

April 2015



Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a Web page.](#)

- [USDA to Issue Disaster Assistance to Help Honeybee, Livestock and Farm-Raised Fish Producers](#)
- [Dates to Remember](#)
- [Margin Protection Program for Dairy Producers - Payment Reminder](#)
- [Farm Loan Program Limits](#)
- [Report Failed Crop Acreage Prior to Destruction](#)
- [Increase Farm Income by Creating Habitat for Native Pollinators](#)
- [USDA Conducts Sorghum Referendum](#)
- [Tree Assistance Program \(TAP\) Available](#)

Ohio FSA State News and Updates

Ohio Farm Service Agency State Office

200 North High St. Room
540
Columbus, OH, 43215
Phone: 614-255-2441
FAX: 855-832-5100

State Executive

Director:

Steven Maurer

Administrative Officer:

Mimi Garringer

Conservation Chief:

Brandi Koehler

Farm Loan Chief:

David Drake

Price Support Chief:

USDA to Issue Disaster Assistance to Help Honeybee, Livestock and Farm-Raised Fish Producers

***Farm Bill Program Offers Producers Relief for 2014 Losses in
more than 40 States including Ohio***

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency recently announced that nearly 2,700 applicants will begin receiving disaster assistance through the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) for losses experienced from Oct. 1, 2013, through Sept. 30, 2014.

The program, re-authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill, provides disaster relief to livestock, honeybee, and farm-raised fish producers not covered by other agricultural disaster assistance programs. Eligible losses may include excessive heat or winds, flooding, blizzards, hail, wildfires, lightning strikes, volcanic eruptions and diseases, or in the case of honeybees, losses due to colony collapse disorder. Beekeepers, most of whom suffered honeybee colony losses, represent more than half of ELAP recipients.

Carletha Fasching

**Production Adjustment,
Compliance and Risk
Management Chief:**
Matt Kleski

State Committee:
Bob Boggs, Chairperson
Bob Cole, member
Bruce Long, member
Jim Rex, member
Jim Zumbrink, member

The farm bill caps ELAP disaster funding at \$20 million per federal fiscal year and the Budget Control Act of 2011, passed by Congress, requires USDA to reduce payments by 7.3 percent, beginning Oct. 1, 2014. To accommodate the number of requests for ELAP assistance, which exceeded 2014 funding, payments will be reduced to ensure that all eligible applicants receive a prorated share.

To learn more about ELAP, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/elap. For more information about USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) disaster assistance programs, contact your [County FSA Office](#).

Visit Ohio FSA website for additional information at: www.fsa.usda.gov/oh

Please contact your [FSA County Office](#) for questions specific to your operation.

Dates to Remember

April 21 -- Last Day to vote on Sorghum Request for Referendum.

May 25 --- Memorial Day Holiday. FSA Offices Closed.

June 1 ----- Deadline to apply for 2014 commodity loans and LDP's on feed grains, soybeans, pulse crops.

July 3 ----- Independence Day Holiday. FSA Offices Closed.

Margin Protection Program for Dairy Producers - Payment Reminder

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds producers who selected buy-up coverage under the Margin Protection Program for Dairy Producers (MPP-Dairy), that outstanding premiums are due by June 1st, 2015. Reminder letters will be generated May 1st to participating dairies with an outstanding premium due to notify them of the amount still owed.

If the remaining premium is not paid by June 1st, a receivable will be established, coverage will be lost, and any further MPP-Dairy payments triggered will be forfeited. Additionally, dairy operations will not be eligible for buy-up coverage in subsequent calendar years however the dairy will remain legally obligated to pay the premium for 2015. Furthermore, the dairy will be obligated to pay the annual \$100 administrative fee for the duration of the MPP-Dairy Program.

After coverage has been lost, coverage can only be regained when the premium is paid in full prior to the end of 2015. If paid in full, coverage will be reinstated for any remaining consecutive two-month period in the program year.

For additional information or questions, please contact your [County FSA office](#).

Farm Loan Program Limits

The Farm Service Agency is committed to providing family farmers with loans to meet their farm credit needs. If you are having trouble getting the credit you need for your farm, or regularly borrow from FSA, direct and guaranteed loans are currently available.

Ask your lender about an FSA loan guarantee if you've had a setback and your lender is reluctant to extend or renew your loan.

Farm ownership loans or farm operating loans may be obtained as direct loans for a maximum of up to \$300,000. Guaranteed loans have a maximum limit of \$1,392,000. This makes the maximum combination of direct and guaranteed loan indebtedness \$1,692,000.

For detailed information, contact your [County FSA office](#) to setup an appointment with a Loan Approval Official.

Report Failed Crop Acreage Prior to Destruction

With spring planting quickly approaching, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) encourages farmers to report failed crop acreage that will not be brought to harvest to their FSA office. Failed acreage must be reported to FSA before destroying and replanting to allow time for a field check.

"It is very important that farmers report failed acreage that will not be brought to harvest to the FSA office prior to destruction," said State Executive Director, Steven Maurer. "This simple act of insuring that failed acres are documented could be the determining factor in whether or not a farmer is eligible for future crop disaster program payments."

Form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. For crop losses covered by the Non-insured Assistance Program (NAP), producers must contact their local FSA office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent. Producers with crop insurance should also contact their local agent when losses occur and before destroying the crop.

Producers are encouraged to keep good production records on acreage with a low crop yield to document crop losses. To be eligible for crop disaster programs in the future, production records may help support crop loss claims.

Additional information in regard to failed crop acreage or crop losses covered by the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) can be obtained by contacting your [County FSA office](#).

