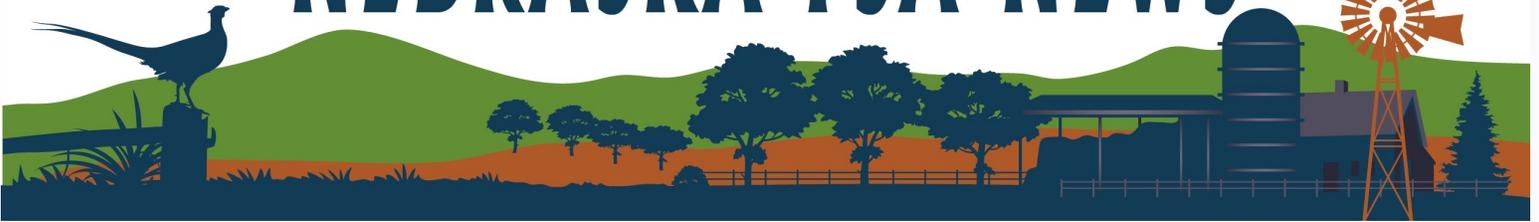




NEBRASKA FSA NEWS



June 2016

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For More Information

For more information about any of the programs listed in this newsletter, your best resource is your local FSA County Office. To find a County Office near you, or to see more information about FSA programming, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/ne.

Producers Encouraged to Note Program Sign-up Deadlines

As the 2016 growing season gets into full swing, Nebraska Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices across the state are busy. With well over a dozen programs to implement with and for you - our state's farmers, ranchers and landowners - FSA County Office employees spend each day dwelling on important details that are necessary to effectively deliver programs and services.

We need your assistance in order to be successful with that goal.

In this issue of the Nebraska FSA State News, you will find program information and critical sign-up deadlines. I encourage you to take a moment to scan the headlines for programs that impact you and your operation, take note of the enrollment windows, and then pick up the phone to make an appointment with your local County FSA Office.

While all our programs are important to

Acres Must Be Reported to FSA to Retain Benefits

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, producers must file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline. For Nebraska, the acreage reporting date for 2016 spring-seeded crops, such as corn and soybeans, is July 15, 2016. Acres enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) must also be certified to FSA by this date.

The deadline to report fall-seeded and perennial forage crops for the 2016 crop year was Nov. 15, 2015. If these crops were not reported timely with FSA last fall, they can still be reported, though late-filing requirements must be met. Late-filing provi-

one individual or another, I want to call attention to a couple of deadlines that affect the vast majority of you. The acreage reporting deadline for spring-seeded crops such as corn and soybeans is July 15, 2016. Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres must also be certified by this date. Certification by the deadline matters because acreage reporting is a basic requirement to receive program benefits associated with the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs.



Dan Steinkruger
State Executive Director

In addition to certification of acres, producers also must re-enroll annually in ARC and PLC. Even though you've already chosen which program to be in, and

** See: Producers Encouraged, Page 10*

sions include an FSA representative physically verifying the late-filed crop and the producer paying a late-filed measurement service fee.

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

** See: Acre Reporting, Page 3*

Farm Programs

Enrollment Period for ARC/PLC Safety Net Coverage Ends Aug. 1

Producers who chose coverage from the safety net programs established by the 2014 Farm Bill, known as the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs, can visit FSA county offices through Aug. 1, 2016, to sign contracts to enroll in coverage for 2016.

Although the choice between ARC and PLC is completed and remains in effect through 2018, producers must still enroll their farm by signing a contract each year to receive coverage.

Producers are encouraged to contact their local FSA office to schedule an appointment to enroll. If a farm is not enrolled during the 2016 enrollment period, producers on that farm will not be eligible for financial assistance from the ARC or PLC programs should crop prices or farm revenues fall below the historical price or revenue benchmarks established by the program.

The two programs were authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill and offer a safety net to agricultural producers when there is a

substantial drop in prices or revenues for covered commodities.

