

September 2016



NEWSLETTER

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New York State FSA Newsletter

New York State Farm Service Agency

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SED Comments

A large portion of New York counties have received a Secretarial Disaster designation lately. Check out the next article for a complete list. This designation opens up several federal farm program benefits that may be available to help eligible producers to recover from recent drought. Some recent declarations for the spring freeze event have also added a handful of contiguous declarations in Eastern New York counties.

FSA offers disaster assistance and low-interest loan programs to assist agricultural producers in their recovery efforts following qualifying natural disasters, like drought. More information on all of these programs is included in this newsletter.

Producers must file a Notice of Loss for failed acres on all crops including grasses in a timely fashion, often within 15 days of the occurrence or when the losses become apparent. Producers of hand-harvested crops must notify FSA of damage or loss within 72 hours of when the date of damage or loss first becomes apparent.

To find out what programs you may be eligible for, please contact your local office. To find your local FSA county office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Best Wishes,

Farm Loan Chief:
John Liddington

Jim Barber

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

<http://offices.usda.gov>

Multiple Counties are Eligible for Emergency Loans

Numerous counties in New York were declared a primary/contiguous disaster due to drought and heat using the streamlined Secretarial Disaster Designation process. Under this designation, producers with operations in any primary or contiguous county are eligible to apply for low interest emergency loans.

As of September 22nd, 2016, the Primary Counties are:

- Allegany
- Cattaraugus
- Cayuga
- Chautauqua
- Chemung
- Cortland
- Erie
- Genesee
- Livingston
- Monroe
- Niagara
- Onondaga
- Ontario
- Orleans
- Schuyler
- Seneca
- Steuben
- Suffolk (contiguous for frost)
- Tioga
- Tompkins
- Wayne
- Wyoming
- Yates

As of September 22nd, 2016, the Contiguous Counties are:

- Broome
- Columbia (frost)
- Dutchess (frost)
- Madison
- Nassau (frost & drought)

- Oswego
- Putnam (frost)
- Rensselaer (frost)
- Westchester (frost)

The streamlined disaster designation process issues a drought disaster declaration when a county has experienced a drought intensity value of at least a D2 (severe drought) level for eight consecutive weeks based on the U.S. Drought Monitor during the crop year.

Emergency loans help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought, frost or freeze, and other natural disasters or quarantine.

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.

FSA Offers Improved Program to Limit Losses on Forages - Deadline is September 30th

Reduced forage quality is now considered a production loss for weather disaster assistance coverage under the new buy-up provisions of the Farm Service Agency (FSA) Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP).

This safety net is important for cattlemen who produce non-insurable forages for feeding livestock. Previously, FSA only considered a decrease in overall forage tonnage produced when determining if the producer suffered a compensable loss after a qualifying weather event. Under FSA's new NAP buy-up provisions, a decrease in forage quality – such as Relative Feed Value (RFV) – is also considered.

To receive coverage for the 2017 crop year, producers must enroll their eligible forage in NAP by September 30, 2016. Beginning, limited resource and targeted underserved farmers or ranchers are eligible for a waiver of the NAP service fee and a 50 percent premium reduction in buy-up provisions.

For more information on NAP, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/nap.

Save Time – Make an Appointment with FSA

Producers are encouraged to call their local FSA office to schedule an appointment to ensure maximum use of their time and to make sure FSA staff is available to tend to their important business needs. Please call your local FSA office ahead of your visit to set an appointment and to discuss any records or documentation that might be needed during your appointment. To find your local FSA office, visit: <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>.

Livestock Forage Disaster Losses

Producers in some New York counties are eligible due to the drought, to apply for 2016 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) benefits on small grain, native pasture, improved pasture, annual

ryegrass, forage sorghum.

LFP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who suffer grazing losses for covered livestock due to drought on privately owned or cash leased land or fire on federally managed land.

County committees can only accept LFP applications after notification is received by the National Office of qualifying drought. Eligible livestock producers must complete a CCC-853 and the required supporting documentation no later than January 30, 2017 for 2016 losses.

