

April 29, 2015



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Belmont/Monroe County FSA Updates

Belmont/Monroe County 2015 Acreage Reporting Dates

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

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for Belmont/Monroe County:

May 31, 2015 --- Report Nursery Crop Acreage.

July 15, 2015 --- Report all your Burley Tobacco, Cabbage (Planted 3/19/15-5/31/15), Corn, Grain Sorghum, Hybrid Corn Seed, Spring Oats, Popcorn, Potatoes, Soybeans, Sugar Beets, Tomatoes and all other crops.

Aug. 15, 2015 --- Report Cabbage (Planted 6/1/15-7/20/15).

Sept. 30, 2015 --- Report Aquaculture.

Dec. 15, 2015 ---- Fall Barley, Fall Wheat, and all other 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 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.

Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency makes loans to youths to establish and operate 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.

Applicants Must:

- 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
- Must obtain a written recommendation and consent from a parent or guardian if the applicant has not reached the age of majority under state law
- 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 project and the loan, along with providing adequate supervision.

To find out more about the FSA Youth loan program, contact one of the Farm Loan Program specialists listed on the left above.

USDA Implements 2014 Farm Bill Provision to Limit Payments to Non-Farmers

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently announced a proposed rule to limit farm payments to non-farmers, consistent with requirements Congress mandated in the 2014 Farm Bill. The proposed rule limits farm payments to individuals who may be designated as farm managers but are not actively engaged in farm management. In the Farm Bill, Congress gave USDA the authority to address this loophole for joint ventures and general partnerships, while exempting family farm operations from being impacted by the new rule USDA ultimately implements.

The current definition of "actively engaged" for managers, established in 1987, is broad, allowing individuals with little to no contributions to critical farm management decisions to receive safety-net payments if they are classified as farm managers, and for some operations there were an unlimited number of managers that could receive payments.

The proposed rule seeks to close this loophole to the extent possible within the guidelines required by the 2014 Farm Bill. Under the proposed rule, non-family joint ventures and general partnerships must document that their managers are making significant contributions to the farming operation, defined as 500 hours of substantial management work per year, or 25 percent of the critical management time necessary for the success of the farming operation. Many operations will be limited to only one manager who can receive a safety-net payment. Operators that can demonstrate they are large and complex could be allowed payments for up to three managers only if they can show all three are actively and substantially engaged in farm operations. The changes specified in the rule would apply to payment eligibility for 2016 and subsequent crop years for Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) Programs, loan deficiency payments and marketing loan gains realized via the Marketing Assistance Loan program.

As mandated by Congress, family farms will not be impacted. There will also be no change to existing rules for contributions to land, capital, equipment, or labor. Only non-family farm general partnerships or joint ventures comprised of more than one member will be impacted by this proposed rule.

Stakeholders interested in commenting on the proposed definition and changes are encouraged to provide written comments at www.regulations.gov by May 26, 2015. The proposed rule is available at <http://go.usa.gov/3C6Kk>.

Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food

Recent growth in the demand for locally and regionally produced food has opened up new market opportunities for farmers, growers and food businesses. Americans are interested in learning more about where their food comes from, a trend that benefits all of U.S. agriculture. Learn more about local and regional food systems, who participates in them, and their role in economic and community development in the [Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food Compass](#).

Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food (KYF2) is a USDA-wide effort to strengthen local and regional food systems.

A surge in consumer demand for locally-produced food is creating jobs and opportunities throughout rural America. Beginning farmers are finding an entry point into agriculture through local markets. Experienced farmers are diversifying their sales to capture added value through local branding. Small businesses are developing new packing, processing, distribution and retail opportunities. And consumers are learning more about where their food comes from and gaining access to fresh, local foods.

Local and regional markets often provide farmers with a higher share of the food dollar, and money spent at a local business often continues to circulate within community, creating a multiplier effect and providing greater economic benefits to the area.

USDA has responded to the growing interest in local and regional foods through the Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food initiative (KYF2). Our mission is to support the critical connection between farmers and consumers and to strengthen USDA's support for local and regional food systems. Through KYF2, USDA integrates programs and policies that:

- Stimulate food- and agriculturally-based community economic development;
- Foster new opportunities for farmers and ranchers;
- Promote locally- and regionally-produced and processed foods;
- Cultivate healthy eating habits and educated, empowered consumers;
- Expand access to affordable fresh and local food; and
- Demonstrate the connection between food, agriculture, community and the environment.

To make the most of [USDA programs available to support local and regional food systems](#), KYF2 works to foster innovative, effective and open government. The initiative is carried out by a task force of USDA employees representing every agency within the Department. It breaks down bureaucratic silos, develops common-sense solutions, and fosters new partnerships inside USDA and across the country.

Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)

The Rural Development Agency has financial assistance available in the form of grants and guaranteed loans to agricultural producers and rural small businesses for purchasing and installing renewable energy systems and making energy efficiency improvements through the Renewable Energy Systems and Energy Efficiency Improvements Assistance Program.

Agricultural Producers and Rural Small Businesses may be eligible to apply. Eligible projects may include:

- Renewable energy systems that provide energy from the following list of renewable resources or hydrogen derived from these renewable resources: Wind, Solar, Renewable biomass, Small hydro-electric, Ocean, Geothermal;
- Energy efficiency improvements to a facility or building;
- Technology must be commercially available;
- Projects must be technically feasible and have technical merit.

More information may be obtained by contacting Randy Monhemius, Business Program Specialist at 614-255-2424 or Randy.Monhemius@oh.usda.gov OR by contacting Christie Hooks, Business Program Specialist at 614-255-2397 or Christie.Hooks@oh.usda.gov.

Deadlines are April 30 and June 30, so don't delay!

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).