

September 2018



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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Wisconsin FSA Newsletter

Wisconsin Farm Service Agency **A Message from Sandy Chalmers**

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State Executive Director:
Sandy Chalmers

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First, our hearts go out to those of you who are suffering from the record-setting floods in western and central Wisconsin. As I write this, emergency response is underway, and more rain is in the forecast. Please remember to report weather-related losses and damage to your county FSA office. Your reports are used as the basis for a potential disaster designation. Your FSA staff will also have information on eligibility for disaster programs, including programs designed to offset livestock and feed losses. Program information is also available on farmers.gov/recover.

Signup will begin for the Market Facilitation Program on September 4. MFP will provide payments to eligible producers of commodities impacted by unjustified retaliatory tariffs, including dairy, hogs, corn, soybeans, and wheat. Producers must have completed harvest on a commodity before a payment will be issued.

Some of you may want to wait until all crops are harvested to visit your FSA office. If you want to come in earlier for your payment on dairy, hogs, and wheat, we will be ready to take your application

State Committee:

Lisa Condon, Chair
Thomas Gillis
David Heideman
Tom McClellan

www.fsa.usda.gov/wi

and issue your payment. We'll issue another payment to you when your corn and bean harvest is wrapped up. Either way, we expect high interest in this program, so it's always best to call ahead and make an appointment.

MFP details are available on farmers.gov/mfp or at your local FSA office.

Sandy Chalmers
State Executive Director

Dates to Remember

September 1, 2018: [Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program \(NAP\)](#) deadline for 2019 Value Loss Crops including ginseng, turf grass sod, aquaculture, mushrooms, and Christmas trees

September 4, 2018: Signup begins for the [Market Facilitation Program](#) for corn, cotton, sorghum, soybeans, wheat, dairy, and hogs

September 30, 2018: [NAP Application](#) deadline for 2019 crops including alfalfa, birdsfoot trefoil, clover, grasses, mixed forages, rhubarb, rye, triticale, vetch, wheat, and other winter-seeded small grains and perennial forage

November 15, 2018: [Acreage reporting](#) deadline for 2019 crops including fall-seeded crops, perennial forage, fall mint, pasture, rangeland, and forage

Programs Available for Producers Impacted by Flood and Heavy Rains

Wisconsin Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds farmers and ranchers across the state of federal farm program benefits that may be available to help eligible producers recover from recent heavy rains and flooding.

FSA offers disaster assistance and low-interest loan programs to assist agricultural producers in their recovery efforts following floods or similar qualifying natural disasters.

Available programs and loans include:

[Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program \(NAP\)](#) - provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters (includes native grass for grazing). Eligible producers must have purchased NAP coverage for 2018 crops.

[Livestock Indemnity Program \(LIP\)](#) - offers payments to eligible producers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather. Eligible losses may include those determined by FSA to have been caused by hurricanes, floods, blizzards, wildfires, tropical storms, tornadoes lightning, extreme heat, and extreme cold. Producers will be required to provide verifiable documentation of death losses resulting from an eligible adverse weather event and must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent.

Programs Available for Producers Impacted by Flood and Heavy Rains (Continued)

Tree Assistance Program (TAP) – provides assistance to eligible orchardists and 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. ELAP covers physically damaged or destroyed livestock feed that was purchased or mechanically harvested forage or feedstuffs intended for use as feed for the producer's eligible livestock. In order to be considered eligible, harvested forage must be baled; forage that is only cut, raked or windrowed is not eligible. Producers must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent.

ELAP also covers up to 150 lost grazing days in instances when a producer has been forced to remove livestock from a grazing pasture due to floodwaters.

For beekeepers, ELAP covers beehive losses (the physical structure) in instances where the hive has been destroyed by a natural disaster including flooding, high wind, and tornadoes.

Emergency Loan Program – Available to producers with agriculture operations located in a county under a primary or contiguous Secretarial Disaster designation. These low-interest loans help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought or flooding. (**NOTE:** A Secretarial Disaster designation has not been declared as of the writing of this newsletter. Watch local news releases and GovDelivery for future information.)

Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) - provides emergency funding for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate land severely damaged by natural disasters; including fence losses.

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. Farmers also can use another feature to post advertisements for grazing land, specifically ads announcing the availability of grazing land or ads requesting a need for land to graze. For more information visit www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet.

To establish or retain FSA program eligibility, farmers and ranchers must report prevented planting and failed acres (crops and grasses). Prevented planting acreage must be reported on form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date as established by FSA and Risk Management Agency (RMA).

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

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USDA Announces Details of Assistance for Farmers Impacted by Unjustified Retaliation

USDA is taking action to assist farmers in response to trade damage from unjustified retaliation by foreign nations. As [announced last month](#), USDA will authorize up to \$12 billion in programs, consistent with our World Trade Organization obligations.

