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December 2018



Farm Service Agency Electronic News Service

# NEWSLETTER

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## Wisconsin FSA Newsletter

### Wisconsin Farm Service Agency

8030 Excelsior Dr.  
Suite 100  
Madison, WI 53717

Phone: 608-662-4422  
Fax: 855-758-0755

**State Executive Director:**  
Sandy Chalmers

**Farm Loan Chief:**  
Tom Brandt

**Farm Program Chiefs:**  
Greg Biba  
John Palmer

**State Committee:**  
Lisa Condon, Chair  
Thomas Gillis  
David Heideman  
Tom McClellan

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

### A Message from the SED

As harvest winds down, many of you are starting to make arrangements for the next crop year. Changes to your farming operation are an important part of your FSA farm records, because the changes can impact your eligibility for some programs. For example, if you recently bought or sold land, or if you picked up or dropped rented land from your operation, see your local FSA office to report the changes. Reporting the changes now can save you time next spring.

We're ready to discuss your credit needs with you, as well. Whether you obtain credit through a direct or guaranteed loan, it's good to start the planning process early. FSA offers operating and ownership loans, as well as opportunities specially targeted to beginning farmers. Our loan staff will help you determine which are the best loan options for you and your operation.

Our FSA offices continue to be busy with signup for the Market Facilitation Program (MFP). Remember that the signup deadline is January 15, 2019, even though you have until May to certify your production totals.

On behalf of the Wisconsin FSA team, it has been an honor to serve you this year. Best wishes for a blessed holiday season!

Sandy Chalmers

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## Dates to Remember

**December 3, 2018:** Final date to submit Notice of Loss, Application for Payment and supporting documentation for [2017 AND 2018 ELAP losses](#)

**December 3, 2018:** Final date to submit Notice of Loss for [2018 LIP losses](#) (or within 30 calendar days of when the loss is first apparent, whichever is later)

**December 3, 2018:** Final date to return [COC election](#) ballots to the USDA Service Center

**DECEMBER 5, 2018:** *Service Centers closed in observance of National Day of Mourning for 41st President, George H.W. Bush.*

**December 25, 2018:** USDA Service Centers Closed

**January 1, 2019:** USDA Service Centers Closed

**January 2, 2019:** [Acreage reporting](#) deadline for 2019 Honeybee colonies (hives)

**January 15, 2019:** [Acreage reporting](#) deadline for 2019 crops including apples, caneberries, cherries, cranberries, currants, grapes, hops, maple sap, pears, and strawberries

**January 15, 2019:** Final date to sign and submit part D of the CCC-910 application for the [Market Facilitation Program \(MFP\)](#)

**January 21, 2019:** USDA Service Centers Closed

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## USDA's Market Facilitation Program Underway

USDA launched the trade mitigation package aimed at assisting farmers suffering from damage due to unjustified trade retaliation by foreign nations. Producers of certain commodities can now sign up for the Market Facilitation Program (MFP).

USDA [provided details in August](#) of the programs to be employed. USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will administer the Market Facilitation Program (MFP) to provide payments to almond, cherry, corn, cotton, dairy, hog, sorghum, soybean, and wheat producers. An announcement about further payments will be made in the coming months, if warranted. USDA is currently working to determine how to address market disruptions for producers of almonds and sweet cherries.

The sign-up period for MFP is now open and runs through Jan. 15, 2019, with information and instructions provided at [www.farmers.gov/mfp](http://www.farmers.gov/mfp). MFP provides payments to almonds, cherries, cotton, corn, dairy, hog, sorghum, soybean, and wheat producers who have been significantly impacted by actions of foreign governments resulting in the loss of traditional exports. Eligible producers should apply after harvest is complete, as payments will only be issued once production is reported.

A payment will be issued on 50 percent of the producer's total production, multiplied by the MFP rate for a specific commodity. A second payment period, if warranted, will be determined by the USDA.

## USDA's Market Facilitation Program Underway (continued)

### Market Facilitation Program

Commodity	Initial Payment Rate
Cotton	\$0.06/lb.
Corn	\$0.01/bu.
Dairy (milk)	\$0.12/cwt.
Fresh Sweet Cherries	\$0.16/lb.
Pork (hogs)	\$8.00/head
Shelled Almonds	\$0.03/lb.
Soybeans	\$1.65/bu.
Sorghum	\$0.86/bu.
Wheat	\$0.14/bu.

\*\*Initial payment rate on 50% of production

MFP payments are limited to a combined \$125,000 for corn, cotton, sorghum, soybeans, and wheat capped per person or legal entity. MFP payments are also limited to a combined \$125,000 for dairy and hog producers. Applicants must also have an average adjusted gross income for tax years 2014, 2015, and 2016 of less than \$900,000. Applicants must also comply with the provisions of the Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation regulations.

For more further information or to locate and contact local FSA offices, interested producers can visit [www.farmers.gov](http://www.farmers.gov)

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## Sign in/Sign up!

Farmers, ranchers and agricultural producers have new online options to access U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs. Through USDA's new streamlined process, producers doing business as an individual can now register, track and manage their applications for the Market Facilitation Program (MFP) and 2017 Wildfires and Hurricanes Indemnity Program (2017 WHIP) on the secure and convenient [www.farmers.gov](http://www.farmers.gov). USDA eAuthentication does not have the mechanism to issue login accounts to businesses, corporations, other entities, or for anyone acting on behalf of another individual or entity. Producers, doing business as an individual, first need to sign up for Level 2 eAuthentication access.

