

January 2018



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

# NEWSLETTER

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## Virginia FSA State Newsletter

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**Virginia FSA  
State Office**

**Nivin A. Elgohary**  
State Executive Director

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Richmond, VA 23229

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### **State Executive Director Message**

#### **USDA Offers Farmers and Ranchers Immediate Disaster Assistance for Extreme Cold**

Farm Service Agency Stands Ready in the most effective, most efficient and be managed way to Assist Agricultural Producers Slammed by Recent Extreme Cold.

Good day and happy New Year. As we begin our year together. I hope to have a minute of your time each month to share some highlights for Farm Service Agency (FSA) – Virginia. Thanks for the opportunity to serve Virginia's farmers and ranchers.

**Hours**

Monday - Friday  
7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**State Office Staff**

Pete Adamson  
Chief Farm Loans

Brent L. Whitlock  
Chief Farm Programs

Connie Washburn-Marsh  
Chief Administration Officer

Diane Lenoir-Giles  
Public Relations/Outreach  
Specialist

**Virginia FSA Internet**

More Information about  
Virginia FSA programs,  
activities and news can be  
found on the VA FSA Internet  
at

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/va>

To learn more about FSA  
programs you can also visit  
the National website at  
<http://www.fsa.usda.gov>

Mother Nature has provided Virginia extreme cold and snow in some parts of the state. I would like to remind our farmers and ranchers that (FSA) provides assistance through federal farm program benefits that may be available to help eligible producers' due to the extreme cold and snow. I encourage you to reach out to your county office and discuss this with our team.

FSA offers disaster assistance to assist agricultural producers adversely affected by the natural disaster conditions. Available programs include:

- **Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)** - nursery tree growers for qualifying tree, shrub and vine losses due to natural disaster.
- **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
- **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.

For more information on disaster assistance programs and loans visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/or](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/or) contact your local FSA Office. To find your local FSA county office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>

**Text Messages: Great Tool for Communications: Fast, Fiery and Fun.**

GovDelivery SMS alert feature provides FSA stakeholders critical, time- sensitive updates that will reach you wherever you may be.

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## Deadlines Approaching for FSA Livestock Disaster Assistance Programs

Livestock producers are reminded that deadlines for the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) and the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) are quickly approaching.

The deadline to apply for LFP benefits for 2017 grazing losses is Jan. 30, 2018. Eligible livestock producers must complete a CCC-853 and submit the required supporting documentation by the deadline. LFP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who suffer grazing losses for covered livestock due to drought on privately owned or cash leased land or fire on federally managed land.

Producers with eligible livestock losses must submit a LIP application for payment by March 31, 2018. 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.

For 2017, eligible LIP losses must occur on or after Jan. 1, 2017, and no later than 60 calendar days from the ending date of the applicable adverse weather event or attack. 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 90 calendar days after the end of the calendar year in which the eligible loss condition occurred.

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

Please contact to your local FSA office to make an appointment to apply for LFP or LIP benefits.

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## **The Census of Agriculture is a Producer's Voice, Future, and Opportunity.**

In December farmers and ranchers across the nation received the 2017 Census of Agriculture. Producers can mail in their completed census form, or respond online via the improved web questionnaire. The online questionnaire has been revised extensively to make it more convenient for producers.

Conducted once every five years, the census of agriculture is a complete count of all U.S. farms, ranches, and those who operate them; it is the only source of uniform, comprehensive, and impartial agriculture data for every state and county in the nation.

Farmers and ranchers, trade associations, government, extension educators, researchers, and many others rely on census of agriculture data when making decisions that shape American agriculture – from creating and funding farm programs to boosting services for communities and the industry. The census of agriculture is a producer's voice, future, and opportunity.

For more information about the 2017 Census of Agriculture, visit [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov) or call (800) 727-9540.

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## **Annual Review of Payment Eligibility for New Crop Year**

All participants of FSA programs who request program benefits are required to submit a completed CCC-902 (Farming Operation Plan) and CCC-941 Average Gross Income (AGI) Certification and Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information to be considered for payment eligibility and payment limitation applicable for the program benefits.

Participants are not required to annually submit new CCC-902s for payment eligibility and payment limitation purposes unless a change in the farming operation occurs that may affect the determination of record. A valid CCC-902 filed by the participant is considered to be a continuous

certification used for all payment eligibility and payment limitation determinations applicable for the program benefits requested.

Participants are responsible for ensuring that all CCC-902 and CCC-941 and related forms on file in the county Office are correct at all times. Participants are required to timely notify the county office of any changes in the farming operation that may affect the determination of record by filing a new or updated CCC-902 as applicable.

Changes that may require a NEW determination include, but are not limited to, a change of:

- Shares of a contract, which may reflect:
  - A land lease from cash rent to share rent
  - A land lease from share rent to cash rent (subject to the cash rent tenant rule)
  - A modification of a variable/fixed bushel-rent arrangement
- The size of the producer's farming operation by the addition or reduction of cropland that may affect the application of a cropland factor
- The structure of the farming operation, including any change to a member's share
- The contribution of farm inputs of capital, land, equipment, active personal labor, and/or active personal management
- Farming interests not previously disclosed on CCC-902 including the farming interests of a spouse or minor child
- Financial status that may affect the 3-year average for the determination of average AGI or other changes that affects eligibility under the average adjusted gross income limitations.