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 and sweet rice), safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

Upland cotton is no longer a covered commodity.

Initiative Will Streamline Crop Acreage Reporting Between FSA, Crop Insurers

Farmers and ranchers filing crop acreage reports with FSA and participating insurance providers approved by the Risk Management Agency (RMA) now can provide the common information from their acreage reports at one office and the information will be electronically shared with the other location.

This new process is part of the USDA Acreage Crop Reporting Streamlining Initiative (ACRSI). This interagency collaboration also includes participating private crop insurance agents and insurance companies, all working to streamline the information collected from farmers and ranchers who participate in USDA programs.

Once a producer files at one location, data that's important to

both FSA and RMA will be securely and electronically shared with the other location, avoiding redundant and duplicative reporting, as well as saving farmers and ranchers time.

More than 93 percent of all annually reported acres to FSA and RMA now are eligible for the common data reporting, and USDA is exploring adding more crops. Producers must still visit both locations to validate and sign acreage reports, complete maps or provide program-specific information.

The common data from the first-filed acreage report will now be available to pre-populate and accelerate completion of the second report. Plans are under way at USDA to continue building upon the framework with additional efficiencies at a future date.

Producers Encouraged to Update Name, Address Changes

FSA is cleaning up its producer record database. If you have any unreported changes of address or zip code or an incorrect name or business name on file, they need to be reported to your FSA office. Changes in your farm operation, like the addition of a farm by lease or purchase, need to be reported to the FSA office as well. Producers participating in FSA and NRCS programs are required to timely report changes in their farming operation to the County Office in writing and update their CCC-902 Farm Operat-

ing Plan. Please call your local FSA office with changes.

FSAFarm+ Available for Secure, Online Access to Farm Records

Farmers and ranchers can now access their FSA farm information from the convenience of their home computer. Producers can see field boundaries, images of the farm, conservation status, operator and owner information and much more. The new customer self-service portal, known as FSAFarm+, gives farmers and ranchers online access to securely view, print or export their personal farm data. To learn more, or begin the enroll-

ment process, visit www.fsa.usda.gov, and click on FSAFarm+ under the Online Services tab.

Change in Administrative Counties Must Be Made by Aug. 1

Producers who wish to transfer their farm records to a different administrative county for Fiscal Year 2016 must file a request no later than Aug. 1, 2016. Restrictions do apply when transferring to an office other than the county in which the land is physically located. Transfer requests to increase program benefits or to circumvent FSA procedures will not be allowed.

Dairy Safety Net Expanded to Allow Addition of Next-Generation Family Members

Dairy farms participating in the Margin Protection Program (MPP) can now update their production history when an eligible family member joins the operation. The voluntary 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.



FSA published a final rule which made these changes effective on April 13, 2016. Any dairy operation already enrolled in the Margin Protection Program that had an intergenerational transfer occur will have an opportunity to increase the dairy operation's production history during the 2017 registration and annual coverage election period. The next election period begins on July 1, 2016, and ends on Sept. 30, 2016.

For intergenerational transfers occurring on or after July 1, 2016, notification must be made to the

FSA within 60 days of purchasing the additional cows. Each participating dairy operation is authorized one intergenerational transfer at any time of its choosing until 2018.

For \$100 a year, dairy producers can receive basic catastrophic protection that covers 90 percent of milk production at a \$4 margin coverage level. For additional premiums, operations can protect 25 to 90 percent of production history with margin coverage levels from \$4.50 to \$8, in 50 cent increments. Annual enrollment in the program is required in order to receive margin protection.

The final rule also provides improved risk protection for dairy farmers who pay premiums to buy-up higher levels of coverage by clarifying that 90 percent of production is covered below the \$4 level, even if a lower percentage was selected above the \$4 margin.

For more information, visit FSA online at www.fsa.usda.gov/dairy.

