



NEWSLETTER



December 2014

Idaho Farm Service Agency

9173 West Barnes Drive
Suite B
Boise, ID 83709

www.fsa.usda.gov/id

State Committee:

Scott McLeod, Chair
Bobbi Bodine
Sherry Crutcher
Matt Gellings
Amy Manning

Executive Director:

Mark Samson

Farm Loan Chief

Aaron Johnson

Farm Program Chief

Ron Abbott

To find contact information for your local office you can go to www.fsa.usda.gov/id and select County Offices.

FARM BILL ALLOWS EARLY TERMINATION FOR CERTAIN CRP CONTRACTS

The Farm Service Agency reminds producers with acres under contract through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) that they can apply for early contract termination, as required by the 2014 Farm Bill. The deadline to request early CRP contract termination is Jan. 30, 2015.

This is a unique opportunity to request early termination afforded by the 2014 Farm Bill. The earliest effective date for this early termination is October 1, 2014. The requesting CRP contract must have been in effect for at least five years and additional eligibility conditions must be met to qualify. The 2014 Farm Bill identifies a list of 10 exceptions whereby land will not be eligible for the early termination provisions. For a complete list of these exceptions, please view the program fact sheet online at

http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/crp_opt_out_fact_sht.pdf

Once a CRP contract termination request is approved by the FSA County Committee, the decision may not be reversed and the terminated contract will not be reinstated. Once the land is no longer considered under the CRP contract all participants must meet HEL/WC and other conservation compliance provisions for all associated lands.

For more information or to verify eligibility for early termination (opt-out) for existing CRP contracts, please contact your local FSA office. For local FSA Service Center contact information, please visit: <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>.

COVERAGE SELECTION FOR NEW 2014 FARM BILL SAFETY NET PROGRAMS BEGAN NOV. 17

Producers have Until March 31, 2015, to Choose the Program Best for their Operation

Farm owners and producers are reminded that the opportunity to choose between the new 2014 Farm Bill established programs, Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC), began Nov. 17, 2014, and continues through March 31, 2015. The new programs, designed to help producers better manage risk, usher in one of the most significant reforms to U.S. farm programs in decades.

USDA helped create online tools to assist in the decision process, allowing farm owners and producers to enter information about their operation and see projections that show what ARC and/or PLC will mean for them under possible future scenarios. Farm owners and producers can access the online resources, available at www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc, from the convenience of their home computer or mobile device at any time.

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, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat. Upland cotton is no longer a covered commodity.

USDA EXTENDS APPLICATION DEADLINE FOR DAIRY MARGIN PROTECTION PROGRAM TO DEC. 19TH

Dairy producers urged to act now to protect their businesses against unpredictable market swings, take advantage of increased protections offered in first year of program.

The application deadline for the dairy Margin Protection Program (MPP) will be extended until Dec. 19, 2014. The program, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, protects participating dairy producers when the margin – the difference between the price of milk and feed costs – falls below levels of protection selected by the applicant.

For just \$100, a farmer can cover 90 percent of production at \$4 margin swings, and with affordable incremental premiums, dairy farmers can cover up to \$8 margin swings. Those who apply this year will receive a slight increase in production protection that will not be available in the future. Farmers who do not sign up for the Margin Protection Program for 2015 will forfeit the 1 percent base production increase.

Producers can use the online Web resource at www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool to calculate the best levels of coverage for their dairy operation. They can type in specific operation data and explore price projections and market scenarios to determine what level of coverage is best for them. The online resource is on a secure website that can be accessed from computers, mobile phones or tablets, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Farmers also have a chance to share comments and help shape the Margin Protection Program for the future. Last month, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the extension of the opportunity for public comments on both the Margin Protection Program and the Dairy Product Donation Program until Dec. 15, 2014. Comments can be submitted to USDA via the [regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) website at <http://go.usa.gov/GJSA> or send them by mail to: Danielle Cooke, Special Programs Manager, Price Support Division, FSA, USDA, STOP 0512, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, D.C., 20250-0512.

To learn more about the Margin Protection Program for dairy, contact your local USDA Farm Service Agency county office at offices.usda.gov or visit us on the Web at www.fsa.usda.gov.

