

June 2015



# NEWSLETTER



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## 2015 June State FSA Newsletter

### South Dakota Farm Service Agency

200 Fourth St. SW  
Huron, SD 57350

[www.fsa.usda.gov/sd](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/sd)

#### State Committee:

James Burg  
Larry Birgen  
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Joyce Jobgen  
Ethel Whitcher

#### State Executive Director:

Craig Schaunaman

### Secretary Vilsack Announces Additional 800,000 Acres Dedicated to Conservation Reserve Program for Wildlife Habitat and Wetlands

Secretary Hails Program's 30th Anniversary, Announces General Signup Period

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced today that an additional 800,000 acres of highly environmentally sensitive land may be enrolled in Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) under certain wetland and wildlife initiatives that provide multiple benefits on the same land.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will accept new offers to participate in CRP under a general signup to be held Dec. 1, 2015, through Feb. 26, 2016. Eligible existing program participants with contracts expiring Sept. 30, 2015, will be granted an option for one-year extensions.

**Division Directors:**

Paul Hanson  
Lynn Stoltenburg  
Owen Fagerhaug  
LaDonna Hupp

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

Farmers and ranchers interested in removing sensitive land from agricultural production and planting grasses or trees to reduce soil erosion, improve water quality and restore wildlife habitat are encouraged to enroll.

For 30 years, the Conservation Reserve Program has helped farmers and ranchers prevent more than 8 billion tons of soil from eroding, reduce nitrogen and phosphorous runoff relative to cropland by 95 and 85 percent respectively, and even sequester 43 million tons of greenhouse gases annually, equal to taking 8 million cars off the road.

The voluntary Conservation Reserve Program allows USDA to contract with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive land is conserved. Participants establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat. In return, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. Contract duration is between 10 and 15 years.

CRP protects water quality and restores significant habitat for ducks, pheasants, turkey, quail, deer and other important wildlife which spurs economic development like hunting and fishing, outdoor recreation and tourism across rural America. Today's announcement allows an additional 800,000 acres for duck nesting habitat and other wetland and wildlife habitat initiatives to be enrolled in the program.

Farmers and ranchers should consider the various CRP continuous sign-up initiatives that may help target specific resource concerns. Financial assistance is offered for many practices including conservation buffers and pollinator habitat plantings, and initiatives such as the highly erodible lands, bottomland hardwood tree and longleaf pine.

Farmers and ranchers may visit their FSA county office for additional information. The 2014 Farm Bill authorized the enrollment of grasslands in CRP and information on grasslands enrollment will be available after the regulation is published later this summer.

For more information on CRP and other FSA programs, please visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

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## **Producers Must Report Prevented Planting and Failed Acres**

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds producers to report prevented planting and failed acres in order to establish or retain FSA program eligibility.

Producers must report crop acreage they intended to plant, but due to natural disaster, were prevented from planting. 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).

If a producer is unable to report the prevented planting acreage within the 15 calendar days following the final planting date, a late-filed report can be submitted. Late-filed reports will only be accepted if FSA conducts a farm visit to assess the eligible disaster condition that prevented the crop from being planted. A measurement service fee will be charged.

Additionally, producers with failed acres should also use form FSA-576, Notice of Loss, to report failed acres.

For losses on crops covered by the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and crop insurance, producers must file a Notice of Loss within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent. Producers must timely file a Notice of Loss for failed acres on all crops including grasses.

Please contact the Name County FSA Office at XXX-XXX-XXXX to schedule an appointment to file a Notice of Loss. To find your local FSA office visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

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## 2015 ACREAGE REPORTING DATES

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

Acres reporting dates vary by crop and by county so please contact your local FSA office for a list of county-specific deadlines.

The following exceptions apply to acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the applicable acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the applicable acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.
- If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of “cover only,” “green manure,” “left standing,” or “seed,” then the acreage must be reported by July 15th.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the applicable dates or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact your local FSA office.

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## **ARC, PLC and CTAP Acreage Maintenance**

Producers enrolled in Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC), Price Loss Coverage (PLC) or the Cotton Transition Assistance Program (CTAP) must protect all cropland and noncropland acres on the farm from wind and water erosion and noxious weeds. Producers who sign ARC county or individual contracts and PLC contracts agree to effectively control noxious weeds on the farm according to sound agricultural practices. If a producer fails to take necessary actions to correct a maintenance problem on a farm that is enrolled in ARC, PLC or CTAP, the County Committee may elect to terminate the contract for the program year.

A list of noxious weeds can be found on the following website:

<http://plants.usda.gov/java/noxiousDriver>.