Farm Ownership, Operation Changes Must Be Reported by Aug. 1 to Maintain Benefits

Changes in farm ownership or operation must be reported to FSA timely. A reconstitution may be needed to accurately represent a farm's constitution for FSA program purposes. A reconstitution is the process of combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farming operation.

Changes to existing FSA farms must be reported to FSA by Aug. 1, 2016, to maintain benefits for the current crop year.

The following are the different methods for dividing base acres when a farm division is completed:

Estate Method - The division of base acres for a parent farm among heirs according to the estate.

Designation by Landowner Method - The division of base acres in the manner agreed to by the parent farm owners and the purchaser or transferee. This method may be used when (1) part of a farm is sold or ownership is transferred; (2) an entire farm is sold to two or more persons; (3) farm ownership is transferred to two or more persons; (4) part of a tract is sold or ownership is transferred; (5) a tract is sold to two or more persons; or (6) tract ownership is transferred to two or more persons.

In order to use the Designation by Landowner Method, the land sold must have been owned for at least three years, or a waiver granted, and the buyer and seller must sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

DCP Cropland Method - Applicable to tract divisions, the division of base acres is proportional to the DCP Cropland acres associated on the resulting tracts.

Default Method - Applicable to farm divisions, the tracts identified with the resulting farms maintain the associated base acres.

* From: *Acre Reporting*, Page 1

than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.

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.

FSA requires that a producer's report of acreage and specific crop data be provided on a map showing FSA's field boundaries and acres. In most cases, FSA provides producers with a map of their farming interest representing that crop year.

To ensure an accurate acreage report is filed, producers are reminded to review the map to verify the field boundaries are accurately delineated. Producers should notify FSA of any changes or corrections needed prior to filing the acreage report with FSA.

Disaster Programs

Programming Available to Assist in Recovery from Natural Disasters

Nebraska FSA reminds farmers and ranchers across the state of federal farm program benefits that may be available to help eligible producers recover from recent heavy rains, flooding and other natural disasters.

Available programs and loans include:

- **Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)** - provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters (includes native grass for grazing). Eligible producers must have purchased NAP coverage for 2016 crops. The signup deadline for most 2017 crops is March 15, 2017.
- **Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)** - offers payments to eligible producers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather. Eligible losses may include those determined by FSA to have been caused by floods, blizzards, wildfires, tornadoes, lightning, extreme heat and extreme cold. Producers will be required to provide verifiable documentation of death losses resulting from an eligible adverse weather event and must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss of

livestock is apparent. (See Page 5 for more program details.)

- **Tree Assistance Program (TAP)** – provides assistance to eligible orchardists and nursery tree growers for qualifying tree, shrub and vine losses due to natural disaster.
- **Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP)** - provides emergency relief for losses due to feed or water shortages, disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, which are not adequately addressed by other disaster programs. (See below for more program details.)
- **Emergency Loan Program** – is available to producers with agriculture operations located in a county under a primary or contiguous Secretarial Disaster designation. These low interest loans help producers recover from production and physical losses due to natural disasters.
- **Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)** - provides emergency funding for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate land severely damaged



by natural disasters; this includes fence loss.

- **HayNet** - is an internet-based ad service allowing farmers and ranchers to share 'Need Hay' ads and 'Have Hay' ads online. Farmers also can use another feature to post advertisements for grazing land, specifically ads announcing the availability of grazing land or ads requesting a need for land to graze. It can be found at www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet.

To view the listing of FSA disaster programs, visit www.fsa.usda.gov, "Disaster Assistance Programming," "Programs and Services."

ELAP Provides Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, Farm-Raised Fish

The Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) provides emergency assistance to eligible livestock, honeybee and farm-raised fish producers who have losses due to disease, adverse weather or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires, not covered by other agricultural disaster assistance programs.

Eligible livestock losses include grazing losses not covered under the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), loss of purchased feed and/or mechanically harvested feed due to an

eligible adverse weather event, additional cost of transporting water because of an eligible drought and additional cost associated with gathering livestock to treat for cattle tick fever.

