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Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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New York State FSA Newsletter

New York State Farm Service Agency

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To find contact information for
your local office go
to www.fsa.usda.gov/ny

From the SED

Tomorrow, March 20 is National Agriculture Day – a day designated each year by the [Agriculture Council of America \(ACA\)](#) to celebrate the accomplishments of agriculture. The [Farm Service Agency \(FSA\)](#) joins the council in thanking American agricultural producers, especially in New York, for their contributions to the nation's outstanding quality of life.

This year's theme, **Agriculture: Food for Life**, spotlights the hard work of American farmers, ranchers and foresters who diligently work to provide food, fiber and more to the United States and countries around the world. To ensure a prosperous future for American agriculture, FSA provides continuous support to agriculturalists across the country.

FSA is rural America's engine for economic growth, job creation and development, offering local service to millions of rural producers. In fiscal year 2017, [USDA Farm Loan programs](#) provided \$6 billion in support to producers across America, the second highest total in FSA history. FSA also distributed \$1.6 billion in [Conservation Reserve Program \(CRP\)](#) payments to over 375,000 Americans to improve water quality, reduce soil erosion and increase wildlife habitat.

For agricultural producers who suffered market downturns in 2016, USDA is issuing approximately \$8 billion in payments under the [Agriculture Risk Coverage \(ARC\) and Price Loss Coverage \(PLC\) programs](#). USDA also continues to provide extensive assistance in response to natural [disasters](#) throughout the country, including last

year's hurricanes in Florida, Texas, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, drought in the northern high plains, wildfires in the west and central plains, floods, tornados, freezes and other catastrophic weather events.

To support [beginning farmers and ranchers](#), Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue signed a Memorandum of Understanding with officials from [SCORE](#), the nation's largest volunteer network of expert business mentors, to support new and beginning farmers. The agreement provides new help and resources for beginning ranchers, veterans, women, socially disadvantaged Americans and others, providing new tools to help them both grow and thrive in agribusiness.

I am honored to administer programs that enable our producers to manage their risks when the agriculture industry faces hardship. On behalf of the Farm Service Agency here in New York, I would like to thank our agricultural producers for continuing to feed our nation and the world.

For more information about FSA programs and services, visit <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/>.

Clark Putman
State Executive Director

Submit Loan Requests for Financing Early

The Farm Loan teams in New York are already working on operating loans for spring 2018 so it is important that potential borrowers submit their requests early so they can be timely processed. The farm loan team can help determine which loan programs are best for applicants.

FSA offers a wide range of low-interest loans that can meet the financial needs of any farm operation for just about any purpose. The traditional **farm operating and farm ownership loans** can help large and small farm operations take advantage of early purchasing discounts for spring inputs as well expenses throughout the year.

Microloans are a simplified loan program that will provide up to \$50,000 to eligible applicants. These loans, targeted for smaller operations and non-traditional operations, can be used for operating expenses, starting a new agricultural enterprise, purchasing equipment, and other needs associated with a farming operation. The staff at your local FSA office can provide more details on farm operating and microloans and provide loan applications. Loans to beginning farmers and members of underserved groups are a priority.

Other types of loans available include:

Marketing Assistance Loans allow producers to use eligible commodities as loan collateral and obtain a 9-month loan while the crop is in storage. These loans provide cash flow to the producer and allow them to market the crop when prices may be more advantageous.

Farm Storage Facility Loans can be used to build permanent structures used to store eligible commodities, or for storage and handling trucks, or portable or permanent handling equipment. A variety of structures are eligible under this loan, including bunker silos, grain bins, hay storage structures and refrigerated structures for vegetables, fruit, dairy and meat.

Please call your local FSA office if you have questions about any of the loans available through FSA.

Environmental Review Required Before Project Implementation

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires Federal agencies to consider all potential environmental impacts for federally-funded projects before the project is approved.

For all Farm Service Agency (FSA) programs, an environmental review must be completed before actions are approved, such as site preparation or ground disturbance. These programs include, **but are not limited to**, the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program and farm loans. If project implementation begins before FSA has completed an environmental review, this will result in a denial of the request. There are exceptions regarding the Stafford Act and emergencies. It is important to wait until you receive written approval of your project proposal before starting any actions, including, but not limited to, vegetation clearing, site preparation or ground disturbance.

Remember to contact your local FSA office early in your planning process to determine what level of environmental review is required for your program application so that it can be completed timely.

Applications cannot be approved contingent upon the completion of an environmental review. FSA must have copies of all permits and plans before an application can be approved.

Reporting Wind Turbines Constructed on Cropland

Producers who have wind turbines constructed on their farms should notify the local Farm Service Agency office. Any area that is no longer considered suitable as cropland (producing annual or perennial crops) should be designated in FSA's records and common land unit. When base acres on a farm are converted to a non-agricultural commercial or industrial use, the total base acres on the farm must be reduced or redistributed accordingly. Non-cropland areas used for wind turbines might impact payments calculated using base acres, such as Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC).

Farm Storage Facility Loans

FSA's Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program provides low-interest financing to producers to build or upgrade storage facilities and to purchase portable (new or used) structures, equipment and storage and handling trucks.

The low-interest funds can be used to build or upgrade permanent facilities to store commodities. Eligible commodities include:

- Grain Crops
- Malted Small Grains
- Pulse Crops
- Hay & Forages
- Fruits, Nuts & Vegetables
- Milk, Butter, Cheese & Yogurt
- Meat, Poultry (unprocessed) & Eggs
- Honey
- Maple sap & syrup
- Hops
- Floriculture
- Renewable biomass crops
- Some Aquaculture

ELIGIBLE Facilities & Upgrades include:

- Grain Bins & Cribs, including drying and handling equipment
- Hay Storage, including pole barns
- Silage Bunks
- Cold Storage, including handling, washing & packing equipment

- Refrigeration/freezer units
- Milk Houses & Equipment, including bulk milk tanks
- Sap Tanks
- New & Used Trucks, including refrigerated trucks

Loans up to \$50,000 can be secured by a promissory note/security agreement and loans between \$50,000 and \$100,000 may require additional security. Loans exceeding \$100,000 require additional security.

Producers do not need to demonstrate the lack of commercial credit availability to apply. The loans are designed to assist a diverse range of farming operations, including small and mid-sized businesses, new farmers, operations supplying local food and farmers markets, non-traditional farm products, and underserved producers.

To learn more about the FSA Farm Storage Facility Loan, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport or contact your local FSA county office. To find your local FSA county office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

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.

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).



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