

APRIL 2020



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

# BULLETIN

*GovDelivery*

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## Sheridan~Johnson County FSA Updates

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### Sheridan~Johnson County **From the Desk of Linda Benzel, CED** FSA Office

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**County Committee:**  
Raymon Turk, Chairman  
John Buyok, Vice Chairman  
Thad Stoltz, Member  
Ray Daly, Member  
Gerry Miller, Member

Dear Producers;

In response to the Coronavirus Outbreak, USDA has taken the recommended precautions for our daily operations.

On Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, our Farm Service Agency (FSA) Administrator, Richard Fordyce, held a national video call for the 10,000 FSA employees. This was the first time for an FSA meeting of this magnitude, and it was very successful.

Administrator Fordyce brought us up to date for the response to the coronavirus and what we will be doing as an agency to help our farmers and ranchers. Currently, ag producers may be eligible for loans through the Small Business Administration (SBA). Their link is <https://covid19relief.sba.gov/#/>.

With the COVID19 impacts across the country, FSA has moved quickly into telework status. The agency has adjusted for office operations and flexibility in program delivery. Staci, Justine and I are on a rotation for telework. While two employees are teleworking, one will be in the office to answer phone calls and take care of the day to day operations that can only be done in the office environment. ***We want to let you know we are available to you through email or phone.***

We have started the 2020 crop reporting via email and mail. For those of you who do not plant crops in the spring, please contact our office to start the process of reporting your acreage. Those who are planting, please let us

**Next County Committee Meeting: TBD**

know when you are finished, and we will work with you to update the crop report. Deadline is July 15, 2020.

Stay safe,

Linda

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Producers are reminded to keep updated livestock inventory records. These records are necessary in the event of a natural disaster. When disasters strike, the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) can assist producers who suffered excessive livestock death losses and grazing or feed losses due to eligible natural disasters.

Producers should record all pertinent information regarding livestock inventory records including: Documentation of the number, kind, type, and weight range of livestock and beginning inventory supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts;

Have you had a memorable encounter with FSA or NRCS??? - now you can let Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Purdue know about it.

<https://www.usda.gov/tellsonny> Tell Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Purdue about your experience with FSA or NRCS.~

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## Maps for Acreage Reporting

Maps are now available at the Sheridan~Johnson County FSA Office for acreage reporting purposes. Reporting deadlines for Sheridan~Johnson County is July 15, 2020.

In order to maintain program eligibility and benefits, producers must timely file acreage reports. Failure to file an acreage report by the crop acreage reporting deadline may result in ineligibility for future program benefits. FSA will not accept acreage reports provided more than a year after the acreage reporting deadline.

Producers are encouraged to file their acreage reports as soon as planting is completed.

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.
- If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of "cover only," "green manure," "left standing," or "seed," then the acreage must be reported by July 15th.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact the Sheridan~Johnson County FSA office at (307) 683-4202.

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## New Farmers.gov Feature Helps Producers Find Farm Loans that Fit Their Operation

A new online tool can help farmers and ranchers find information on U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) farm loans that may best fit their operations. USDA has launched the new *Farm Loan Discovery Tool* as the newest feature on farmers.gov, the Department's self-service website for farmers.

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers a variety of loan options to help farmers finance their operations. From buying land to financing the purchase of equipment, FSA loans can help. Compared to this time last year, FSA has seen an 18 percent increase in the amount it has obligated for direct farm ownership loans, and through the 2018 Farm Bill, has [increased the limits](#) for several loan products.

USDA conducted field research in eight states, gathering input from farmers and FSA farm loan staff to better understand their needs and challenges.

### How the Tool Works

Farmers who are looking for financing options to operate a farm or buy land can answer a few simple questions about what they are looking to fund and how much money they need to borrow. After submitting their answers, farmers will be provided information on farm loans that best fit their specific needs. The loan application and additional resources also will be provided.

Farmers can download application quick guides that outline what to expect from preparing an application to receiving a loan decision. There are four guides that cover loans to individuals, entities, and youth, as well as information on microloans. The guides include general eligibility requirements and a list of required forms and documentation for each type of loan. These guides can help farmers prepare before their first USDA service center visit with a loan officer.

Farmers can access the *Farm Loan Discovery Tool* by visiting [farmers.gov/fund](https://farmers.gov/fund) and clicking the "Start" button. Follow the prompts and answer five simple questions to receive loan information that is applicable to your agricultural operation. The tool is built to run on any modern browser like Chrome, Edge, Firefox, or the Safari browser, and is fully functional on mobile devices. It does not work in Internet Explorer.

### About Farmers.gov

In 2018, USDA unveiled farmers.gov, a dynamic, mobile-friendly public website combined with an authenticated portal where farmers will be able to apply for programs, process transactions, and manage accounts.

The *Farm Loan Discovery Tool* is one of many resources on farmers.gov to help connect farmers to information that can help their operations. Earlier this year, USDA launched the *My Financial Information* feature, which enables farmers to view their loan information, history, payments, and alerts by logging into the website.

USDA is building farmers.gov for farmers, by farmers. In addition to the interactive farm loan features, the site also offers a Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool. Farmers can visit [farmers.gov/recover/disaster-](https://farmers.gov/recover/disaster-)

[assistance-tool#step-1](#) to find disaster assistance programs that can help their operation recover from natural disasters.

With feedback from customers and field employees who serve those customers, farmers.gov delivers farmer-focused features through an agile, iterative process to deliver the greatest immediate value to America's agricultural producers – helping farmers and ranchers do right, and feed everyone.

For more information or to locate your USDA Service Center, visit [farmers.gov](#).

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Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in this meeting should contact [Linda Benzel](#) at [307-672-5820](#) extension 2 or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339.

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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).