Eligible honeybee losses include loss of purchased feed due to an eligible adverse weather event, cost of additional feed purchased above normal quantities due to an eligible adverse weather condition, colony losses in excess of normal mortality

* See: ELAP, Page 5

Livestock Loss Reporting Critical to Indemnity Assistance

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides assistance to eligible producers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law. Adverse weather can include events such as floods, blizzards, wildfires, extreme heat or extreme cold.

LIP compensates livestock owners and contract growers. For 2016, eligible losses must occur on or after Jan. 1, 2016, and before Dec. 31, 2016. A notice of loss must be filed with FSA within 30 days of when the loss of livestock is apparent.

Participants must provide the following supporting documentation to their local FSA office no later than 90 calendar days after the end of the calendar year for which benefits are re-

quested:

- Proof of death documentation
- Copy of growers' contracts
- Proof of normal mortality documentation

USDA has established normal mortality rates for each type and weight range of eligible livestock, i.e. Adult Beef Cow = 1.5% and Non-Adult Beef Cattle (less than 400 pounds) = 5%. These established percentages reflect losses that are considered expected or typical under "normal" conditions.

Producers who suffer livestock losses in 2016 also must file both of the following:

- A notice of loss the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss was apparent or by Jan. 30, 2017; and
- An application for payment by March 31, 2017.

Livestock Forage Program Assists with Drought Loss Situations

The Livestock Forage Program (LFP) is designed to provide assistance for decreased grazing due to drought conditions during the normal 150-day grazing season (May 1 to Oct. 27) in Nebraska.

In leased/rented grazing acre scenarios, it is critical that parties have identified what happens if the grazing is stopped due

to drought conditions. If the full rental amount is still due even with removal of the livestock, this can maximize the LFP benefits. In addition, it is important that parties identify whether the livestock producer is responsible for any pasture maintenance items such as fencing, water source or weed control program. Discussion of these items ahead of time can help the parties avoid frustration when and if LFP triggers.

** From: ELAP, Page 4*

due to an eligible weather event or loss condition, including CCD, and hive losses due to eligible adverse weather.

ELAP covers physically damaged or destroyed livestock feed that was purchased or mechanically harvested forage or feedstuffs intended for use as feed for the producer's eligible livestock. In order to be considered eligible, harvested forage must be baled; forage that is only cut, raked or windrowed is not eligible. Producers must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent.

ELAP also covers up to 150 lost grazing days in instances when a producer has been forced to remove livestock from a grazing pasture due to floodwaters.

Eligible farm-raised fish losses include death losses in excess of normal mortality and/or loss of purchased feed due to an eligible adverse weather event.

Producers who suffer eligible livestock, honeybee or farm-

raised fish losses from Oct. 1, 2015 to Sept. 30, 2016 must file:

- A notice of loss the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent or by Nov. 1, 2016; and
- An application for payment by Nov. 1, 2016.

Producers must also file, or already have filed, their acreage reports by the applicable deadline. Acreage reporting deadlines were/are:

- Sept. 30, 2015, aquaculture
- Nov. 15, 2015, perennial forage/fall seeded crops
- Jan. 2, 2016, honeybee colonies
- July 15, 2016, all other forage

Honeybee producers also must file an acreage report within 30 days of any increase or decrease of colony numbers and/or when colonies are moved to a different state.

The Farm Bill caps ELAP disaster funding at \$20 million per federal fiscal year. ELAP Fact Sheets (by topic) can be found on the FSA website.

Direct, Guaranteed Loan Programs Offer Options for Producers

FSA offers direct farm ownership and direct farm operating loans to producers who want to establish, maintain or strengthen their farm or ranch. FSA loan officers process, approve and service direct loans.

Direct farm operating loans can be used to purchase livestock and feed, farm equipment, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance and other costs including family living expenses. Operating loans also can be used to finance minor improvements or repairs to buildings and to refinance some farm-related debts, excluding real estate.

