



NEWSLETTER



WELCOME TO THE ILLINOIS FSA STATE NEWSLETTER (26th Edition)

As USDA Farm Service Agency is moving to a paperless, electronic version of County Newsletters, the State Office has developed a State Wide Newsletter that will be posted to this site every month. This is a uniform Newsletter available to all producers in the state. If you would like to have a hard copy of this newsletter for your use, please stop by your local county office to obtain one. If you wish to receive electronic county office news, and have not signed up to do so yet, please contact your local county office and provide them with your email address. We appreciate your patience while we transition into a new, more efficient, cost saving way of providing you with the most up to date information possible.

Sincerely,
Scherrie V. Giamanco – State Executive Director

Illinois State FSA Office

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Springfield, IL 62711

217-241-6600
855-800-1760 fax

Hours

Monday - Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

JULY 2014

Scherrie V. Giamanco
**State Executive
Director**

Rick Graden
Executive Officer

Mary Kirby – **Public
Affairs Specialist**

Visit our Website at:
www.fsa.usda.gov/il

COC NOMINATION DEADLINE

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to farmers and ranchers. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The COC nomination period runs from June 17, 2014 through August 1, 2014. The nomination form is available at USDA Service Centers and [online](#). For more information contact your local FSA office.

MICROLOAN PROGRAM

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) developed the Microloan (ML) program to better serve the unique financial operating needs of beginning, niche and small family farm operations.

FSA offers applicants a Microloan designed to help farmers with credit needs of \$35,000 or less. The loan features a streamlined application process built to fit the needs of new and smaller producers.

This loan program will also be useful to specialty crop producers and operators of community supported agriculture (CSA).

Eligible applicants can apply for a maximum amount of \$35,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses to extend the growing season, essential tools, irrigation and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing, and distribution expenses. As financing needs increase, applicants can apply for a regular operating loan up to the maximum amount of \$300,000 or obtain financing from a commercial lender under FSA's Guaranteed Loan Program.

Individuals interested in applying for a microloan or would like to discuss other farm loan programs available, should contact the local FSA office to setup an appointment with a Loan Approval Official.

USDA FARM SERVICE AGENCY ANNOUNCES TREE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP) SIGN-UP

Currently, orchardists and nursery tree growers who experienced losses from natural disasters that occurred on or after Oct. 1, 2011, can sign up for the Tree Assistance Program (TAP). TAP was authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014 as a permanent disaster program.

TAP provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters.

Please see the May 2014 Newsletter for additional details, or a fact sheet is available by clicking the link to read, [Tree Assistance Program Fact Sheet](#), or contact your local FSA office for information.

For more information, please contact your local FSA office.

2012 & 2013 ELAP LOSSES MUST BE FILED BY AUG. 1, 2014 FOR HONEYBEE, LIVESTOCK AND FARM-RAISED FISH LOSSES

Producers who suffered eligible livestock, honeybee or farm-raised fish losses have until August 1, 2014, to submit a notice of loss and application for payment under the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-raised Fish Program (ELAP).

ELAP provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish that have losses due to disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires. ELAP assistance is provided for losses not covered by the Livestock Forage Program (LFP) and Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP). Producers who suffered eligible livestock, honeybee or farm-raised fish losses during 2012 and 2013 program years must submit a notice of loss and application for payment to their local FSA office by August 1, 2014. For 2014 program year losses, the notice of loss and an application for payment must be submitted by November 1, 2014.

For more information, producers can review the ELAP Fact Sheet on the [Farm Bill webpage](#). Producers are encouraged to make an appointment with their local FSA office to apply for these programs.

LIVESTOCK DISASTER ASSISTANCE SIGN-UP UNDERWAY

Livestock disaster programs are authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill as permanent programs and provide retroactive financial assistance authority to cover losses that occurred on or after Oct. 1, 2011. Livestock Forage Program (LFP) provides for grazing losses, Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides financial assistance for livestock losses due to adverse weather events and Emergency Livestock, Honeybees and Farm Raised Fish Program (ELAP) covers losses due to an eligible adverse weather or loss condition, including blizzards and wildfires, as determined by the Secretary.

For more information, producers can review the LFP, LIP and ELAP Fact Sheets on the [Farm Bill webpage](#). Producers are encouraged to make an appointment with their local FSA office to apply for these programs.

2014 MAL AND LDP REQUESTS

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) is accepting requests for marketing assistance loans (MALs) and loan deficiency payments (LDPs) for eligible 2014 commodities.

MALs and LDPs for the 2014 crop year become available to eligible producers beginning with harvest/shearing season and extending through a specific commodity's final loan availability date.

MALs and LDPs provide financing and marketing assistance for wheat, feed grains, soybeans, and other oilseeds, pulse crops, wool, mohair and honey. MALs provide producers interim financing after harvest to help them meet cash flow needs without having to sell their commodities when market prices are typically at harvest-time lows. A producer who is eligible to obtain a loan, but agrees to forgo the loan, may obtain an LDP if such a payment is available.

