October 2019

Farm Service Agency Electronic News Service

BULLETIN

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Platte County FSA Updates

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John Watson, Chairperson
Amy Miller, Vice Chairperson
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Message from the CED

As we begin to roll into the colder weather I know many of you are still harvesting. In the office we have started the ARC/PLC election and signup for 2019 & 2020 crop years. Owners must elect which program they wish to enroll in and also have the option to update yields on crops with base acres. See the article below for more information.

If you are an FSA program participant, and live in Local Administrative Area 3, you should be receiving a ballot in early November for the FSA County Committee (COC) election. Please take a moment to fill it out and return it to the office. This year’s candidate in LAA 3 is Charles Maike II.

We continue to work with customers on applications for the 2019 Market Facilitation Program. Thanks to everyone who already has completed the process with office staff. The deadline to enroll in this program is Dec. 6, 2019. We encourage you to call the office to check on your eligibility.

The deadline is Nov. 15 to timely certify with our office any fall-seeded crops, such as wheat. Certification of acres now helps maintain your eligibility in 2020 for important programs, so call to schedule an appointment today.

Additionally, we would like to remind you of the Marketing Assistance Loans (MAL) that are available through our office. These are nine-month loans at a low interest rate that allow you to market your commodity later but get the
Next County Committee Meeting: Dec 5, 2019 @ 9am

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in this meeting should contact Pam Metz at 307-322-4050 extension 2 or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339

money now that will help your cash flow. It’s a fairly easy process that is a good marketing tool for you. If you are interested in a MAL stop by our office for more information. Covered commodities include corn, barley, wheat, and oats.

**Dates to Remember:**

Oct 31, 2019 – Deadline to apply for the 2019 Organic Cost Share program
Nov 11, 2019 - County Office Closed - Veterans Day Holiday
Nov 15, 2019 – Fall crop acreage reporting deadline
Nov 28, 2019 - County Office Closed - Thanksgiving Day Holiday
Dec 1, 2019- 2020 NAP Application for Coverage Deadline for honey, grass and perennial forage
Dec 2, 2019 - Deadline to return County Committee Election Ballots
Dec 6, 2019 - 2019 MFP signup deadline

Best Regards,

Pam Metz, CED

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**USDA Opens 2019 Enrollment for Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs**

Agricultural producers can now enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs, two popular safety net programs, for the 2019 crop year. Interested producers must sign up for either program by March 15, 2020.

The 2018 Farm Bill reauthorized and made updates to these two USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) programs. ARC provides income support payments on historical base acres when actual crop revenue declines below a specified guarantee level. PLC program provides income support payments on historical base acres when the price for a covered commodity falls below its effective reference price.

Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium grain rice (which includes short grain rice), safflower seed, seed cotton, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

Updated provisions in the 2018 Farm Bill allow producers with an interest in a farm to enroll and elect coverage in crop-by-crop ARC-County or PLC, or ARC-Individual for the entire farm, for program year 2019. The election applies to both the 2019 and 2020 crop years. If a 2019 election is not submitted by the deadline of March 15, 2020, the election defaults to the current elections of the crops on the farm established under the 2014 Farm Bill. No payments will be earned in 2019 if the election defaults.

For crop years 2021 through 2023, producers will have an opportunity to make new elections. Farm owners cannot enroll in either program unless they have a share interest in the farm.

Once the 2019 election and enrollment are completed, producers on the farm for 2020 can complete an enrollment contract for the 2020 crop year beginning Oct. 7, 2019 and ending June 30, 2020.

Although 2019 enrollment begins Sept. 3, 2019 and must occur first, a producer waiting until Oct. 7, 2019 to enroll is afforded the opportunity to enroll in either program for both 2019 and 2020 during the same office visit. During this time, farm owners have a one-time opportunity to update PLC payment yields that takes

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effect beginning with crop year 2020. If the owner accompanies the producer to the office, the yield update may be completed during the same office visit.

In partnership with USDA, the University of Illinois and Texas A&M University are offering web-based decision tools to assist producers in making informed, educated decisions using crop data specific to their respective farming operations. These decision tools can be found at fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc.

Producers are reminded that enrolling in ARC or PLC programs can impact eligibility for some forms of crop insurance. Producers who elect and enroll in PLC also have the option of purchasing Supplemental Coverage Option (SCO) through the USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA). Producers of covered commodities who elect ARC are ineligible for SCO on their planted acres.

For more information on ARC and PLC, download our program fact sheet or our 2014-2018 farm bills comparison fact sheet, or visit fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc.

USDA Accepting Applications to Help Cover Producers’ Costs for Organic Certification

USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced that organic producers and handlers can apply for federal funds to assist with the cost of receiving and maintaining organic certification through the Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP). Applications for fiscal year 2019 funding are due Oct. 31, 2019.

OCCSP received continued support through the 2018 Farm Bill. It provides cost-share assistance to producers and handlers of agricultural products for the costs of obtaining or maintaining organic certification under the USDA’s National Organic Program. Eligible producers include any certified producers or handlers who have paid organic certification fees to a USDA-accredited certifying agent. Eligible expenses for cost-share reimbursement include application fees, inspection costs, fees related to equivalency agreement and arrangement requirements, travel expenses for inspectors, user fees, sales assessments and postage.

Certified producers and handlers are eligible to receive reimbursement for up to 75 percent of certification costs each year, up to a maximum of $750 per certification scope, including crops, livestock, wild crops, handling and state organic program fees.

More Information

To learn more about organic certification cost share, please visit the OCCSP webpage, view the notice of funds availability on the Federal Register, or contact your FSA county office. To learn more about USDA support for organic agriculture, visit usda.gov/organic.

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.

*Please remember if you will be coming into the office for the release of checks, etc. to CALL ahead of time to ensure an FLP staff member is there and will be able to help you.

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).