January 2020

Ohio FSA State Newsletter

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A Message from the State Executive Director

Happy New Year!

Below you’ll find articles that highlight some of the key things keeping our offices busy right now. For example, many folks have been waiting for a general signup opportunity for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Well, the time has come, with our offices accepting applications through Feb. 28, 2020. This is a competitive process, not a first-come, first-served process, but I would strongly encourage you to not wait until the deadline to come see us if you are interested in the program.

Our offices also are accepting election and enrollment for both 2019 and 2020 for the Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage (ARC/PLC) commodity crop safety net programs. Several of our FSA county offices continue to host ARC/PLC meetings with OSU Extension staff around the state through early February. If you haven’t had an opportunity to learn more about these programs, then I encourage you to take advantage of one of the joint Farm Bill meetings. Learn how to use the online decisions tools and if you have questions about the tools or the programs then contact your FSA office so they can assist to answer your questions. If you decided into which program you
Production Adjustment,
Compliance and Risk
Management Chief:
Matt Kleski

State Committee Members:
Trish Levering, Chair
Ronnie Clifton
Daryl Knipp
Chase Powell
Joe Steiner

Visit the 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

would like to enroll your farm(s), please make an appointment to
stop in and complete the paperwork as soon as possible. I want to
thank The OSU Extension Service and their staff for their
partnership with our County office staff as they worked together to
provide information about 2018 Farm Bill programs.

Remember when you sign up, you will choose one of three options:
Agriculture Risk Coverage-county; ARC-individual or Price Loss
Coverage. Whichever one you choose for 2019 must also be your
choice for 2020 and therefore it makes sense to consider signing
up for both years at the same time. Program election and
Enrollment for program year 2020, following a valid election being
performed on the farm for 2019 will continue to June 30, 2020.

Many producers want to wait until the last minute to see if there is
any new information that might come out before the signup
deadline in March. Producers should go ahead and make their
appointment with their County FSA offices now and get their
business done. If you are interested in the ARC/PLC program or
CRP general signup, then it’s important to sign-up early for these
programs. Remember you can always change your ARC/PLC
decision up until the March 15 deadline. Producers who fail to elect
either Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage
(PLC) by March 15, 2020 will NOT receive a 2019 payment and
their 2020 election will default to the prior farm bill election.

Our County Offices continue to tackle busy days, with many deadlines approaching this winter, so
we appreciate your kindness and patience as our staff administers heavy workloads. Remember
it’s important to call ahead to your FSA County office and schedule an appointment before stopping
in. It helps us prepare for your visit, so you can complete your FSA business and be on your way.

Wishing you good health, happiness, and success in the coming year and always.

Respectfully,

Leonard Hubert

Signup Continues for Conservation Reserve Program

USDA opened signup for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) on December 9, 2019. The
deadline for agricultural producers to sign up for general CRP is February 28, 2020, while signup for
continuous CRP is ongoing.

Farmers and landowners who enroll in CRP receive a yearly rental payment for voluntarily
establishing long-term, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees
(known as “covers”) to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat on
marginally productive agricultural lands.

CRP has 22 million acres enrolled, but the 2018 Farm Bill lifted the cap to 27 million acres. This
means farmers and landowners have a chance to enroll in CRP for the first time or continue their
participation for another term.
By enrolling in CRP, producers are improving water quality, reducing soil erosion, and restoring habitat for wildlife. This in turn spurs hunting, fishing, recreation, tourism, and other economic development across rural America.

**CRP Enrollment Options**

**General Signup**

CRP general signup will be held annually. The competitive general signup will now include increased opportunities for enrollment of wildlife habitat through the State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) initiative.

**Continuous Signup**

While some practices under SAFE will remain available through continuous signup, CRP continuous signup will focus primarily on water quality with the Clean Lakes, Estuaries, and Rivers (CLEAR) Initiative. The 2018 Farm Bill prioritizes water quality practices such as contour grass strips, filter strips, riparian buffers, wetlands and a new prairie strip.

USDA will also be working with Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) partners to relaunch CREP continuous options in each state under new statutory provisions. CREP will continue to target high-priority local, state or regional conservation concerns.

**Grasslands Signups**

CRP Grasslands signup helps landowners and operators protect grassland, including rangeland, and pastureland and certain other lands while maintaining the areas as grazing lands. A separate CRP Grasslands signup will be offered each year following general signup.

**Pilot Programs**

Later in 2020, (FSA will roll out pilot programs within CRP: CLEAR 30, which allows contracts expiring with CLEAR practices to be reenrolled in 30-year contracts and in the Soil Health and Income Protection Program (SHIPP) in the prairie pothole region. More information on these programs will be announced in the new year.