Participants are encouraged to file or review these forms within the deadlines established for each applicable program for which program benefits are being requested.

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## **2018 Wheat, Small Grains, Fruit and Grape Acreage Reporting Date Deadline is January 16**

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.

Acreage reporting dates vary by crop and by county so please contact your local FSA office for a list of county-specific deadlines. The 2018 Wheat, Small Grains, Fruit and Grapes Acreage Reporting Dates Deadline is January 16, 2018.

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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## 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 Oct. 1, 2017 to Sept. 30, 2018 must file:

- A notice of loss the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent or by Nov. 1, 2018
- An application for payment by Nov. 1, 2018

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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## Foreign Buyers Notification

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. Foreign persons who have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA within 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, realtors, attorneys and

others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

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## Communication is Key in Lending

Farm Service Agency (FSA) is committed to providing our farm loan borrowers the tools necessary to be a success. A part of ensuring this success is providing guidance and counsel from the loan application process through the borrower's graduation to commercial lending institutions. While it is FSA's commitment to advise borrowers as they identify goals and evaluate progress, it is crucial for borrowers to communicate with their farm loan staff when changes occur. It is the borrower's responsibility to alert FSA to any of the following:

- Any proposed or significant changes in the farming operation;
- Any significant changes to family income or expenses;
- The development of problem situations;
- Any losses or proposed significant changes in security. In addition, if a farm loan borrower cannot make payments to suppliers, other creditors, or FSA on time, contact your farm loan staff immediately to discuss loan servicing options. For more information on FSA farm loan programs, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

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## Preauthorized Debit Available for Farm Loan Borrowers

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) has implemented pre-authorized debit (PAD) for Farm Loan Program (FLP) borrowers. PAD is a voluntary and alternative method for making weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual payments on loans.

PAD payments are pre authorized transactions that allow the National Financial and Accounting Operations Center (NFAOC) to electronically collect loan payments from a customer's account at a financial institution.

PAD may be useful for borrowers who use nonfarm income from regular wages or salary to make payments on loans or adjustment offers or for payments from seasonal produce stands. PAD can only be established for future payments.

To request PAD, customers, along with their financial institution, must fill out form RD 3550-28. This form has no expiration date, but a separate form RD 3550-28 must be completed for each loan to which payments are to be applied. A fillable form can be accessed on the USDA Rural Development (RD) website at <http://www.rd.usda.gov/publications/regulations-guidelines>. Click forms and search for "Form 3550-28."

If you have a "filter" on the account at your financial institution, you will need to provide the financial institution with the following information: Origination ID: 1220040804, Agency Name: USDA RD DCFO.

PAD is offered by FSA at no cost. Check with your financial institution to discuss any potential cost. Preauthorized debit has no expiration date, but you can cancel at any time by submitting a written request to your local FSA office. If a preauthorized debit agreement receives three payment rejections within a three month period, the preauthorized debt agreement will be cancelled by FSA. The payment amount and due date of your loan is not affected by a cancellation of preauthorized debit. You are responsible to ensure your full payment is made by the due date.

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## Selected Interest Rates for January 2018

90-Day Treasury Bill - 1.25%  
Farm Operating Loans — Direct - 3.0%  
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct - 3.75%  
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher - 1.5%  
Emergency Loans - 3.75%  
Farm Storage Facility Loans (3 years) - 1.875%  
Farm Storage Facility Loans (5 years) - 2.125%  
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years) - 2.250%  
Farm Storage Facility Loans (10 years) - 2.375%  
Farm Storage Facility Loans (12 years) - 2.375%  
Commodity Loans 1996-Present - 2.625%

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## Dates to Remember

Jan. 15:  
USDA Offices are closed.

Jan. 16:  
Deadline to report your 2018 planted acreage of small grains, wheat, fruit trees, bushes, and vines.

Jan. 30:  
Deadline to submit 2017 LIP applications and supporting documentation.

Jan. 31:  
Deadline to request 2017 crop peanut Marketing Assistance Loans.

Feb. 15:  
Deadline for 2018 NAP coverage enrollment and fee for forage, grazed and vegetable crops.

Continuous:  
Submit CREP and Grassland CRP Enrollment Offers.

Continuous:  
Submit your AD-1026 prior to forest land being cleared for agricultural use and new ground (hay and pasture) to be planted to a row crop or vegetable.

Continuous:  
Need on farm grain, hay or cold storage, consider FSFL for your storage needs. Contact your local FSA Office for more details.

Continuous:  
Have harvested 2017 grain, cotton or peanuts and in storage, FSA offers marketing assistance loans (MAL) for these stored crops. Contact your local FSA Office for more details.

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For more information on bulletin subjects or details regarding your GovDelivery subscription with the Virginia FSA State Office, contact Diane Lenoir-Giles at [diane.lenoir-giles@va.usda.gov](mailto:diane.lenoir-giles@va.usda.gov) or call at 804-287-1537.

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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).