



# NEWSLETTER



## WELCOME TO THE ILLINOIS FSA STATE NEWSLETTER (28th Edition)

### Illinois State FSA Office

3500 Wabash  
Springfield, IL 62711

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#### Hours

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

### SEPTEMBER 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](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/il)

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

#### LIVESTOCK PRODUCERS URGED TO ENROLL IN DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BY SEPTEMBER 30, 2014

#### 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 October 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. All livestock disaster payments issued after September 30, 2014 will be reduced by 7.3%. Please visit your local FSA office as soon as possible.

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. Livestock disaster programs are authorized with their local FSA office to apply for these programs.

#### USDA FARM SERVICE AGENCY REMINDS PRODUCERS: FARM BILL ALLOWS EARLY TERMINATION FOR CERTAIN CRP CONTRACTS

USDA Illinois Farm Service Agency reminds producers that as of August 6, 2014 producers with acres under contract through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) can apply for early contract termination, as required by the 2014 Farm Bill. The deadline to request early CRP contract termination is January 30, 2015.

The effective date for early termination is no earlier than October 1, 2014. The CRP contract must be in effect for at least five years and other conditions must be met. The 2014 Farm Bill identifies 10 exceptions whereby land will not be eligible for the early-out 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](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 cannot be reversed and the contract cannot be reinstated. Producers must meet conservation compliance provisions for all land that will be returned to production.

For more information on or to determine eligibility for early termination of 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>.

USDA NOTIFIES PRODUCERS ON ACREAGE HISTORY AND YIELDS

Written notifications from USDA are underway to farmers that provide updates on their current base acres, yields and 2009-2012 planting history.

Please cross check the letter from USDA with your farm records. If the information is correct, no further action is needed at this time, but if our letter is incomplete or incorrect, contact your local FSA office as soon as possible.

Verifying the accuracy of data on a farm’s acreage history is a required early step for enrolling in the upcoming Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) program and the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program. Farmers and ranchers can update their crop yield information and reallocate base acres.

By mid-winter all producers on a farm will be required to make a one-time, unanimous and irrevocable election between price protection and county revenue protection or individual revenue protection for 2014-2018 crop years. Producers can expect to sign contracts for ARC or PLC for the 2014 and 2015 crop years in the spring of 2015.

Covered commodities for Illinois include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, dry peas, rapeseed, safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed, and wheat.

Visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) or the local FSA office for information about FSA and the 2014 Farm Bill programs.

2015 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.

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 2015 acreage reporting dates are applicable for Illinois:

September 30, 2014 aquaculture, Christmas trees, turfgrass sod, floriculture

December 15, 2014

perennial forage (with an intended use of haying or grazing), fall-seeded 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 15, 2015.

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.

September 30, 2014 is the 2015 NAP application closing date for mechanically harvested forage, grazed forage, and fall seeded small grains.

November 20, 2014 is the 2015 NAP application closing date for bi-annual and perennial crops, such as apples, asparagus, blueberries, caneberries, cherries, grapes, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums, rhubarb, and strawberries.

December 1, 2014 is the 2015 NAP application closing date for honey.

Producers should apply for Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage using form CCC-471 (Application for Coverage).

Related service fees are due when the application is filed. The application and service fee MUST be filed by the crop sales closing date. Contact your local FSA office for the filing dates for your crops

#### 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.

#### LOANS FOR MEMBERS OF UNDERSERVED GROUPS

##### (SOCIALY 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.

#### 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 loan rates for 2014 crops are posted on the FSA website at: [www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport). For more information, please visit your local FSA office or FSA's website [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

MARGIN PROTECTION PROGRAM FOR DAIRY  
PRODUCERS

The 2014 Farm Bill authorized the Margin Protection Program (MPP-Dairy) for dairy producers. The new, voluntary risk management program replaces the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program which expires on September 1, 2014.

MPP-Dairy offers protection to dairy producers when the difference (the margin) between the all-milk price and national average feed cost falls below a certain producer selected amount.

Eligible producers may purchase coverage for their dairy operation by paying an annual administrative fee of \$100 and a premium, as applicable, for higher levels of coverage. Producers in the dairy operation will have to select a desired coverage level ranging from \$4.00 to \$8.00, in \$0.50 increments and a desired coverage percentage level ranging from 25 to 90 percent, in 5 percent increments. Producers will also have to decide whether or not to participate in the MPP-Dairy Program or the Livestock Gross Margin (LGM) program administered by the Risk Management Agency (RMA), but they will not be allowed to participate in both.

A decision tool is available to assist producers make coverage level decisions. MPP registration began September 2, 2014 and ends November 28, 2014 for the remaining months in 2014 (September, October, November and December) and for all months in calendar year 2015. Dairy operators will establish their production history during registration and election. Verification of the production records will be required. Please contact and visit your local county FSA office for additional

information and to register and make your election for MPP coverage for 2014 and 2015 as soon as possible but before November 28, 2014.

The regulations for MPP-dairy are still being developed. Additional information will be provided as it becomes available.

FSA WANTS YOU TO BE BETTER PREPARED  
FOR DISASTERS

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's 2012 National Survey, 46% of respondents believed that a natural disaster will occur in their community; however, nearly 70% of Americans have not believed that a natural disaster will occur in their community; however, nearly 70% of Americans have not participated in a preparedness drill or exercise in the past two years. As a proud supporter of America's PrepareAthon, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) wants to share important information that will help you or your family be better prepared in case of a disaster. America's PrepareAthon is a nationwide, community-based campaign around the country will focus on preparedness during the national day of action. These national days of action drive participation in hazard-specific drills, group discussions, and exercises. Visit [www.ready.gov/prepare](http://www.ready.gov/prepare) to learn more about America's PrepareAthon and how you can improve your preparedness plan for your family and your community.

**SEPTEMBER 2014 INTEREST RATES**

<b>90 Day Treasury Bills</b>	<b>.125%</b>
<b>Farm Operating Loans – Direct</b>	<b>1.50%</b>
<b>Farm Ownership Loan – Direct</b>	<b>3.625%</b>
<b>Farm Ownership Loans – Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher</b>	<b>1.50%</b>
<b>Direct Farm Ownership – Joint Financing</b>	<b>2.50%</b>
<b>Emergency Loans</b>	<b>3.25%</b>
<b>Farm Storage Facility Loan (7 years)</b>	<b>2.125%</b>
<b>Farm Storage Facility Loan (10 years)</b>	<b>2.625%</b>
<b>Farm Storage Facility Loan (12 years)</b>	<b>2.750%</b>
<b>Commodity Loans 1996 – Present</b>	<b>1.125%</b>

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

<b>October 1, 2014</b>	<b>Livestock Disaster Assistance (LFP, LIP) benefits reduced by 7.3%</b>
<b>September 30, 2014</b>	<b>Acreage reporting deadline for aquaculture, Christmas trees, turfgrass sod, floriculture</b>
<b>September 30, 2014</b>	<b>2015 NAP application closing date for mechanically harvested forage, grazed forage, and fall seeded small grains</b>
<b>Continuous</b>	<b>Farm Storage Facility Loans Sign up to conduct business online through E-authentication</b>

*USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. 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).*