**Land Transition**

The CRP Transition Incentives Program (TIP) is an option for producers interested in transitioning land to a beginning farmer landowner or a member of a socially disadvantaged group to return land to production for sustainable grazing or crop production. CRP contract holders no longer need to be a retired or retiring owner or operator to transition their land. TIP participants may have a lease less than five years with an option to purchase, and they have two years before the end of the CRP contract to make conservation and land improvements.

**Previously Expired Land**

Land enrolled in CRP under a 15-year contract that expired in September 2017, 2018 or 2019, may be eligible for enrollment if there was no opportunity for re-enrollment and the practice under the expired contract has been maintained.

**CRP Rates and Payments**
FSA recently posted updated soil rental rates for CRP. County average rates are posted on the [CRP Statistics webpage](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/landuse/crp/). Soil rental rates are statutorily prorated at 90 percent for continuous signup and 85 percent for general signup. The rental rates will be assessed annually. Under continuous signup, producers also receive incentives, including a signup incentive payment and a practice incentive payment.

To enroll in CRP, contact your [FSA County office](https://www.fsa.usda.gov/ farmers) or visit [fsa.usda.gov/crp](https://fsa.usda.gov/crp).

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**Enrollment Continues for Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs**

Agricultural producers can continue to enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs – two U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) safety net programs – for the 2019 and 2020 crop year.

ARC provides income support payments on historical base acres when actual crop revenue declines below a specified guaranteed level. PLC provides income support payments on historical base acres when the effective price for a covered commodity falls below its reference price. The 2018 Farm Bill reauthorized and updated both programs.

Signup for the 2020 crop year closes June 30, 2020, while signup for the 2019 crop year closes March 15, 2020. Producers who have not yet enrolled for 2019 can enroll for both 2019 and 2020 during the same visit to an FSA county office.

ARC and PLC have options for the farm operator who is actively farming the land as well as the owner of the land. Farm owners also have a one-time opportunity to update PLC payment yields beginning with crop year 2020. If the farm owner and producer visit the FSA county office together, FSA can also update yield information during that visit.

Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium and short grain rice, safflower seed, seed cotton, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

**More Information**

For more information on ARC and PLC including two online decision tools that assist producers in making enrollment and election decisions specific to their operations, visit the [ARC and PLC webpage](https://www.fsa.usda.gov/crp).

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**Have you heard about the Ohio AgrAbility Program?**

Ohio AgrAbility promotes success in agriculture for Ohio’s farmers and farm families coping with a disability or long-term health condition. This is part of a national program from the U.S. Department of Agriculture that promotes independence for people in agriculture who want to continue to farm after experiencing a disabling condition. The Ohio State University has partnered with Easter Seals to help bring this program to the local level. The goal is to provide education, resources, and technical assistance to those individuals and their families so they may continue to be successful in agriculture.

The Ohio AgrAbility Program can assist those engaged in agriculture, who have a disability. Some disabilities may be present at birth, while others may be a result of accidents, illness, or age–related
conditions and may include: Arthritis, Head or Spinal Cord injury, Amputation, Paralysis, Back pain or injury, Stroke, Diabetes, Visual or Hearing Impairment, Respiratory Problems, Cerebral Palsy, Parkinson’s disease and Repetitive Motion Injuries.

Ohio AgrAbility provides onsite home and agricultural worksite assessments to help you find solutions that will meet your specific needs and recommend assistive technologies and universal design concepts to help you to continue to farm.

If you are interested in learning more about this program or know someone that might benefit from the Ohio AgrAbility Program, contact:

Laura Akgerman, Disability Services Coordinator Ohio AgrAbility Program and OSU Extension
The Ohio State University 263 Agricultural Engineering Building 590 Woody Hayes Drive Columbus, Ohio 43210 Phone: 614-292-0622 Akgerman.4@osu.edu

To learn more about the Ohio AgrAbility program, visit their website at: http://agrability.osu.edu/.

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**Dates to Remember**

**Jan. 1** ----- Elected Committee Members and alternates take office.

**Jan. 1** ----- New Year’s Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed**.

**Jan. 20** ---- Martin Luther King Jr. Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed**.

**Jan. 31** ---- Deadline on 2019 LDPs for wool and unshorn lamb pelts.

**Feb. 17** ---- President’s Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed**.

**Feb. 28** ---- Deadline to sign-up for General CRP.

**Mar. 15** --- Deadline to obtain 2020 NAP coverage on spring planted crops.

**Mar. 15** --- ARC/PLC signup deadline for the 2019 Program Election and Enrollment Closes. Producers who fail to elect either Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) by **March 15, 2020** will NOT receive a 2019 payment and their 2020 election will default to the prior farm bill election.

**Mar. 31** --- Final Availability for 2019 crop wheat, barley, oats, honey loans and LDPs.

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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).