Increase Farm Income by Creating Habitat for Native Pollinators

Did you know that production agriculture is dependent upon pollinators such as bees, insects, birds, and other animals? Approximately 30 percent of the food and fiber crops grown throughout the world depend upon insect pollination. Recent significant declines in pollinator populations pose a potentially serious economic threat to production agriculture.

To help enhance and restore habitat for ecologically and economically significant pollinator species, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) has collaborated with pollinator experts and other conservation partners to develop a new CRP practice, CP42-Pollinator Habitat. CP42 allows landowners and farm operators to establish plots of wildflowers and legumes vital for the longevity of pollinator species.

The pollinator habitat practice may be established on the acreage of an entire field, or planted in blocks or strips within a field. The strips or blocks may allow for the practice to be incorporated into organic or non-organic farming operations if the land meets certain eligibility criteria. CP42 may

also be incorporated into the landscape of vineyards and orchards.

To be eligible for CP42, the offered land must be owned or leased for at least one year prior to enrollment to be eligible, and must be physically and legally capable of being cropped in a normal manner. Land must also meet cropping history and other eligibility requirements. Land currently enrolled in CRP may be re-offered for enrollment into CP42 if the land enrolled in CRP is in the last year of the CRP-1 contract.

Offers for enrollment may be made at your County FSA office. Offers are automatically accepted provided the land and applicant meet certain eligibility requirements. CP42 offers are not subject to competitive bidding.

Producers will receive annual rental payments for the length of the contract, and cost-share assistance of up to 50 percent of the eligible practice cost to establish CP42 pollinator habitats. Additionally, FSA provides producers with a signing incentive payment of up to \$150 per acre (not applicable to re-enrolled acreage). Contracts for CP42 practices must be 10 years in duration.

If you are interested in establishing or restoring pollinator habitat on your land or wish to learn more about the new CP42-Pollinator Habitat practice, then stop by your [County FSA office](#) or go [online](#) to read further about the pollinator habitat.

USDA Conducts Sorghum Referendum

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is conducting a referendum regarding the continuation of the Sorghum Checkoff Program. USDA will conduct the referendum through April 21, 2015, at county USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices for producers and the Agricultural Marketing Service office for importers. Ballots may be obtained in person, by mail or facsimile at county FSA offices, or via the Internet.

Any eligible person engaged in the production or importation of sorghum from January 1, 2011, to December 31, 2014, is eligible to participate. Individuals are required to provide documentation such as a sales receipt or remittance form that shows they engaged in the production or importation of sorghum.

The Sorghum Promotion, Research, and Information Order requires that a referendum be conducted no later than seven years after the start of assessments, which began on July 1, 2008. For the program to continue, a majority of those voting must favor the continuation of the order.

The Sorghum Checkoff Program, and its 13-member board, is authorized by the Commodity Promotion, Research, and Information Act of 1996. The Sorghum Checkoff is intended to be a national, coordinated, self-help marketing program designed to strengthen the position of sorghum in the marketplace, maintain and expand existing domestic and foreign markets and uses for sorghum, and develop new markets and uses for sorghum.

The final procedures were published in the Nov. 18, 2010, Federal Register. The notice announcing the dates of the referendum was published in the Feb. 19, 2015, Federal Register.

For more information, contact Craig Shackelford, Marketing Specialist, Research and Promotion Division, Livestock, Poultry, and Seed Program, AMS, USDA, 22 Jamesport Lane, White, GA 30184; Telephone: (470) 315-4246; craig.shackelford@ams.usda.gov. Procedures and additional information about the referendum can be found at: www.ams.usda.gov/SorghumReferendum.

Tree Assistance Program (TAP) Available

Orchardists and nursery tree growers who experienced losses from natural disasters can sign up for the Tree Assistance Program (TAP) at their County FSA Office. TAP provides financial assistance to qualifying fruit and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters. For 2015, eligible losses must occur on or after Jan. 1, 2015, and before December 31, 2015. A notice of loss must be filed with FSA and provide supporting documentation within 90 days of the disaster event or the date when the loss is apparent.

Eligible tree types include trees, bushes or vines that produce an annual crop for commercial purposes. Nursery trees include ornamental, fruit, nut and Christmas trees that are produced for commercial sale. Trees used for pulp or timber are ineligible.

To qualify for TAP, fruit growers must suffer a qualifying tree, bush or vine loss in excess of 15 percent mortality from an eligible natural disaster. The eligible trees, bushes or vines must have been owned when the natural disaster occurred; however, eligible growers are not required to own the land on which the eligible trees, bushes and vines were planted.

If the TAP application is approved, the eligible trees, bushes and vines must be replaced within 12 months from the date the application is approved. The cumulative total quantity of acres planted to trees, bushes or vines for which a producer can receive TAP payments, cannot exceed 500 acres annually.

If physical evidence of the lost trees, bushes, or vines no longer exists, the owner must provide documentation to determine the eligible trees, bushes, or vines existed and were lost on each stand because of the approved disaster condition.

Examples of documentation can include:

- Receipts for the original purchase of the eligible trees, bushes, or vines where TAP is requested,
- Documentation of labor and equipment used to plant or remove the eligible trees, bushes, or vines that were lost,
- Chemical, fertilizer, or other related receipts to substantiate the existence of the eligible trees, bushes, or vines.
- RMA appraisal worksheet may be used by COC to substantiate applicant's certification of trees lost.

For more information, producers are encouraged to review the [TAP fact sheet](#) or contact their [County FSA Office](#).

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).