Direct farm ownership loans can be used to purchase farmland, enlarge an existing farm, construct and repair buildings and to make farm improvements. The maximum loan amount for both direct farm ownership and operating loans is \$300,000 and a down payment is not required. Repayment terms

Loan Servicing for Stressful Times

There are options for FSA loan customers during financial stress. If you are a borrower who is unable to make payments on a loan, contact your local FSA farm loan manager to learn about the options available to you.

vary depending on the type of loan, collateral and the producer's ability to repay the loan. Operating loans are normally repaid within seven years and farm ownership loans are not to exceed 40 years. Please contact your local FSA office for more information or to apply for a direct farm ownership or operating loan.

FSA guaranteed loans allow lenders to provide agricultural credit to farmers who do not meet the lender's normal underwriting criteria. Farmers and ranchers apply for a guaranteed loan

through a lender, and the lender arranges for the guarantee. FSA can guarantee up to 95 percent of the loss of principal and interest on a loan. Guaranteed loans can be used for both farm ownership and operating purposes. Guaranteed farm ownership loans can be used to purchase farmland, construct or repair buildings, develop farmland to promote soil and water conservation or to refinance debt. Guaranteed operating loans can be used to purchase livestock, farm equipment, feed, seed, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance and other operating expenses. FSA can guarantee farm ownership and operating loans up to \$1,399,000. Repayment terms vary depending on the type of loan, collateral and the producer's ability to repay the loan. Operating loans are normally repaid within seven years and farm ownership loans are not to exceed 40 years. Please contact your lender or local FSA farm loan office for more information on guaranteed loans.

Farm Storage Facility Loan Program Expands to Reach Small, Mid-Sized Farms

The FSA Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program has recently been expanded to include a smaller "microloan" option with lower down payments, designed to help producers, including new, small and mid-sized producers, grow their businesses and markets.

The new microloan option allows applicants seeking less than \$50,000 to qualify for a reduced down payment of 5 percent and no requirement to provide three years of production history. Farms and ranches of all sizes are eligible. The microloan option is expected to be of particular benefit to smaller farms and ranches, and specialty crop producers who may not have access to commercial storage or on-farm storage after harvest. These producers can invest in equipment like conveyers, scales or refrigeration units and trucks that can store commodities before delivering them

Traditional FSFL Program Still in Place

The FSFL program allows producers of eligible commodities to obtain low-interest financing to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities. The maximum FSFL loan amount is \$500,000 per loan. Participants are required to provide a down payment of 15 percent, with Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) providing a loan for the remaining 85 percent of the net cost of the eligible storage facility, permanent drying and handling equipment. Loan terms of 3, 5, 7, 10 or 12 years are available, depending on the amount of the loan. FSFL security requirements have been eased for loans in the amount of \$100,000 and less.

to markets. Producers do not need to demonstrate the lack of commercial credit availability to apply.

Earlier this year, FSA significantly expanded the list of commodities eligible for Farm Storage Facility Loans. Eligible commodities now include aquaculture, floriculture, fruits (including nuts) and vegetables, corn, grain sorghum, rice, oilseeds, oats, wheat, triticale, spelt, buckwheat, lentils, chickpeas, dry peas, sugar, peanuts, barley, rye, hay, honey, hops, maple sap, unprocessed meat and poultry,

eggs, milk, cheese, butter, yogurt and renewable biomass. FSFL microloans also can be used to finance wash and pack equipment used post-harvest, before a commodity is placed in cold storage.

Loans Available to Assist Targeted Underserved Producers

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 targeted underserved applicants.

A targeted underserved applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender preju-

dice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities.

For purposes of this program, targeted underserved 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.

USDA Expands Microloan Program, Simplifies Application Process

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is offering farm ownership microloans, creating a new financing avenue for farmers to buy and improve property. These microloans are especially helpful to beginning or underserved farmers, U.S. veterans looking for a career in farming, and those who have small and mid-sized farming operations.