Additional Information about LFP, including eligible livestock, is available at your local FSA office or online at: www.fsa.usda.gov.

Emergency Conservation Program Assistance Available in Some New York Counties

The Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) provides emergency funding and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters and to implement emergency water conservation measures in periods of severe drought.

A producer qualifying for ECP assistance may receive cost-share levels not to exceed 75 percent of the eligible cost of restoration measures. No producer is eligible for more than \$200,000 cost sharing per natural disaster occurrence. The following types of drought emergency measures may be eligible:

- drilling and deepening wells
- developing spring developments and troughs if needed for livestock water or vineyard/orchard irrigation water supplies

Producers who suffered a loss from a natural disaster should contact their local FSA Office for ECP deadlines. Please contact your local FSA office for more information on what assistance you may be eligible for. You can find your local office at <http://offices.usda.gov>

Tree Assistance Program (TAP) Sign-up

Orchardists and nursery tree growers who experience losses from natural disasters during calendar year 2016 must submit a TAP application either 90 calendar days after the disaster event or the date when the loss is apparent. TAP was authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014 as a permanent disaster program. TAP provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters.

Eligible tree types include trees, bushes or vines that produce an annual crop for commercial purposes. Nursery trees include ornamental, fruit, nut and Christmas trees that are produced for commercial sale. Trees used for pulp or timber are ineligible.

To qualify for TAP, orchardists must suffer a qualifying tree, bush or vine loss in excess of 15 percent mortality from an eligible natural disaster. The eligible trees, bushes or vines must have been owned when the natural disaster occurred; however, eligible growers are not required to own the land on which the eligible trees, bushes and vines were planted.

If the TAP application is approved, the eligible trees, bushes and vines must be replaced within 12 months from the date the application is approved. The cumulative total quantity of acres planted to trees, bushes or vines, for which a producer can receive TAP payments, cannot exceed 500 acres annually.

Loan Servicing

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.

Disaster Set-Aside (DSA) Program

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.

USDA Extends Margin Protection Program for Dairy Enrollment Deadline

USDA announced that it will extend the deadline for dairy producers to enroll in the Margin Protection Program (MPP) for Dairy to Dec. 16, 2016, from the previous deadline of Sept. 30. This voluntary dairy safety net program, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, provides financial assistance to participating dairy producers when the margin – the difference between the price of milk and feed costs – falls below the coverage level selected by the producer. A USDA web tool, available at www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool, allows dairy producers to calculate levels of coverage available from MPP based on price projections.

USDA Climate Hub Building Block: Conservation of Sensitive Lands

USDA Climate Hubs are working with producers, ranchers, pasture and forest landowners to effectively partner in ways to help reduce climate change. To aid in this partnership, USDA established the 10 Building Blocks for Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry.

One such Building Block is the “Conservation of Sensitive Lands”. The term “sensitive lands” denotes soils and landscapes that are valuable due to properties (e.g., high organic matter, wet hydrology) and/or function (e.g., wildlife habitat, filtration, and hydrologic storage). Typical examples

of these soils are organic rich histosols, floodplains, or wetlands along riparian areas. Properties and functions of these soils are easily disrupted from agricultural or urban land use.

Sensitive lands that are used for agricultural production can be protected by changes in land use (long-term cover). This reduction in land use intensity can provide multiple environmental benefits, including substantial GHG mitigation that occurs as carbon is sequestered or preserved in soils and vegetation. When land is removed from crop production, several activities—including tillage, nitrogen fertilization, and energy use—are substantially reduced or eliminated, generating additional GHG mitigation.

FSA and NRCS are committed to identifying these sensitive lands and encouraging landowners, farmers, and ranchers to voluntarily adopt conservation systems--using financial and technical assistance--to generate GHG benefits. To read more about Conservation of Sensitive Lands, click the following link: http://www.usda.gov/oce/climate_change/building_blocks/4_SensitiveLands.pdf

For more information about the USDA Climate Hubs click here:
<http://www.climatehubs.oce.usda.gov/>

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