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Ohio FSA State News and Updates

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**Production
Adjustment,
Compliance and Risk**

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.

To learn more about the Margin Protection Program for dairy, visit the FSA online at: www.fsa.usda.gov/dairy or stop by your [FSA County office](#). Producers may visit www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool to calculate the best levels of coverage for their dairy operation.

Dairy operations enrolling in the new program must meet conservation compliance provisions and cannot participate in the Livestock Gross Margin Dairy Insurance Program.

FSAfarm+, FSA's Customer Self-Service Portal

The USDA FSA has launched a new tool to provide farmers with remote access to their personal farm information using their home computers.

Management Chief: Farmers and producers can now view, print or export their personal farm data all without visiting an FSA county office.
Matt Kleski

State Committee: The program, known as **FSAfarm+**, provides you with secure access to view your personal FSA data, such as base and yields, Conservation Reserve Program data, other conservation program acreage, Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation status information, field boundaries, farm imagery, name and address details, contact information and membership interest and shares in the operation. This data will be available in real time, at no cost to the producer and allow operators and owners to export and print farm records, including maps. Producers also can electronically share their data with a crop insurance agent from their own personal computer.

Visit Ohio FSA website for additional information at:

www.fsa.usda.gov/oh

Please contact your [FSA County Office](#) for questions specific to your operation.

[Current FSA Farm Loan Interest Rates](#)

[Current Commodity Credit Corporation \(CCC\) Interest Rates](#)

Farm operators and owners first will need “Level 2 eAuthentication” to access the webportal. This level of security ensures that personal information is protected for each user. Level 2 access can be obtained by going to www.eauth.usda.gov, completing the required information and then visiting your local FSA office to finalize access.

For more information on **FSAfarm+**, the customer self-service portal, contact your [FSA County office](#).

Farmers Encouraged to Sign-Up for the Lake Erie CREP

For most agricultural producers, activities over the winter months tend to slow down. This is an opportune time to take another look at your farming operation and determine if there are areas that could benefit from the establishment of one or more conservation practices.

For instance, do you have a ditch or stream running through your farm that needs a filter strip? Is a particular field prone to wind erosion and stands to benefit from a windbreak? How about that one area that's hard to farm because it's always wet? Have you considered how FSA's Lake Erie Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (Lake Erie CREP) might benefit your farming operation and help to protect the environment at the same time?

Lake Erie CREP began with the main objective to improve water quality in all of our rivers, streams, and tributaries within the Lake Erie watershed with a special emphasis on the Blanchard and Tiffin Rivers as important tributaries of the Maumee River. These conservation practices will target environmentally sensitive areas to reduce sediments and nutrients, prevent water pollution and minimize the risk of flooding and improve the habitat for multiple wildlife species.

Conservation is voluntary. It is entirely up to the landowner or the farm operator to enroll acres in a particular program. Through our federal partnerships it is quite possible that we can have a conservation plan in place before this spring's planting. Farmers and landowners can choose from a number of practices including grass buffer strips, hardwood tree plantings, wildlife habitat, wetlands and windbreaks that work together to prevent chemicals, soils and other contaminants from running off of cropland and into waterways. Also, participants can earn money on less economically viable land, such as land along ditch banks, streams, and woodlands.

In exchange for installing and maintaining these practices, you will earn a guaranteed annual rental payment for 14 to 15 years plus receive cost share and potential incentives to cover the majority of

the cost of practice installation. The annual income from the conservation practice will be similar to what is paid for cash rent on the three predominant soils of the CREP practice area. Additional soil rental rate incentives are also available. Also, FSA can provide you with an estimate of the payments you would be eligible to receive for the duration of the contract period (14-15 years).

The Lake Erie CREP is available in 27 counties including; Allen, Ashland, Auglaize, Crawford, Defiance, Erie, Fulton, Hancock, Hardin, Henry, Huron, Lucas, Lorain, Marion, Medina, Mercer, Ottawa, Paulding, Putnam, Richland, Sandusky, Seneca, Shelby, Van Wert, Williams, Wood and Wyandot Counties.

Sign-up for the Lake Erie CREP is going on now. Interested landowners and farmers should contact their [FSA County office](#) or the SWCD office to learn more about the Lake Erie CREP.

Farm Loans Available for Beginning and Targeted Underserved Producers

FSA has funding to assist beginning farmers and members of targeted underserved groups 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 farm size; and
- Also, the applicant must meet the loan eligibility requirements of the program to which he/she is applying.

Targeted underserved applicants are one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of their identity as a member of the group without regard to their individual qualities. Targeted underserved groups are Women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. Certain FSA loan funds are targeted to beginning farmers and underserved groups.

Note: All applicants for direct farm ownership loans must have participated in a business operation of a farm for at least three years.

To find out more about loans for beginning farmer and targeted underserved groups contact your [FSA County office](#) to setup an appointment with a loan approval official.

USDA Climate Hub Building Block: Conservation of Sensitive Lands

USDA Climate Hubs are working with producers, farmers, 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 producers 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/>

Dates to Remember

Sept. 5 ---- Labor Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed.**

Oct. 1 ----- Deadline to obtain [2017 NAP coverage](#) for Winter Wheat, Rye, Barley and Speltz.

Oct. 10 --- Columbus Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed.**

Nov. 7 ---- County committee ballots mailed to voters.

Nov. 11 --- Veterans Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed.**

Nov. 20 --- **Last day to apply** for [2017 NAP coverage](#) for asparagus, blueberries, caneberries, cherries, chestnuts, forage for hay and pasture, grapes, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums, strawberries, honey, hops and maple syrup.

Nov. 24 --- Thanksgiving Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed.**

Dec. 5 ----- **Last day** to return voted ballots in the [County Committee Election](#).

Dec. 16 --- **Last day** for dairy producers to make elections for [Milk Price Protection Program](#).

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).