These programs will assist agricultural producers to meet the costs of disrupted markets:

- USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will administer the Market Facilitation Program (MFP) to provide payments to corn, cotton, dairy, hog, sorghum, soybean, and wheat producers starting Sept. 4, 2018. An announcement about further payments will be made in the coming months, if warranted.
- USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) will administer a Food Purchase and Distribution Program to purchase up to \$1.2 billion in commodities unfairly targeted by unjustified retaliation. USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) will distribute these commodities through nutrition assistance programs, such as The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and child nutrition programs.
- Through the Foreign Agricultural Service's (FAS) Agricultural Trade Promotion Program (ATP), \$200 million will be made available to develop foreign markets for U.S. agricultural products. The program will help U.S. agricultural exporters identify and access new markets and help mitigate the adverse effects of other countries' restrictions.

The Market Facilitation Program is established under the statutory authority of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) and administered by FSA. For each commodity covered, the payment rate will be dependent upon the severity of the trade disruption and the period of adjustment to new trade patterns, based on each producer's actual production.

Interested producers can apply after harvest is 100 percent complete and they can report their total 2018 production. Beginning Sept. 4 of this year, Market Facilitation Program applications will be available online at www.farmers.gov/mfp. Producers will also be able to submit their applications in person, by email, fax or by mail.

For detailed information, including initial payment rates and to view U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue's video message on the Market Facilitation Program, read the full [USDA press release](#).

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FSA Offers Joint Financing Options on Direct Farm Ownership Loans

The USDA Farm Service Agency's (FSA) [Direct Farm Ownership loans](#) are a resource to help farmers and ranchers become owner-operators of family farms, improve and expand current operations, increase agricultural productivity, and assist with land tenure to save farmland for future generations.

Depending on the applicant's needs, there are three types of Direct Farm Ownership Loans: regular, joint financing, and down payment. FSA also offers a [Direct Farm Ownership Microloan](#) option for smaller financial needs up to \$50,000.

Joint financing allows FSA to provide more farmers and ranchers with access to capital. FSA lends up to 50 percent of the total amount financed. A commercial lender, a State program, or the seller of the property being purchased provides the balance of loan funds, with or without an FSA guarantee.

In addition, down payment loans are a type of Farm Ownership loan available to beginning farmers and underserved farmers. Similar to joint financing loans, a participating lender is required. The applicant provides a minimum down payment of 5% and qualifies for more favorable rates and terms.

To be eligible, the operation must be an eligible farm enterprise. Farm Ownership loan funds cannot be used to finance nonfarm enterprises and all applicants must be able to meet general eligibility requirements. Loan applicants are also required to have participated in the business operations of a farm or ranch for at least three years out of the 10 years prior to the date the application is submitted. The applicant must show documentation that their participation in the business operation of the farm or ranch was not solely as a laborer.

The maximum loan amount for any of these Direct Farm Ownership loans is \$300,000.

For more information about FSA Loan programs, contact your local FSA office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov. To find your local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

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Report Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Losses

The Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters including freeze, hail, excessive moisture, excessive wind or hurricanes, flood, excessive heat, and qualifying drought (including native grass for grazing), among others.

Eligible producers must have purchased NAP coverage for 2018 crops. A notice of loss must be filed within 15 calendar days of when the loss is apparent or 15 calendar days after the normal harvest date.

Eligible crops must be commercially produced agricultural commodities for which crop insurance is not available, including perennial grass forage and grazing crops, fruits, vegetables, mushrooms, floriculture, ornamental nursery, aquaculture, turf grass, ginseng, honey, maple sap, bioenergy, and industrial crops.

For more information on NAP, contact your [local FSA office](#) or visit www.fsa.usda.gov/nap.

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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**.

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.

If there is a mental health emergency during non-office hours, they should contact 911 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

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2-1-1 Resources Available in Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Farm Service Agency would like to remind producers of a **free and confidential** resource for all Wisconsin residents. **2-1-1 Wisconsin** is an information helpline and website that links people from all communities and ages to essential health and human services they need, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

2-1-1 provides access to information and resources including utilities assistance, mental health services, financial and tax assistance, and health care information. You can reach the resource by dialing 2-1-1 on your phone from anywhere in Wisconsin or visiting www.211wisconsin.org. From there, residents are linked to information about local resources from both government and nonprofit organizations.

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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.](#)

Farm Loans- SEPTEMBER 2018

Farm Operating- Direct: 3.750%

Farm Operating- Microloan: 3.750%

Farm Ownership- Direct: 4.000%

Farm Ownership- Microloan: 4.000%

Farm Ownership- Direct, Joint Financing: 2.500%

Farm Ownership- Down Payment: 1.50%

Emergency Loan- Amount of Actual Loss: 3.750%

Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL)-AUGUST 2018

***Note-** FSFL and Commodity loan interest rates are not announced until the first of the applicable month. Listed below are interest rates for loans approved in August 2018. Interest rates below are subject to change for September 2018 but give a general idea of the interest rate range.

3-year FSFL: 2.625%

5-year FSFL: 2.750%

7-year FSFL: 2.875%

10-year FSFL: 2.875%

12-year FSFL: 2.875%

9-Month Commodity Loans AUGUST 2018

Marketing Assistance Loan: 3.375%

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).