- Step 1: Create an online account at [www.eauth.usda.gov](http://www.eauth.usda.gov)
- Step 2: Complete identity verification by either using the online self-service identity verification method or by completing the identity verification in-person at your USDA Service Center.
- Step 3: Contact your local USDA Service Center to have your new Level 2 account linked with your USDA customer record
- Step 4: You're enrolled and ready to log in

Users with a secure Level 2 eAuthentication ID, linked to their USDA customer record, can apply for select USDA programs, view and print farm maps and farm records data. Enrolling is easy! Visit [farmers.gov/sign-in](http://farmers.gov/sign-in) to learn more.

To locate a service center near you or use online services not requiring eAuthentication access, visit [www.farmers.gov](http://www.farmers.gov). For technical assistance, call the eAuthentication help desk at 1-800-457-3642.

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## USDA Acreage Reporting Deadline for Perennial Forage Changes to July 15

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) has established a new acreage reporting deadline for perennial forage for 2019 and subsequent years. Previously set in the fall, the new deadline is July 15 for all states, except for Hawaii and Puerto Rico.

Timely and accurate acreage reports for all crops and land uses, including prevented planting or failed acreage, are the foundation for many FSA program benefits, including disaster programs for livestock owners. Producers must report their acreage to maintain program eligibility.

Producers who have coverage for perennial forage under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) must report their crop acreage by the earlier of any of the following:

- the established acreage reporting date (July 15)
- 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific crop acreage being reported
- the established normal harvest date for the end of the coverage period

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## Resilient Farms Conference Will Help Farmers Explore Ideas for Creating New Revenue

Faced with lower milk and commodity prices, many Wisconsin farmers are looking to diversify and add new revenue streams. The University of Wisconsin-Extension will be co-hosting a one-day conference on Tuesday, Dec. 11 at the Wilderness Resort in Wisconsin Dells to provide producers an opportunity to explore ideas for creating new revenue.

At the conference, farmers can attend any of the two dozen scheduled sessions to gather information, resources, and tools that can help them explore various options. About 20 industry experts, including many farmers who have successfully implemented alternative enterprises, will also be available for one-on-one consultations.

Session topics will include value-added production ideas, marketing and business strategies, business planning and analysis, and guides to regulatory and licensing processes.

The December 11 conference is scheduled from 8:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. at the Wilderness Resort. The registration fee is \$20, which includes lunch. To register or for more information, go to: [Resilient Farms Conference](#) or find Resilient Farms Conference on the [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com) registration site.

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## Wisconsin Farm Center Offers Assistance to FSA Customers

Many farmers balance the needs of their family and farm above everything else, often ignoring their own needs. As farmers continue to endure an extended period of tough economic conditions, the Wisconsin Farm Service Agency wants to remind farmers and landowners that help is available.

The **Wisconsin Farm Center** at the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) is there for farmers to call for guidance on finances, farm succession planning, and other issues they may be dealing with. Farm Center staff work with farmers and their families one-on-one to address each personal situation. All services are **free and confidential**.

## Wisconsin Farm Center Offers Assistance to FSA Customers (continued)

Farmers, whether beginning their career or nearing retirement, can experience challenging situations. Staff are able to walk through options with farmers about how to navigate difficult personal or financial situations. While at times, alternatives may seem very limited, sometimes an outside perspective can help bring light to possibilities.

Just as taking care of physical health is important, so is taking care of mental health. Those in need are encouraged to reach out for help and utilize available resources by calling the Wisconsin Farm Center at 800-942-2474. Staff are available Monday through Friday from 7:45 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

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### Financial Hardship and Loan Servicing

Many farm loan borrowers' payments are due on Jan. 1. FSA expects and encourages prompt payment. However, for borrowers who cannot make their payments due to adversity such as a natural disaster or production difficulties beyond their control, FSA is committed to providing our farm loan borrowers with the tools necessary to be successful. A part of ensuring this success is providing guidance and counsel from loan or loan servicing application, through the term of your loan, and after. In order for FSA to help, you must alert your local FSA office 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

There are options for FSA loan customers during financial stress. If you are a borrower who is unable to make payments on a loan, contact your local FSA Service Center to learn about the options available to you.

If past due on payments, FSA will notify you of your options with a Notice of Availability of Loan Servicing. Please pay special attention to this notice as it provides you with your options for FSA servicing programs and outlines specific deadlines that you must meet. Failure to meet these statutory deadlines may significantly limit your options and FSA's ability to help address your farm's financial difficulties.

For more information on FSA farm loan programs, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov). Please contact your local FSA Service Center if you have any questions or would like to schedule an appointment to meet with the loan staff to discuss your options

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## Current Interest Rates

\*Interest rates are announced at the beginning of each month.

[Click here to find notification of current FSFL and commodity loan interest rates.](#)

[Click here to view current Farm Loan interest rates.](#)

<b>Farm Loan Interest Rates</b>	<b>DECEMBER 2018</b>
Farm Operating- Direct	4.000%
Farm Operating- Microloan	4.000%
Farm Ownership- Direct	4.250%
Farm Ownership- Microloan	4.250%
Farm Ownership- Direct, Joint Financing	2.500%
Farm Ownership- Down Payment	1.500%
Emergency Loan- Amount of Actual Loss	3.750%

<b>Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL)</b>	<b>DECEMBER 2018</b>
3 year FSFL	2.875%
5 year FSFL	3.000%
7 year FSFL	3.125%
10 year FSFL	3.125%
12 year FSFL	3.125%

<b>9-Month Commodity Loans</b>	<b>DECEMBER 2018</b>
Marketing Assistance Loan	3.750%

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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).