The microloan program, which celebrated its third anniversary earlier this year, has been hugely successful, providing more than 16,800 low-interest loans, totaling over \$373 million, to producers across the country. Microloans have helped farmers and ranchers with operating costs, such as feed, fertilizer, tools, fencing, equipment and living expenses since 2013. Seventy percent of loans have gone to new farmers.

Now, microloans will be available to also help with farm land

and building purchases and soil and water conservation improvements. FSA designed the expanded program to simplify the application process, expand eligibility requirements and expedite smaller real estate loans to help farmers strengthen their operations. Microloans provide up to \$50,000 to qualified producers and can be issued to the applicant directly from the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).

This microloan program is another USDA resource for America's farmers and ranchers to utilize, especially as new and beginning farmers and ranchers look for the assistance they need to get started.

To learn more about the FSA microloan program visit www.fsa.usda.gov/microloans, or contact your local FSA county office.

Youth Loans Help Those Age 10 to 20 Get a Start

FSA 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 adviser, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5,000.

Youth loan eligibility requirements are:

- 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; and
- Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project adviser. The project supervisor must recommend the youth loan applicant, along with providing adequate supervision.



Youth loans can be used for live-stock, seed, equipment and supplies, including honeybees.

Conservation Reserve Program Announcements Highlighted

Nebraska awarded 76,575 acres in recent sign-up opportunity, third highest in nation

The 2014 Farm Bill reduced the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage authorization from 32 million acres to 24 million acres. With the current commodity prices, there has been an increased demand for CRP access, with limited available acres.

In May, USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the results of the recent program application period.

General CRP Signup

Nebraska is authorized to accept 288 offers for 25,024 acres for General CRP Signup 49. Signup was held Dec. 1, 2015, through Feb. 26, 2016. Only offers with the highest Environmental Benefit Index (EBI) scores were accepted. Nebraska had 1,599 offers submitted for 88,381 acres.

CRP Grassland Signup

The 2014 Farm Bill allows enrollment of 2 million acres of grasslands into the CRP. These grasslands are working lands, and producers are able to graze and hay grasslands according to their approved conservation plan of operations. Nebraska is authorized to accept 121 offers for 31,089 acres. Signup for the CRP Grasslands started Sept. 1, 2015, with a ranking cutoff of Nov. 20, 2015. At that time, Nebraska had received 737 offers for 150,140 acres.

State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE)

Nebraska has two existing SAFE projects, and as of June, all the acres for these projects had been allocated. The state FSA office has submitted a new SAFE project for migratory birds that was being considered for approval at national headquarters as of the printing of this newsletter.

Signup to participate in CRP SAFE initiatives is ongoing; more acres could be allocated to the programs in Nebraska at a later time.

Platte-Republican River Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

In 2005, the State of Nebraska and USDA signed a CREP agreement to allow enrollment of irrigated land, located in designated areas within Nebraska, into this CREP. Participants are paid an irrigated rental rate approved by the USDA to devote their irrigated land to CRP resource-conserving cover.

Many CREP contracts, enrolled in the early years of this program, already have, or soon will, expire. Recently, a CREP steering committee revised the CREP agreement to allow landowners with current CREP contracts to re-enroll for 10 to 15 years. As of the printing of this newsletter, this amended agreement was still under consideration.

Under this program the water normally used for irrigation on program acres is restricted and maintained for instream flows, reservoirs and groundwater recharge. Irrigated rental rates in the approved CREP areas range from \$155 to \$245 per acre, based on location and type of irrigation.

