

May 2016



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## Wisconsin FSA Newsletter

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### Wisconsin Farm Service Agency

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To find contact information  
for your local office go to  
<http://offices.usda.gov>

### State Director Greetings

The 2016 crop season is well underway in Wisconsin. I love seeing perfectly tilled and planted fields on my drives throughout the state. In addition to this being a sign of spring, it is also a sign that many farmers throughout the state are putting in long hours to make sure the job gets done.

These long hours create an amazing agriculture industry here in Wisconsin. Our state is home to 68,900 farm operations covering 14.4 million acres. We are in the top ten of all states in production of vegetables, fruits, Christmas Trees, milk, forage, and corn silage. The state has amazing diversity in agriculture and you can see that at local farmers markets, roadside stands, and even local grocery stores.

Long hours along with the current market conditions can create perfect conditions for high amounts of stress and anxiety. I want to remind everyone of a few signs to watch for and resources available.

It is important for family, friends, and neighbors to be aware of the signs that someone may be under severe stress and in need of assistance. Some symptoms of stress are:

- Change in routines
- Increase in illness
- Appearance of the farm or ranch declines
- Care of livestock declines
- Increase in injuries
- Children show signs of stress

As a friend, neighbor, or family member, you can help by putting the stressed family in touch with professionals who are trained to provide assistance. The Wisconsin Farm Center is a great resource for all Wisconsin residents. They are able to assist with financial and legal counseling, farm transfers and a number of other things. The Farm Center hotline is 1-800-942-2474 and hours are 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Wisconsin also operates a call center called 211 Wisconsin. By dialing 2-1-1 on any phone in Wisconsin, you will be connected to a hotline that can assist with information related to assistance for food, housing and shelter, education, legal advice, emergencies, physical and mental health issues, financial assistance, transportation, and state agency and program information. The service is provided at no charge to the caller.

I, along with all the employees at the Wisconsin Farm Service Agency, want to see you all have a healthy, happy, and productive year. Please take time for yourself and reach out to the many available resources if you need them.

Stay safe everyone,  
Patty Edelburg

\*information gathered from <http://fyi.uwex.edu/drought2012/files/2013/04/Stress-Depression-in-Farm-or-Ranch-Families-R-Williams.pdf>

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## Deadlines to Remember

### May 31, 2016

Last day to obtain a Marketing Assistance Loan on 2015 small grain crops.

### June 15-August 1, 2016

County Committee Election Nomination period for Local Administrative Area up for election. Individuals can nominate themselves or others.

### July 15, 2016

Acreage reporting deadline for spring-seeded crops; including soybeans, dark red kidney beans, light red kidney beans, forage seeding, and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres

### August 1, 2016

Agriculture Risk Coverage Price Loss Coverage (ARCPLC) enrollment deadline for 2016 contracts

### September 1, 2016

Application deadline for Non-insured Assistance Program (NAP) crops (for coverage period beginning October 1, 2016): Flowers, Christmas trees, Fin Fish, Ginseng, Mushrooms, & Turfgrass sod

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## Interested in the County Committee? Free Webinar June 1st at 2:00 p.m.

The Farm Service Agency Outreach and Education Division is hosting a webinar on Wednesday, June 1st at 2:00 p.m. Central time discussing the upcoming County Office Committee (COC) elections.

FSA County Committee members are a critical component of the day-to-day operations of the Farm Service Agency. They help deliver FSA farm programs at the local level. Farmers who serve on committees help decide the kind of programs their counties will offer. In this webinar, you will be shown the importance of county committees, the election process and how you can make a difference by becoming a COC member.

To register for the free webinar, [click here](#) or visit :<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/outreach-and-education/webinars/index>.

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in this webinar should contact Kim Iczkowski at 608-662-4422 x 133 or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 by May 31, 2016.

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## USDA Resumes Incentives to Grow and Harvest Biomass for Energy and Biobased Products

Farm Service Agency (FSA) has announced that incentives resume this month for farmers and foresters who grow and harvest biomass for renewable energy and biobased products. The funds come through the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP), which was reauthorized in the 2014 Farm Bill.