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## **Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybee, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP)**

The Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) provides emergency assistance to eligible livestock, honeybee, and farm-raised fish producers who have losses due to disease, adverse weather or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires, not covered by other agricultural disaster assistance programs.

Eligible livestock losses include grazing losses not covered under the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), loss of purchased feed and/or mechanically harvested feed due to an eligible

adverse weather event, additional cost of transporting water because of an eligible drought and additional cost associated with gathering livestock to treat for cattle tick fever.

Eligible honeybee losses include loss of purchased feed due to an eligible adverse weather event, cost of additional feed purchased above normal quantities due to an eligible adverse weather condition, colony losses in excess of normal mortality due to an eligible weather event or loss condition, including CCD, and hive losses due to eligible adverse weather.

Eligible farm-raised fish losses include death losses in excess of normal mortality and/or loss of purchased feed due to an eligible adverse weather event.

Producers who suffer eligible livestock, honeybee, or farm-raised fish losses from October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2015 must file:

- A notice of loss the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent or by November 1, 2015
- An application for payment by November 1, 2015

The Farm Bill caps ELAP disaster funding at \$20 million per federal fiscal year.

The following ELAP Fact Sheets (by topic) are available online:

- ELAP for Farm-Raised Fish Fact Sheet
- ELAP for Livestock Fact Sheet
- ELAP for Honeybees Fact Sheet

To view these and other FSA program fact sheets, visit the FSA fact sheet web page at [www.fsa.usda.gov/factsheets](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/factsheets).

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## **LIVESTOCK INDEMNITY PROGRAM (LIP)**

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides assistance to eligible producers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law. LIP compensates livestock owners and contract growers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather, including losses due to hurricanes, floods, blizzards, wildfires, extreme heat or extreme cold.

For 2015, eligible losses must occur on or after Jan. 1, 2015, and before December 31, 2015. A notice of loss must be filed with FSA within 30 days of when the loss of livestock is apparent. Participants must provide the following supporting documentation to their local FSA office no later than 30 calendar days after the end of the calendar year for which benefits are requested:

- Proof of death documentation
- Copy of growers contracts
- Proof of normal mortality documentation

USDA has established normal mortality rates for each type and weight range of eligible livestock, i.e. Adult Beef Cow = 1.5% and Non-Adult Beef Cattle (less than 400 pounds) = 5%. These established percentages reflect losses that are considered expected or typical under "normal" conditions. Producers who suffer livestock losses in 2015 must file both of the following:

- A notice of loss the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss was apparent or by January 30, 2016
- An application for payment by January 30, 2016.

Additional Information about LIP is available at your local FSA office or online at: [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

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## Direct Loans

FSA offers direct farm ownership and direct farm operating Loans to producers who want to establish, maintain or strengthen their farm or ranch. FSA loan officers process, approve and service direct loans.

Direct farm operating loans can be used to purchase livestock and feed, farm equipment, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance and other costs including family living expenses. Operating loans can also be used to finance minor improvements or repairs to buildings and to refinance some farm-related debts, excluding real estate.

Direct farm ownership loans can be used to purchase farmland, enlarge an existing farm, construct and repair buildings, and to make farm improvements.

The maximum loan amount for both direct farm ownership and operating loans is \$300,000 and a down payment is not required. Repayment terms vary depending on the type of loan, collateral and the producer's ability to repay the loan. Operating loans are normally repaid within seven years and farm ownership loans are not to exceed 40 years.

Please contact your local FSA office for more information or to apply for a direct farm ownership or operating loan.

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## **Guaranteed Loan Program**

FSA guaranteed loans allow lenders to provide agricultural credit to farmers who do not meet the lender's normal underwriting criteria. Farmers and ranchers apply for a guaranteed loan through a lender, and the lender arranges for the guarantee. FSA can guarantee up to 95 percent of the loss of principal and interest on a loan. Guaranteed loans can be used for both farm ownership and operating purposes.

Guaranteed farm ownership loans can be used to purchase farmland, construct or repair buildings, develop farmland to promote soil and water conservation or to refinance debt.

Guaranteed operating loans can be used to purchase livestock, farm equipment, feed, seed, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance and other operating expenses.

FSA can guarantee farm ownership and operating loans up to \$1,392,000. Repayment terms vary depending on the type of loan, collateral and the producer's ability to repay the loan. Operating loans are normally repaid within seven years and farm ownership loans are not to exceed 40 years.

Please contact your lender or local FSA farm loan office for more information on guaranteed loans.

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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).