PRODUCERS INVITED TO ATTEND FARM BILL MEETINGS

The Idaho Farm Service Agency in partnership with various groups including the U of I Extension Service will be hosting several Farm Bill meetings during November and December. The meetings are free and open to the public. For a list of all meeting locations and times please visit the Idaho FSA web page and click on **State Events** in the left hand column.

There will be a demonstration of the online decision-making tools that are available to producers to help make important

enrollment decisions regarding the Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs. Learning more about ARC and PLC is extremely important for producers who must make a one-time decision about base and yield updates as well as ARC or PLC election and enrollment decisions. An FSA representative will be in attendance to answer any questions on ARC and PLC policy and procedure.



Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in this meeting/event/function should contact their local county office or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 one week prior to the meeting date.

USDA ENHANCES FARM STORAGE FACILITY LOAN PROGRAM

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the expansion of the Farm Storage and Facility Loan program, which provides low-interest financing to producers. The enhanced program includes 22 new categories of eligible equipment for fruit and vegetable producers.

Producers with small and mid-sized operations, and specialty crop fruit and vegetable growers, now have access to needed capital for a variety of supplies including sorting bins, wash stations and other food safety-related equipment. A new more flexible alternative is also provided for determining storage needs for fruit and vegetable producers, and waivers are available on a case-by-case basis for disaster assistance or insurance coverage if available products are not relevant or feasible for a particular producer.

Additionally, Farm Storage Facility Loan security requirements have been eased for loans up to \$100,000. Previously, all loans in excess of \$50,000 and any loan with little resale value required a promissory note/security agreement and additional security, such as a lien on real estate. Now loans up to \$50,000 can be secured by only a promissory note/security agreement and some loans between \$50,000 and \$100,000 will no longer require additional security.

The low-interest funds can be used to build or upgrade permanent facilities to store commodities. Eligible commodities include grains, oilseeds, peanuts, pulse crops, hay, honey, renewable biomass commodities, fruits and vegetables. Qualified facilities include grain bins, hay barns and cold storage facilities for fruits and vegetables.

Contact your local FSA office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov for more about FSA programs and loans, including the Farm Storage Facility Loan Program.

USDA REMINDS FARMERS OF 2014 FARM BILL CONSERVATION COMPLIANCE CHANGES

The 2014 Farm Bill implements a change that requires farmers to have a Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification (AD-1026) on file.

For farmers to be eligible for premium support on their federal crop insurance, a completed and signed AD-1026 certification form must be on file with the FSA. The Risk Management Agency (RMA), through the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC), manages the federal crop insurance program that provides the modern farm safety net for American farmers and ranchers.

Since enactment of the 1985 Farm Bill, eligibility for most commodity, disaster, and conservation programs has been linked to compliance with the highly erodible land conservation and wetland conservation provisions. The 2014 Farm Bill continues the requirement that producers adhere to conservation compliance guidelines to be eligible for most programs administered by FSA and NRCS. This includes most financial assistance such as the new price and revenue protection programs, the Conservation Reserve Program, the Livestock Disaster Assistance programs and Marketing Assistance Loans and most programs implemented by FSA. It also includes the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, the Conservation Stewardship Program, and other conservation programs implemented by NRCS.

Many FSA and Natural Resource Conservation (NRCS) programs already have implemented this requirement and therefore most producers should already have an AD-1026 form on file for their associated lands. If however an AD-1026 form has not been filed or is incomplete then farmers are reminded of the deadline of June 1, 2015.

When a farmer completes and submits the AD-1026 certification form, FSA and NRCS staff will review the associated farm records and outline any additional actions that may be required to meet the required compliance with the conservation compliance provisions.

FSA recently released a revised form AD-1026, which is available at USDA Service Centers and online at: www.fsa.usda.gov. USDA will publish a rule later this year that will provide details outlining the connection of conservation compliance with crop insurance premium support. Producers can also contact their local USDA Service Center for information. A listing of service center locations is available at www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/contact/local/.

USDA ANNOUNCES CHANGES TO FRUIT, VEGETABLE AND WILD RICE PLANTING RULES

Farm Service Agency (FSA) has announced fruit, vegetable and wild rice provisions that affect producers who intend to participate in certain programs authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014.