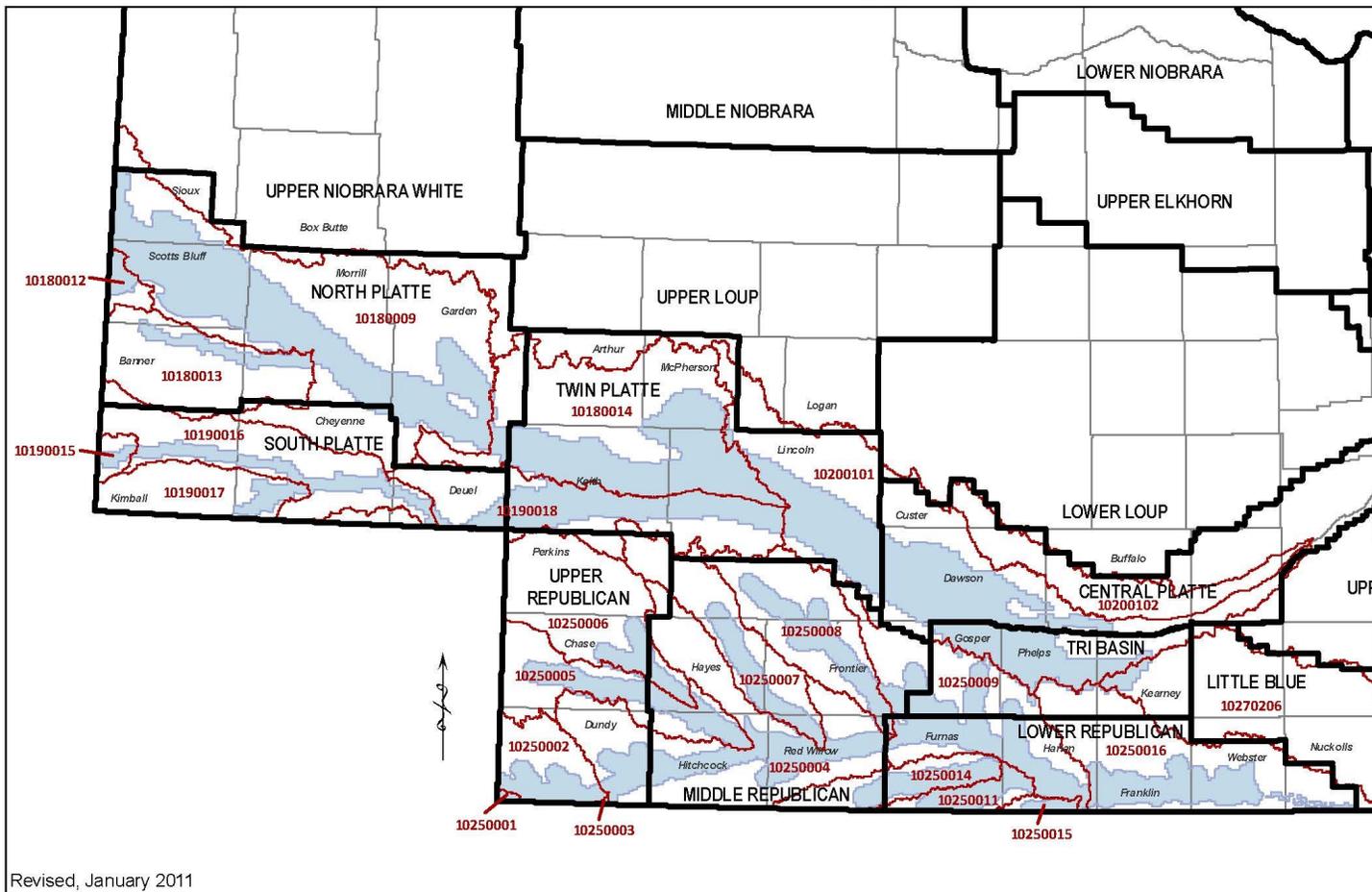
CRP Continuous Sign-up

Environmentally sensitive land devoted to certain practices may be enrolled in CRP at any time. To learn more about options under Continuous CRP, visit your local county FSA office.

Conservation Programs



CREP Area Nebraska Platte - Republican Resources Area



State and federal officials are working to amend the Platte-Republican CREP Agreement to allow for re-enrollment of expiring contracts for this program, which was first approved in 2005.

