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Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

BULLETIN

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Sheridan~Johnson County FSA Updates

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
Ray Daly, Member
Gerry Miller, Member

Dear Producers,

The Sheridan County USDA Service Center will continue to be open for business by phone appointment only and field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. While our program delivery staff will continue to come into the office, they will be working with our producers by phone, and using online tools whenever possible. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, or any other Service Center agency are required to call to schedule a phone appointment.

Farm Service Agency: (307) 672-5820 extension 2

Natural Resources Conservation Service: (307) 672-5820 extension 3

Employees may also be contacted by email at the following email address:

Linda.Benzel@usda.gov

Staci.Steiner@usda.gov

Justine.Scheeler@usda.gov

Online services are available to customers with an eAuth account, which provides access to the farmers.gov portal where producers can view USDA

Thad Stoltz, Member
Susan Moyes, SD Advisor

Next County Committee Meeting: TBD

farm loan information and payments and view and track certain USDA program applications and payments. Through [FSA's website](#), customers with an eAuth account can apply for certain programs and view FSA data on FSAfarm+, including farm records and maps. Online NRCS services are available to customers through the [Conservation Client Gateway](#). Customers can track payments, report completed practices, request conservation assistance, and electronically sign documents. Customers who do not already have an eAuth account can enroll at [farmers.gov/sign-in](#).

For the most current updates on available services and Service Center status visit [farmers.gov/coronavirus](#).

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

Stay safe,

Linda

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;

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

Small Business Administration's Agricultural Assistance

The new Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act provides additional resources for both the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) and the Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program. Participation in SBA's PPP or EIDL program does not impact producer eligibility for USDA's forthcoming CFAP. There is no linkage between the two programs. Likewise, participation in SBA's PPP or EIDL program does not impact producer eligibility for any USDA farm program. The PPP duplicate benefit provision does not have an impact on FSA farm programs or farm loan programs.

Paycheck Protection Program

The PPP is a guaranteed loan program administered by the SBA. The purpose of the program is to support small businesses and help support their payroll during the coronavirus situation.

Agricultural producers, farmers, and ranchers with 500 or fewer employees whose principal place of residence is in the United States are eligible.

Farms are eligible if:

- the farm has 500 or less employees, **OR**
- it fits within the revenue-based sized standard, which is on average annual receipts of \$1M.

Additionally, farms can qualify for PPP if it meets SBA's "alternative size standard." The "alternative size standard" is currently:

- a maximum net worth of the business not more than \$15 million, **AND**
- the average net income Federal income taxes of the business for the two full fiscal years before the date of the application be not more than \$5 million.

Small agricultural cooperatives may receive PPP loans as long as other eligibility requirements are met. Other forms of cooperatives may be eligible provided they comply with all other Loan Program Requirements (as defined in 13 CFR 120.10).

In regard to H-2A or H-2B workers on payroll, only employees with a principal place of residence in the U.S. count toward eligibility and calculation of the PPP loan amount.

SBA requires sole proprietors, independent contractors, and other eligible self-employed individuals to provide documentation to its lender that the business was in operation as of February 15, 2020. This documentation may include payroll processor records, payroll tax filings, or Form 1099-MISC, or income and expenses from a sole proprietorship. For borrowers that do not have any such documentation, the borrower must provide other supporting documentation to its lender, such as bank records, sufficient to demonstrate the qualifying payroll amount.

Documentation options for payroll tax filings include the following:

- IRS Form 941 (quarterly wages);
- IRS Form 944 (calendar year wages);
- State income, payroll and unemployment insurance filings;
- QuickBooks;
- bank repository accounts; and/or
- internally generated profit and loss statements.

Some additional notes include:

- Nonprofit organizations must include IRS Form 990;
- Sole proprietors must include IRS Form 1040 Schedule C;
- Any entity that filed IRS Form 1099-MISC must include this form;
- Seasonal employers must document the period beginning February 15, 2019 through June 30, 2019

More extensive FAQs can be found at the Treasury Department's [CARES Act website](#).

Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program

In response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, small business owners in all U.S. states, Washington D.C., and territories are eligible to apply for an EIDL advance of up to \$10,000 and borrow up to \$2

million. This advance will provide economic relief to businesses that are currently experiencing a temporary loss of revenue. Loan advances will not have to be repaid.

For the first time, agricultural enterprises are now eligible for the disaster assistance from EIDL.

For more information, visit [sba.gov](https://www.sba.gov).

Higher Limits Now Available on USDA Farm Loans

Higher limits are now available for borrowers interested in USDA's farm loans, which help agricultural producers purchase farms or cover operating expenses. The 2018 Farm Bill increased the amount that producers can borrow through direct and guaranteed loans available through USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) and made changes to other loans, such as microloans and emergency loans.

Key changes include:

- The Direct Operating Loan limit increased from \$300,000 to \$400,000, and the Guaranteed Operating Loan limit increased from \$ 1.429 million to \$1.75 million. Operating loans help producers pay for normal operating expenses, including machinery and equipment, seed, livestock feed, and more.
- The Direct Farm Ownership Loan limit increased from \$300,000 to \$600,000, and the Guaranteed Farm Ownership Loan limit increased from \$1.429 million to \$1.75 million. Farm ownership loans help producers become owner-operators of family farms as well as improve and expand current operations.
- Producers can now receive both a \$50,000 Farm Ownership Microloan and a \$50,000 Operating Microloan. Previously, microloans were limited to a combined \$50,000. Microloans provide flexible access to credit for small, beginning, niche, and non-traditional farm operations.
- Producers who previously received debt forgiveness as part of an approved FSA restructuring plan are now eligible to apply for emergency loans. Previously, these producers were ineligible.
- Beginning and socially disadvantaged producers can now receive up to a 95 percent guarantee against the loss of principal and interest on a loan, up from 90 percent.

About Farm Loans

Direct farm loans, which include microloans and emergency loans, are financed and serviced by FSA, while guaranteed farm loans are financed and serviced by commercial lenders. For guaranteed loans, FSA provides a guarantee against possible financial loss of principal and interest.

For more information on FSA farm loans, visit www.fsa.usda.gov or contact Rob Weppner at rob.weppner@usda.gov or (307) 682-8843 ext. 2.

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in this meeting should contact [Linda Benzel](mailto:Linda.Benzel@usda.gov) at [307-683-4202](tel:307-683-4202) or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339.

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).