Producers who intend to participate in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs are subject to an acre-for-acre payment reduction when fruits and nuts, vegetables or wild rice are planted on the payment acres of a farm. Payment reductions do not apply to mung beans, dry peas, lentils or chickpeas. Planting fruits, vegetables or wild rice on acres that are not considered payment acres will not result in a payment reduction. Farms that are eligible to participate in ARC/PLC but are not enrolled for a particular year may plant unlimited fruits, vegetables and wild rice for that year but will not receive ARC/PLC payments for that year. Eligibility for succeeding years is not affected.

Planting and harvesting fruits, vegetables and wild rice on ARC/PLC acreage is subject to the acre-for-acre payment reduction when those crops are planted on either more than 15 percent of the base acres of a farm enrolled in ARC using the county coverage or PLC, or more than 35 percent of the base acres of a farm enrolled in ARC using the individual coverage.

Fruits, vegetables and wild rice that are planted in a double-cropping practice will not cause a payment reduction if the farm is in a double-cropping region as designated by the USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation.

YOUTH LOANS

The Farm Service Agency makes loans to youth to establish and operate agricultural income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5000.

Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

- Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien
- Be 10 years to 20 years of age
- Comply with FSA's general eligibility requirements
- Be unable to get a loan from other sources
- Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above
- Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the youth loan applicant, along with providing adequate supervision.

Stop by the county office for help preparing and processing the application forms.

2015 ACREAGE REPORTING DATES

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit the Name County FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline.

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for Idaho:

January 2, 2015:	Honey
January 15, 2015:	Apples, Cherries, Fresh Apricots, Fresh Freestone Peaches, Fresh Nectarines, Grapes, Plums
July 15, 2015:	CRP, Spring Alfalfa (forage or seed), Spring Barley, Spring Canola, Corn, Dry Beans, Dry Peas, Flax, Green Peas, Spring Mint, Mustard, Oats, Onions, Potatoes, Processing Beans, Safflower, Sugar Beets, Sweet Corn, Spring Wheat, and all other crops
November 15, 2015:	Apiculture (honey bee forage), Pasture, Rangeland, Forage (includes mixed forages, grass hay, not Alfalfa for seed)
December 15, 2015:	Fall Planted and Established Alfalfa for Seed, Fall Barley, Fall Canola, Fall-planted Dry Peas, Fall Mint, Fall Wheat, and all other Fall-planted Small Grains

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 your local county office.

USDA FARM SERVICE AGENCY (FSA) ANNOUNCES ONLINE HAY AND GRAZING ACRES LOCATOR TOOL

For many years, FSA's Hay Net website www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet has been the "go to" online resource for agricultural producers to list information concerning the need for hay or the availability of hay.

Now, in response to requests from livestock producers and landowners, FSA has expanded the site to include the option to list a need for grazing acres or to list acres available for grazing.

If, due to extenuating circumstances, producers are in need of hay and/or grazing acres to support livestock, please use Hay Net to post an advertisement seeking these resources. Likewise, landowners who have hay and/or grazing acres available for livestock producers should post a Hay Net advertisement as well.

Hay Net is brought to you by FSA as a public service. The sole purpose of this online resource is to provide a site for the exchange of information. FSA does not endorse, guarantee, or otherwise make representations of any kind regarding any user of this site and FSA is not responsible for defining the terms of grazing agreements or lease contracts.

For more information about Hay Net and other FSA services and programs, please contact your local FSA office. For local FSA Service Center contact information, please visit: <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Dec. 15	Crop reporting deadline for all fall-seeded crops.
Dec. 19	Deadline to enroll for MPP Dairy
Dec. 25-26	Offices closed for Christmas
Jan. 2	Acreage Reporting Deadline for Honey covered under NAP
Jan. 15	Crop reporting deadline for apples, apricots, cherries, grapes, nectarines, peaches and plums.
Jan. 30	Deadline to request early termination of CRP contract.

Selected Interest Rates for December 2014

Farm Operating Loans — Direct	2.65%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	4.0%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency Loans	3.625%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years)	2.0%