Organics

Organic Farmers Can Access Assistance for Conservation Buffers, Other Benefits

USDA is assisting organic farmers with the cost of establishing up to 20,000 acres of new conservation buffers and other practices on and near farms that produce organic crops.

The financial assistance is available from the USDA Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), a federally funded voluntary program that contracts with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive land is not farmed or ranched, but instead used for conservation benefits. CRP participants establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat. In return, FSA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. For conservation buffers, funds are available for establishing

shrubs and trees, or supporting pollinating species, and can be planted in blocks or strips. Interested organic producers can offer eligible land for enrollment in this initiative at any time.

Other USDA FSA programs that assist organic farmers include:

- The Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program that provides financial assistance for 55 to 100 percent of the average market price for organic crop losses between 50 to 65 percent of expected production due to a natural disaster.
- Marketing assistance loans that provide interim financing to help producers meet cash flow needs without having to sell crops during har-

vest when market prices are low, and deficiency payments to producers who forgo the loan in return for a payment on the eligible commodity.

- A variety of loans for operating expenses, ownership or guarantees with outside lenders, including streamlined microloans that have a lower amount of paperwork.
- Farm Storage Facility Loans that provide low-interest financing to build or upgrade storage facilities for organic commodities, including cold storage, grain bins, bulk tanks and drying and handling equipment.

Visit www.fsa.usda.gov/organic to learn more about how FSA can help.

Miscellaneous

** From: Producers Encouraged, Page 1*

that selection stays intact through 2018, you must still sign a contract each year to maintain coverage under these safety net programs. The deadline for that is Aug. 1, 2016.

Although I've highlighted deadlines that are especially important to row crop producers, this edition of FSA State News has information relevant to all segments of our Nebraska agriculture industry. This includes programs that impact ranchers, feedlot owners, and dairy producers, such as the Livestock Forage Program, the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program, the Livestock Indemnity Program, and the Margin Protection Program. There also are stories highlighting the availability of the FSA loan programs, including direct farm operating and farm ownership loans.

Our state has roughly 49 million acres within its borders, and agriculture is practiced on about 92 percent of them. That means what you do on your farms, ranches and land in Nebraska matters to the state as a whole. Nebraska FSA is here to help you in that endeavor.

Sincerely,



Producers Reminded of Importance of Completing NASS Surveys

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) Field Offices will contact growers later this year to complete row crop yield surveys. If you are one of the producers contacted to complete a 2016 survey, we encourage your participation as many USDA agencies, including FSA and Risk Management Agency (RMA), use the NASS data for programs.

FSA uses NASS county yield data for farm credit, conservation, disaster programs, loan and commodity programs. For example, under the 2014 Farm Bill, FSA uses the NASS county yield data to calculate Agriculture Risk Coverage – County (ARC-CO) benchmark revenues and current year county revenues. In cases where NASS county yield data is not available, the FSA State Committee must determine a county yield using RMA yield data or the best available yield data, including assigning a county yield using neighboring county yields from NASS or RMA.

Information provided to NASS is kept confidential and protected by federal law. NASS publishes only aggregate-level data.

Dates to Remember

July 15, 2016	Deadline to report all spring-seeded crops, including Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage
Aug. 1, 2016	Enrollment period for 2016 ARC/PLC ends
Aug. 1, 2016	Deadline to request farm transfers or reconstitutions for 2016
Sept. 1, 2016	NAP application/sales deadline for Christmas trees, nursery crop coverage in 2017
Sept. 30, 2016	Deadline to report aquaculture, Christmas trees and nursery crops; deadline for Dairy Margin Protection Program election period
Nov. 1, 2016	Deadline to apply for 2016 ELAP losses
Nov. 15, 2016	Deadline to report fall-seeded crops and perennial grasses (including for ELAP and NAP programming purposes)
Jan. 2, 2017	Deadline to report honeybees for ELAP and NAP

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