The 2014 Farm Bill also establishes payment limitations per individual or entity not to exceed \$125,000 annually on certain commodities for the following program benefits: price loss coverage payments, agriculture risk coverage payments, marketing loan gains (MLGs) and LDPs. These payment limitations do not apply to MAL loan disbursements.

Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) provisions were modified by the 2014 Farm Bill, which states that a producer whose total applicable three-year average AGI exceeds \$900,000 is not eligible to receive an MLG or LDP.

National and county loans rates for 2014 crops are posted on the FSA website at: www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport.

For more information, please visit your local FSA office or FSA's website www.fsa.usda.gov.

KNOW YOUR FARMER, KNOW YOUR FOOD

The *Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food* (KYF2) initiative is a USDA-wide effort focused on strengthening local and regional food systems.

In recent years, consumers have shown an increased interest in purchasing locally-produced foods and many farmers and ranchers followed the trend and offer fresh foods through local markets.

USDA followed suit, developing KYF2, which helps connect consumers with producers in their community. USDA offers a wide range of programs that can assist farmers, ranchers, businesses, communities and individuals. To learn more about grants, loans and support that is available, visit http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=KYF_GRANTS.

These USDA programs stimulate economic development in agricultural communities, foster new opportunities for farmers and ranchers, promote locally and regionally grown and processed foods, cultivate healthy eating habits and educated consumers, expand access to affordable fresh and local food and develop a connection between food, agriculture, community and the environment.

For more information on KYF2, visit <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/knowyourfarmer?navid=KNOWYOURFARMER>

2014 ACREAGE REPORTING DATES

Producers who file accurate and timely reports for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage can prevent the potential loss of FSA program benefits. Please pay close attention to the acreage reporting dates below, as some dates have changed for 2014.

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

The following 2014 acreage reporting dates are applicable for Illinois:

July 15, 2014:	spring seeded crops (corn, soybeans, grain sorghum, oats, etc.) cabbage (planted 3/15 – 5/31) and perennial forage (with an intended use of cover only, green manure, left standing, or seed)
August 15, 2014:	cabbage (planted 6/1 – 7/20)
September 15, 2014	cucumbers (planted 6/1 – 8/15) in Gallatin, Lawrence, and White Counties

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 FSA office.

If filing for prevented planting, an acreage report and CCC-576 must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

NAP APPLICATION CLOSING DATES

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) applications are due at different times, depending on the crop being insured.

- August 31, 2014 is the 2015 NAP application closing date for canola
- September 1, 2014 is the 2015 NAP application closing date for value loss crops, such as, aquaculture, Christmas trees, ornamental nursery, and turfgrass sod
- September 30, 2014 is the 2015 NAP application closing date for mechanically harvested forage, grazed forage, and fall seeded small grains.

The Application for Coverage (CCC-471) and service fee MUST be filed by the NAP crop sales closing date. Contact your local FSA office for the filing dates for your crops

FILING A NAP NOTICE OF LOSS

The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. Timely filing a Notice of Loss is required for all crops including grasses. For losses on crops covered by the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and crop insurance, you must file a CCC-576, Notice of Loss, in the FSA County Office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent.

BEGINNING FARMER LOANS

FSA has a program to assist beginning farmers and/or members of socially disadvantaged groups to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA

- Except for operating loan assistance, does not own farm acreage in excess of 30 percent of the county's average size farm, in the county where the farm is located

Each member of an entity must meet the eligibility requirements. Loan approval is also dependent on acceptable feasibility and security determinations.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at the local USDA Service Center or visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

LOANS FOR MEMBERS OF UNDERSERVED GROUPS

SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED APPLICANTS

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating type loans and/or to purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, FSA has provided priority funding for members of socially disadvantaged groups. (Underserved groups)

A socially disadvantaged applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities.

For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

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.

Contact your local county office for help preparing and processing the application forms.

2013 ACRE

Participation in 2013 ACRE requires production reports for planted acres that must be submitted for the covered commodities planted on the farm by July 15, 2014. Failure to report production for those covered commodities planted on ACRE farms may result in contract termination. If the contract is terminated, all payments, including direct payments previously received plus interest will be required to be refunded.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE

Any person convicted under federal or state law of a controlled substance violation could be ineligible for USDA payments or benefits. Violations include planting, harvesting or growing a prohibited plant. Prohibited plants include marijuana, opium, poppies and other drug producing plants.

JULY 2014 INTEREST RATES	
90 Day Treasury Bills	.125%
Farm Operating Loans – Direct	2.25%
Farm Ownership Loan – Direct	4.00%
Farm Ownership Loans – Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Direct Farm Ownership – Joint Financing	2.50%
Emergency Loans	3.25%
Farm Storage Facility Loan (7 years)	2.125%
Farm Storage Facility Loan (10 years)	2.625%
Farm Storage Facility Loan (12 years)	2.750%
Commodity Loans 1996 – Present	1.125%

DATES TO REMEMBER	
July 15, 2014	Final date to spring seeded crops, cabbage (planted 3/15 – 5/31), perennial forage with intended use of cover only, green manure, left standing, or seed
July 15, 2014	Final date to submit 2013 production for ACRE participants
Continuous	Farm Storage Facility Loans Sign up to conduct business online through E-authentication

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay).