

July 2015



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## Oklahoma FSA Program Updates and Reminders

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**Hours:**

Monday - Friday  
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**State Committee Members:** Exception: If the crop has NAP coverage, the crop must be reported 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest.

Cletus Carter, Beaver  
(Chairman)  
Steve Nunley, Marlow  
Brenda Neufeld, Fairview  
Steve Butler, Wagoner  
Jo Jennings, Depew

**State Staff:**

Phil Estes,  
Farm Loan Programs

Tona Huggins,  
Production & Payment  
Eligibility

Rod Wanger,  
Conservation Programs

Danny Lee,  
Compliance & Price Support

Krey Reimer,  
Administration

Shelly Bilderback,  
Public Relations/Outreach

### July 15 Acreage Reporting Deadline

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit your local FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline.

- **July 15** - final date to report spring-planted crops (Corn, cotton, grain sorghum, sesame, soybeans, sunflowers) and CRP.
- **November 15** - final date to report all 2016 crop-year grass, pasture, range, and forage crops including alfalfa.

**For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, or to schedule an appointment, please contact your local county FSA office as soon as possible.**

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### Time to Sign 2014 and 2015 ARC/PLC Contracts

The USDA has officially opened enrollment in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for 2014 and 2015. **The enrollment period began on June 17, 2015, and will end Sept. 30, 2015.**

The new programs, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, trigger financial protections for agricultural producers when market forces cause substantial drops in crop prices or revenues. More than 1.76 million farmers have elected ARC or PLC. Previously, 1.7 million producers had enrolled to receive direct payments (the program replaced with ARC and PLC by the 2014 Farm Bill). This means more farms have elected ARC or PLC than enrolled under previously administered programs.

Land owners were given the opportunity to do yield updates/base reallocations, then elected either the ARC or PLC program. This final step is enrollment by anyone with an interest in a crop on a farm that has historical base acres.

**All producers are encouraged to contact their local FSA office to schedule an appointment to complete the enrollment process and sign contracts.**

## Enrollment Open for 2016 Dairy Margin Protection Program

Dairy farmers can now enroll in Margin Protection Program for coverage in 2016. The voluntary program, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, provides financial assistance to participating dairy operations when the margin – the difference between the price of milk and feed costs – falls below the coverage level selected by the farmer.

The Margin Protection Program gives participating dairy producers the flexibility to select coverage levels best suited for their operation. Enrollment runs now through Sept. 30, 2015, for coverage in 2016. Participating farmers will remain in the program through 2018 and pay a \$100 administrative fee each year. Producers also have the option of selecting a different coverage level during open enrollment each year. Margin Protection Program payments are based on an operation's historical production. An operation's historical production will increase by 2.61 percent in 2016 if the operation participated in 2015, providing a stronger safety net.

USDA also has an online resource available to help dairy producers decide which level of coverage will provide them with the strongest safety net under a variety of conditions. The enhanced Web tool, available at [www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool), allows dairy farmers to quickly and easily combine their unique operation data and other key variables to calculate their coverage needs based on price projections. Producers can also review historical data or estimate future coverage based on data projections. The secure site can be accessed via computer, mobile phone, or tablet, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Dairy operations enrolling in the program must meet conservation compliance provisions. Producers participating in the Livestock Gross Margin insurance program may register for the Margin Protection Program, but this new margin program will only begin once their livestock dairy insurance coverage has ended. Producers must also submit form CCC-782 for 2016, confirming their Margin Protection Program coverage level selection, to the local FSA office. If electing higher coverage for 2016, dairy producers can either pay the premium in full at the time of enrollment or pay a minimum of 25 percent of the premium by Feb. 1, 2016.

For more information, visit FSA online at [www.fsa.usda.gov/dairy](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dairy), or contact your local FSA office to learn more about the Margin Protection Program.

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## Nominations Open for County Committee Members

FSA is looking for candidates for an upcoming producer-elected county committee election. **FSA offices throughout Oklahoma will accept nominations June 15 through August 3, 2015.** County Committees have a direct influence on the delivery of federal farm programs. They make decisions on disaster and conservation programs, emergency programs, commodity price support loan programs and other agricultural issues.

FSA encourages all interested agricultural producers, including women and minority growers, to seek nomination. Eligible candidates must participate or cooperate in any Farm Service Agency program and be of legal voting age. Even if farmers and ranchers are not currently participating in FSA programs, they are considered eligible to vote under the cooperation criteria if they have farm records on file with the agency.

Farmers and ranchers may nominate themselves or others, and organizations representing minorities and women also may nominate candidates. To become a candidate, an eligible individual must sign the nomination form, FSA-669A. The form and other information about FSA county committee elections are available online at [www.fsa.usda.gov/elections](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections). **Nomination forms for the 2015 election must be postmarked or received in the local FSA Service Center by close of business on Aug. 3, 2015.** Elections will take place this fall.

