

September 2015



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## Ohio FSA State News and Updates

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### USDA Enrollment Period for Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Safety-Net Programs Closes Sept. 30

Eligible producers can enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for 2014 and 2015. The enrollment period began June 17, 2015, and will end **Sept. 30, 2015**.

Covered commodities under ARC and PLC 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.

For more information please contact your [County FSA office](#).

### USDA Announces Conservation Incentives for Working Grass and Pasture Lands

Beginning Sept. 1, farmers and landowners can apply for financial assistance to help conserve working grasslands and pastureland while maintaining the areas as livestock grazing lands.

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Grasslands Initiative is part of the CRP program, a federally funded voluntary program that contracts with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive

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

Visit Ohio FSA website for additional information at: [www.fsa.usda.gov/oh](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/oh)

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

agricultural land is not farmed or ranched, but instead used for conservation benefits. Contract duration is 15 years.

The CRP-Grasslands initiative will provide participants who establish long-term, resource-conserving covers with annual rental payments up to 75 percent of the grazing value of the land. Cost-share assistance also is available for up to 50 percent of the cost to establish cross fencing to support rotational grazing and or livestock watering facilities. Participants may still conduct common grazing practices, produce hay, mow, or harvest for seed production, conduct fire rehabilitation, and construct firebreaks and fences.

With the publication of the CRP regulation, FSA will accept applications on an ongoing basis beginning Sept. 1, 2015, with those applications scored against published ranking criteria, and approved based on the competitiveness of the offer. The ranking period will occur at least once per year and be announced at least 30 days prior to its start. The end of the first ranking period will be Nov. 20, 2015.

Visit your [county FSA office](#) to learn more about participating in CRP-Grasslands, or view the fact sheet [online](#) for further information.

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## Enrollment for 2016 Dairy Margin Protection Program Ends September 30

Dairy farmers are reminded that the enrollment deadline for the [Margin Protection Program](#) for coverage in 2016 is Sep. 30. The voluntary program, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, provides financial assistance to participating dairy operations when the margin – the difference between the price of milk and feed costs – falls below the coverage level selected by the farmer.

The Margin Protection Program gives participating dairy producers the flexibility to select coverage levels best suited for their operation. Enrollment began July 1 and **ends on Sept. 30, 2015**, for coverage in 2016. Participating farmers will remain in the program through 2018 and pay a \$100 administrative fee each year. Producers also have the option of selecting a different coverage level during open enrollment each year. Margin Protection Program payments are based on an operation's historical production. An operation's historical production will increase by 2.61 percent in 2016 if the operation participated in 2015, providing a stronger safety net.

USDA also has an online resource available to help dairy producers decide which level of coverage will provide them with the strongest safety net under a variety of conditions. The enhanced Web tool, available at [www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool), allows dairy farmers to quickly and easily combine their unique operation data and other key variables to calculate their coverage needs based on price projections. Producers can also review historical data or estimate future coverage based on data projections. The secure site can be accessed via computer, mobile phone, or tablet, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Dairy operations enrolling in the program must meet conservation compliance provisions. Producers participating in the Livestock Gross Margin insurance program may register for the Margin Protection Program, but this new margin program will only begin once their livestock dairy insurance coverage has ended. Producers must also submit form CCC-782 for 2016, confirming their Margin Protection Program coverage level selection, to the FSA office. If electing higher coverage for 2016, dairy producers can either pay the premium in full at the time of enrollment or pay a minimum of 25 percent of the premium by Feb. 1, 2016.

For more information, visit FSA online at [www.fsa.usda.gov/dairy](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dairy), or stop by the FSA County office.

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# USDA Packages Disaster Protection with Loans to Benefit Specialty Crop and Diversified Producers

***Free basic coverage and discounted premiums available for new and underserved loan applicants.***

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds producers who apply for FSA farm loans of an opportunity to enroll in new disaster loss protections created by the 2014 Farm Bill. The new coverage, available from the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), is available to FSA loan applicants who grow non-insurable crops, so this is especially important to fruit and vegetable producers and other specialty crop growers.

New and beginning farmers, underserved and limited income specialty growers who apply for farm loans could qualify for basic loss coverage at no cost, or higher coverage for a discounted premium.

The basic disaster coverage protects at 55 percent of the market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of production. Covered crops include “specialty” crops, for instance, vegetables, fruits, hops, mushrooms, floriculture, ornamental nursery, aquaculture, turf grass, ginseng, honey, syrup, hay, forage, grazing and energy crops. FSA allows beginning, underserved or limited income producers to obtain NAP coverage up to 90 days after the normal application closing date when they also apply for FSA credit.

In addition to free basic coverage, beginning, underserved or limited income producers are eligible for a 50 percent discount on premiums for the higher levels of coverage that protect up to 65 percent of expected production at 100 percent of the average market price. Producers also may work with FSA to protect value-added production, such as organic or direct market crops, at their fair market value in those markets. Targeted underserved groups eligible for free or discounted coverage are American Indians or Alaskan Natives, Asians, Blacks or African Americans, Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, and women.

As a farmer, whether you are just starting out or have many years of experience, there are times when you need to borrow money to start, expand, sustain, or make changes to your business. If you are thinking about applying for a loan, FSA offers a variety of loans, including farm ownership loans, operating loans, emergency, conservation and our most popular loan, the microloan. Microloans offer borrowers simplified lending with less paperwork. Microloans allows beginning, small and mid-sized farmers access up to \$50,000 using a simplified application process with up to seven years to repay.

Growers need not apply for an FSA loan, nor be a beginning, limited resource, or underserved farmer, to be eligible for Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program assistance. To learn more, visit our NAP or Farm Loan websites at: [www.fsa.usda.gov/nap](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/nap) or [www.fsa.usda.gov/farmloans](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/farmloans), or contact your FSA office for additional information.

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## Dates to Remember

**Sept. 30** -- **Last day** for dairy producers to make elections for Milk Price Protection Program.

**Sept. 30** -- ARC/PLC Enrollment Period Ends.

**Oct. 1** ----- **Deadline** to obtain 2016 NAP coverage for Winter Wheat, Rye, Barley and Speltz.

**Oct. 12** ---- Columbus Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed.**

**Nov. 9** ---- County committee ballots mailed to voters.

**Nov. 11** --- Veterans Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed.**

**Nov. 20** --- **Last day to apply** for coverage for asparagus, blueberries, caneberries, cherries, chestnuts, forage for hay and pasture, grapes, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums, strawberries, honey, maple syrup and Hops. **NOTE: Hops is a perennial crop and the application deadline moved from spring to fall for coverage.**

**Nov. 26** --- Thanksgiving Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed.**

**Dec. 7** ----- **Last day** to return voted Ballots in county committee election.

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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).

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