

April 2019



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

# NEWSLETTER

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## Washington State FSA Newsletter

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### Washington State Farm Service Agency

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**State Executive Director:**  
Brian Dansel

**State Committee:**  
Melanie Wyss, Chair

### Report Damage or Loss of NAP Covered Crop Acres

As winter weather comes to an end with perennial and fall planted crops emerging from dormancy, remember that any damage to or loss of Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) covered crops must be reported to your county FSA office. NAP notice of loss must be filed for weather-related disaster events or adverse natural occurrences that cause damage to or loss of the NAP covered crop by the earlier of either of the following:

- 15 calendar days after the disaster occurrence or date of loss or damage to the crop or commodity first becomes apparent
- 15 calendar days after the normal harvest date.

When a NAP covered crop is lost or significant damage occurs, reseed or replanting to the same crop is required if it is feasible to reseed or replant by the final plant date for the crop. When you decide the NAP covered crop will be destroyed, abandoned, or not

Jesus Limon, Member  
Maureen Harkcom, Member  
Robyn Meenach, Member  
Bruce Nelson, Member

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taken to harvest as intended, you must report this to your county FSA office so a field visit can be conducted by a certified loss adjuster. Once the crop appraisal has been completed, the loss adjuster will release the field and you can destroy the covered crop acres, replant to a different crop, or harvest the acres for a different use.

Keep in mind that failure to timely notify your FSA county office of crop damage or loss of NAP covered acres will result in denial of NAP payment benefits. Destroying NAP covered crop acres or harvesting for a different use without a loss adjuster appraisal will result in those acres being determined ineligible for NAP payment benefits.

If you have any questions about NAP policy requirements, contact your local county FSA office for more information.

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## Timely Reporting Your Crops and Losses

As the lingering snow now begins to make its exit, spring planting season is fast approaching. Producers are reminded that requests for failed or prevented planted acreage must be timely filed to be acted on and approved by your County Committee (COC).

Failed acreage is acreage that was timely planted with the intent to harvest, but because of disaster related conditions, the crop failed before it could be brought to harvest. There is an expectation that acreage planted to a crop be replanted if the failure occurs prior to the final planting date established for the crop. Although FSA requires producers to report crops by type and variety, we do not differentiate between fall and spring planted varieties as they relate to crop failure. Producers provided their fall planted acreage last December. If you experience winter damage and will be reseeding this spring, you must file a Notice of Loss with FSA before the disposition of the crop to have the request considered timely filed. If you have winter endorsement insurance policy on your fall planted crops, you will also need to ensure you timely file your claim with your agent.

Prevented planted credit is also available when there is an inability to plant the intended crop acreage by the final planting date for the crop type because of a natural disaster. Our most common instances are when areas do not dry sufficiently to allow the planting of the desired crop. To be eligible for prevented planting credit, producers must file a Notice of Loss within 15 calendar days after the final planting date for the specific crop. Your Notice of Loss will need to include evidence of the intent to plant the crop.

Failure to timely file a Notice of Loss for "Failed" or "Prevented Planted" crops will require a field visit by FSA to verify the loss condition. FSA field visits are not free and require producer to pay the costs of a visit up front, and to request consideration by the

COC. In some instances, FSA can use Risk Management Agency information to support your loss claim, however these claims are not always processed in time for the COC to review the information before rendering a determination.

Producers are reminded that acreage reports for spring planted crops can be filed anytime after the crop has been planted. We encourage you to make an appointment with your County FSA Office upon completion of your planting. Being early helps to eliminate confusion and ensures your program compliance requirements are met.

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## Continuous HELC/WC Certification

Producers who request certain USDA program benefits are required to maintain their certification of compliance with Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation provisions (HELC/WC). This certification is made using form AD-1026 and is required for each person or entity and their associated affiliates. Certification on AD-1026 is a continuous certification that will be effective for the year filed and each subsequent year unless either of the following occurs:

- There are changes or activities that affect compliance with the HELC/WC provisions
- Or you submit a written request to withdraw your certification.