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## USDA Offers Flood Disaster Assistance

Oklahoma FSA reminds farmers and ranchers across the state of federal farm program benefits that may be available to help eligible producers recover from recent heavy rains and flooding. FSA offers disaster assistance and low-interest loan programs to assist agricultural producers in their recovery efforts following floods or similar qualifying natural disasters. Available programs and loans include:

**Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)** - provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters (includes native grass for grazing). Eligible producers must have purchased NAP coverage for 2015 crops.

**Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)** - offers payments to eligible producers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather. Eligible losses may include those determined by FSA to have been caused by hurricanes, floods, blizzards, wildfires, tropical storms, tornados, lightning, extreme heat, and extreme cold. Producers will be required to provide verifiable documentation of death losses resulting from an eligible adverse weather event and must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent.

**Tree Assistance Program (TAP)** – provides assistance to eligible orchardists and nursery tree growers who have experienced an 18 percent death loss of qualifying trees, shrubs and vines due to the natural disaster event.

**Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP)** - provides emergency relief for losses due to feed or water shortages, disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, which are not adequately addressed by other disaster programs. ELAP covers physically damaged or destroyed livestock feed that was purchased or mechanically harvested forage or feedstuffs intended for use as feed for the **producer's** eligible livestock. In order to be considered eligible, harvested forage must be baled; forage that is only cut, raked or windrowed is not eligible. Producers must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent.

ELAP also covers up to 150 lost grazing days in instances when a producer has been forced to remove livestock from a grazing pasture due to floodwaters. For beekeepers, ELAP covers beehive losses (the physical structure) in instances where the hive has been destroyed by a natural disaster including flooding, high winds and tornadoes.

**Emergency Loan Program** – available to producers with agriculture operations located in a county under a primary or contiguous **Secretarial Disaster designation**. These low interest loans help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought and flooding.

**Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)** - provides cost share assistance for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate land severely damaged by the natural disaster event. Assistance may include removal of debris, repair of conservation structures, such as dams and terraces, repair of sheet and rill erosion, and/or fence restoration or replacement. **Areas subject to flooding according to soil survey maps are not eligible for assistance.**

**HayNet** - is an Internet-based Hay and Grazing Net Ad Service allowing farmers and ranchers to share 'Need Hay' ads and 'Have Hay' ads online. Farmers also can use another feature to post advertisements for grazing land, specifically ads announcing the availability of grazing land or ads requesting a need for land to graze. [www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet).

**Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Continuous Signup** - provides vegetative (grass and tree) cover cost share assistance and annual rental payments for 10 to 15 years to establish conservation buffers such as filter strips and riparian areas along permanent and intermittent streams.

To establish or retain FSA program eligibility, farmers and ranchers must report prevented planting and failed acres (crops and grasses). Prevented planting acreage must be reported on form FSA-576, Notice of Loss, no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date as established by FSA and Risk Management Agency (RMA).

**Contact your local FSA office for more information on disaster assistance programs and loans available in your county.**

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## Still Time to Register for 2015 Women in Agriculture and Small Business Conference

The Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service along with USDA's Risk Management Agency is pleased to announce the annual conference for women in agriculture and small business August 6-7 in Oklahoma City. The 2-day conference offers a variety of sessions to assist participants in successfully managing risk for their families, farms and/or businesses. Twenty concurrent sessions will be offered from three tracks—agriculture, alternative enterprises and business & finance—with participants able to choose whatever session is of most value to them.

Concurrent sessions range in topics from Emergency and Disaster Planning for Small Businesses to Building Soil Health, Managing Farm/Off Farm Jobs, Affordable Care Act for Ag Businesses and Website Marketing. The 2015 keynote speakers are Carrie Mess of the popular "Adventures of Dairy Carrie" blog and Marji Alaniz of the FarmHer project, which showcases women as the changing face of agriculture.

The registration fee is \$50 a person by August 1 or \$60 per person after August 1. The registration fee includes two breakfasts, two lunches, and all breaks. Thursday evening attendees can choose to join in a networking dinner at Hideaway Pizza in downtown Oklahoma City on Automobile Alley. The sign up for dinner will take place during Thursday morning registration the first day of the conference. Dinner will be coordinated through the Women in Ag Conference, but participants are asked to pay their own way Thursday night.

The registration brochure, agenda, hotel information and more can be found on the Oklahoma Statewide Women in Ag website at: <http://www.okwomeninagandsmallbusiness.com/>. For questions, please call or email Sara Siems at 405-744-9826 or [sara.siems@okstate.edu](mailto:sara.siems@okstate.edu). To register over the phone, please call 405-744-9836.

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### Farm Loan Interest Rates:

- Farm Operating Loans = 2.5%
- Farm Ownership Loans = 3.75%
- Farm Ownership Down Payment Loans = 1.5%
- Micro Loans = 2.5%
- Youth Loans = 2.5%
- Emergency Loans = 3.5%

\*Rates effective July 1, 2015

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USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. 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).