Facilities seeking to be qualified by USDA to accept biomass can begin enrollment between today, May 23, and June 6, 2016. BCAP provides financial assistance to farmers and ranchers who establish and maintain new crops of energy biomass, or who harvest and deliver forest or agricultural residues to a USDA-approved facility that creates energy or biobased products.

In fiscal year 2016, there is \$3 million available for BCAP. A portion of the funds will be provided to two existing BCAP projects in New York and Ohio/Pennsylvania to expand acres planted to shrub willow and giant miscanthus. Farmers and forest landowners may enroll for biomass establishment and maintenance payments for these two projects between June 15 and Sept. 13, 2016.

Also, between June 15 to Aug. 4, 2016, USDA will accept applications from foresters and farmers seeking incentives to remove biomass residues from fields or national forests for delivery to energy generation facilities. The retrieval payments are provided at match of \$1 for \$1, up to \$20 per dry ton. Eligible crops include corn residue, diseased or insect-infested wood materials, or orchard waste.

To learn more about BCAP or to enroll in updates, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/bcap](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/bcap) or contact your local FSA county office. To find your local county office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

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## USDA Packages Disaster Protection with Loans to Benefit Specialty Crop and Diversified Producers

Producers who apply for FSA farm loans will be offered the opportunity to enroll in new disaster loss protections created by the 2014 Farm Bill. The new coverage, available from the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), is available to FSA loan applicants who grow non-insurable crops, so this is especially important to fruit and vegetable producers and other specialty crop growers.

New, underserved and limited income specialty growers who apply for farm loans could qualify for basic loss coverage at no cost, or higher coverage for a discounted premium.

The basic disaster coverage protects at 55 percent of the market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of production. Covered crops include “specialty” crops, for instance, vegetables, fruits, mushrooms, floriculture, ornamental nursery, aquaculture, turf grass, ginseng, honey, syrup, hay, forage, grazing and energy crops. FSA allows beginning, underserved or limited income producers to obtain NAP coverage up to 90 days after the normal application closing date when they also apply for FSA credit.

In addition to free basic coverage, beginning, underserved or limited income producers are eligible for a 50 percent discount on premiums for the higher levels of coverage that protect up to 65 percent of expected production at 100 percent of the average market price. Producers also may work with FSA to protect value-added production, such as organic or direct market crops, at their fair market value in those markets. Targeted underserved groups eligible for free or discounted coverage are American Indians or Alaskan Natives, Asians, Blacks or African Americans, Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, and women.

FSA offers a variety of loan products, including farm ownership loans, operating loans and microloans that have a streamlined application process.

Growers need not apply for an FSA loan, nor be a beginning, limited resource, or underserved farmer, to be eligible for Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program assistance. To learn more, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/nap](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/nap) or [www.fsa.usda.gov/farmloans](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/farmloans), or contact your local FSA office at <https://offices.usda.gov>.

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# USDA Offers New Loans for Portable Farm Storage and Handling Equipment

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will provide a new financing option to help farmers purchase portable storage and handling equipment. The loans, which now include a smaller microloan option with lower down payments, are designed to help producers, including new, small and mid-sized producers, grow their businesses and markets.

The program also offers a new "microloan" option, which allows applicants seeking less than \$50,000 to qualify for a reduced down payment of five percent and no requirement to provide three years of production history. Farms and ranches of all sizes are eligible. The microloan option is expected to be of particular benefit to smaller farms and ranches, and specialty crop producers who may not have access to commercial storage or on-farm storage after harvest. These producers can invest in equipment like conveyers, scales or refrigeration units and trucks that can store commodities before delivering them to markets. Producers do not need to demonstrate the lack of commercial credit availability to apply.

Earlier this year, FSA significantly expanded the list of commodities eligible for Farm Storage Facility Loan. Eligible commodities now include aquaculture; floriculture; fruits (including nuts) and vegetables; corn, grain sorghum, rice, oilseeds, oats, wheat, triticale, spelt, buckwheat, lentils, chickpeas, dry peas sugar, peanuts, barley, rye, hay, honey, hops, maple sap, unprocessed meat and poultry, eggs, milk, cheese, butter, yogurt and renewable biomass. FSFL microloans can also be used to finance wash and pack equipment used post-harvest, before a commodity is placed in cold storage.

To learn more about Farm Storage Facility Loans, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport) or contact a local FSA county office. To find your local FSA county office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

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