If a previously filed form is no longer effective, a new AD-1026 must be filed to regain eligibility. FSA has identified several instances where producers have reported the planting of an agricultural commodity on fields that do not have a current HEL determination. Operators on these identified farms will be contacted and asked to update their certification and make a request to have the Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS) provide a new determination on the land. If you receive one of these notifications, please work with the County Office to get your certification updated promptly to ensure continued eligibility for USDA programs.

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## Tree Assistance Program

The Tree Assistance Program (TAP) provides disaster assistance to eligible orchardist and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate trees, bushes, and vines that are lost because of an eligible natural disaster. TAP applies to orchardists and nursery tree growers who commercially raise perennial trees for production of an annual crop and sustain tree deaths in excess of 15 percent after an adjustment for normal mortality. To be eligible for TAP, the eligible trees, bushes, or vines must have been directly affected by an eligible natural disaster.

To be eligible for assistance, the trees must but be determined either dead, or no longer commercially viable. This requires that FSA make a site visit to verify the cause of loss and to determine the eligible trees for assistance. Trees affected by an approved plant disease can be included as an eligible loss if the production from those trees, vines or bushes are no longer economically viable.

The Washington State FSA Committee must review and approve each plant disease as an eligible loss condition. Fire Blight and Cherry Leaf Roll Virus have been eligible, and they recently approved Little Cherry Disease. Producers claiming losses to plant disease are must provide the

County Committee with supporting documentation in support of their claimed loss. Recognize pathogenic test results providing the specific pathogen infecting the trees must be provided. The number of tests performed in a block or stand must be sufficient to support the number of trees claimed lost. Producers must also provide block production records to support that the affected trees are no longer economically viable.

Because Little Cherry Disease is only visual during the fruit set, it is important for producers to flag infected trees to allow Loss Adjusters the ability to properly assess your losses. Trees removed prior to being assessed by FSA are not eligible for assistance.

TAP is a cost-share program which reimburses producers once all replanting has been completed and proper receipts and costs have been provided and approved. Producer must complete replanting and provide receipts to the County Office within one year of application approval. Producers are not required to replace trees with the same type or variety, however trees must be replaced with trees, and vines with vines. In other words, you could replace cherries with apples, but grapes would not be an eligible replacement crop. You are also not required replant in the same location so if you are required to fumigate prior to planting the planting could occur in a different location within your orchard.

Producer wishing to make application for the Tree Assistance Program must do so within 90 days of when the loss becomes apparent. Please contact your local County FSA office with any questions or to file an application for assistance.

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## The Farm Service Agency is Hiring!

The Farm Service Agency is hiring for multiple positions in Washington. The agency is looking for qualified applicants who are interested in living in rural communities and assisting farmers and ranchers. These are amazing opportunities to enter the Federal workforce, which offers excellent benefits.

The following Farm Loan Officer Trainee position is currently available:

Loan Assistant/Specialist (Agricultural) – Spokane, WA.

Vacancy: FSA-19-10454090-PW-WA-TS

Opens: March 29, 2019

Closes: April 10, 2019

Area of consideration: Open to Recent graduates from a qualifying educational institution having completed an academic program within the preceding two years OR will be receiving a degree or certificate within 120 days of closing date of the announcement. Note: Veterans who were precluded by their military service obligation from meeting this requirement will have up to six years to apply.

The full announcement is available in USAJOBS at the following link:

<https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/528960900>

Please contact Mitzi Stephens at the FSA State Office at [mitzi.stephens@wa.usda.gov](mailto:mitzi.stephens@wa.usda.gov) or (509) 323-3007 with any questions.

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## Important Dates and Deadlines

**April 1, 2019** – Beginning of the Primary Nesting Season for CRP. Activities on established CRP stands are prohibited April 1 through July 1 unless specifically authorized by FSA on a contract by contract basis. This restriction does not apply to contracts where the cover is being established at this time.

**May 1, 2019** - Last day to certify production for MFP.

**May 31, 2019** – Final date to request 2018 crop Marketing Assistance Loan (MAL) or LDP for dry peas, lentils, chickpeas, corn, grain sorghum, mustard seed, safflower seed, sunflower seeds, and soybeans.

**July 15, 2019** – Production reporting deadline for 2018 NAP covered grass seeds, forages, and annually planted spring crops for actual production history (APH) purposes.

**July 15, 2019** -- Final Acreage Reporting date for all crops not previously reported.

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