, Dawes-North Sioux, Frontier, Furnas, Harlan, Hayes, Hitchcock, Kearney, Keith, Kimball, Lincoln, Morrill, Perkins, Phelps, Red Willow, Saline, Sheridan and Webster.

Participating farmers still will have to visit their FSA county office to sign the final acreage report and provide any additional information needed, as well as visit their crop insurance agent to validate transmitted data.

Farmers interested in participating in the pilot should contact their participating county FSA office. This process must be completed by the July 15, 2019, spring acreage reporting deadline.

---

## **Dairy Producers Encouraged to Review Decision Tool for Dairy Margin Coverage Program**

### *Signup For New Program Begins June 17*

USDA announced the availability of a new [web-based tool](#) – developed in partnership with the University of Wisconsin – to help dairy producers evaluate various scenarios using different coverage levels through the new [Dairy Margin Coverage](#) (DMC) program.

The 2018 Farm Bill authorized DMC, a voluntary risk management program that offers financial protection to dairy producers when the difference between the all milk price and the average feed cost (the margin) falls below a certain dollar amount selected by the producer. It replaces the program previously known as the Margin Protection Program for Dairy. Sign up for this USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) program opens on June 17.

The University of Wisconsin launched the decision support tool in cooperation with FSA and funded through a cooperative agreement with the USDA Office of the Chief Economist. The tool was designed to help producers determine the level of coverage under a variety of conditions that will provide them with the strongest financial safety net. It allows farmers to simplify their coverage level selection by combining operation data and other key variables to calculate coverage needs based on price projections.

The decision tool assists producers with calculating total premiums costs and administrative fees associated with participation in DMC. It also forecasts payments that will be made during the coverage year.

For more information, access the tool at [fsa.usda.gov/dmc-tool](https://fsa.usda.gov/dmc-tool). For DMC sign up, eligibility and related program information, visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://fsa.usda.gov) or contact your local [USDA Service Center](#).

---

## **Opportunity to Request a Referendum: Soybean Promotion, Research, and Information Program**

The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) announced that soybean producers may request a referendum on the Soybean Promotion and Research Order, as authorized under the Soybean Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act. Participation in the Request for Referendum is voluntary, and producers should only participate if they wish to request a referendum on the program.

The results of the Request for Referendum will be published in a notice in the Federal Register. If at least 10 percent of eligible producers, as determined by USDA, participate in the Request for Referendum, a referendum will be held within one year from that determination.

Interested soybean producers may request a referendum during a four-week period beginning on May 6 and ending May 31, 2019. Form LS-51-1, *Soybean Promotion and Research Order Request for Referendum*, may be [downloaded online](#), or obtained by mail, fax, or in person from Farm Service Agency (FSA) county offices during this time.

Completed forms and supporting documentation must be returned to the appropriate county FSA office by fax or in person no later than close of business May 31, 2019, or if returned by mail, must be postmarked by midnight May 31, 2019, and received in the county FSA office by close of business on June 6, 2019.

For detailed information, including eligibility, read the full [AMS announcement](#). To find your local office, visit [www.farmers.gov](http://www.farmers.gov).

---

## May FSA Interest Rates

### OPERATING/OWNERSHIP

Farm Operating: 3.5%  
Microloan Operating: 3.5%  
Farm Ownership: 4%  
Farm Ownership - Joint Financing: 2.5%  
Farm Ownership - Down Payment: 1.5%  
Emergency - Actual Loss: 3.75%

### FARM STORAGE

Farm Storage Facility Loan 3 year term: 2.25%  
Farm Storage Facility Loan 5 year term: 2.25%  
Farm Storage Facility Loan 7 year term: 2.375%  
Farm Storage Facility Loan 10 year term: 2.5%  
Farm Storage Facility Loan 12 year term: 2.5%

### MARKETING ASSISTANCE

Commodity Loan: 3.375%

---

## Dates to Remember

**May 24, 2019** – Deadline to apply for Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) buy-up coverage

**May 27, 2019** – Farm Service Agency offices closed for federal holiday

**May 31, 2019** – 2018 Marketing Assistance Loan availability deadline for corn, dry peas, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, safflower seed, chickpeas, soybeans and sunflower seed

**June 3, 2019** - Applications open for certain practices as part of a continuous signup for the Conservation Reserve Program

**June 17, 2019** – Opening of enrollment for Dairy Margin Coverage program, a 2018 Farm Bill program

**July 15, 2019** – Deadline to report all spring-seeded crops, perennial forage and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage

**Aug. 1, 2019** – Deadline to request farm transfers or reconstitutions for 2019

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

---

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).