

April 2015



NEWSLETTER

Missouri FSA Newsletter

Missouri Farm Service Agency

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State Committee:

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Please contact your local FSA Office for questions specific to your operation or county.

2015 Acreage Reporting Dates

All producers are encouraged to visit the local county FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline. Accurate and timely reporting is necessary for various FSA program eligibility requirements.

The following are acreage reporting dates for Missouri:

May 15 - Spring oats, potatoes

July 15 - Burley tobacco, corn, cotton, grain sorghum, hybrid seed corn, popcorn, rice, soybeans and all other crops and CRP.

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 can be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, report the new acreage no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation will be necessary for 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 final acreage reporting date is 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.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact your local county FSA office.

Filing a Notice of Loss

Producers experiencing failed acreage or prevented planting should timely file a CCC-576, Notice of Loss, for all crops including grasses. For losses on crops covered by the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and crop insurance, file a CCC-576, Notice of Loss, in the FSA County Office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent.

If filing for prevented planting, complete an acreage report and the CCC-576 within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop. [Click here](#) for final planting dates for Missouri.

Microloans

FSA reminds farmers and ranchers that the FSA borrowing limit for microloans is now \$50,000. Microloans offer borrowers simplified lending with less paperwork. Microloans are part of USDA's continued commitment to [small and mid-sized farming operations](#).

To complement the microloan program, additional changes to FSA eligibility requirements will enhance beginning farmers and ranchers access to land, a key barrier to entry level producers. FSA understands there may be applicants for the microloan program who want to farm, but may not have traditional farm experience or have not been raised on a farm or within a rural community with agriculture-affiliated organizations. Microloan program applicants will need to have some farm experience; however, FSA will consider an applicant's small business experience, as well as any experience with a self-guided apprenticeship, as a means to meet the farm management requirement.

Since 2010, more than 50 percent of USDA's farm loans now go to beginning farmers and FSA has increased its lending to targeted underserved producers by nearly 50 percent.

Please review the [FSA Microloan Program Fact Sheet](#) for program application, eligibility and related information.

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

Department Proposes Changes to "Actively Engaged" Rule

USDA proposed a 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. It allows individuals to receive safety-net payments if they are classified as farm managers although they

may actually have little to no contributions for critical farm management decisions. Some operations have an unlimited number of managers that could receive payments.

Under the proposed rule, non-family joint ventures and general partnerships must document 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 who 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. Also included are payments earned from loan deficiency payments and marketing loan gains realized through 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>.

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

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

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, 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.

The Farm Bill capped ELAP disaster funding at \$20 million per federal fiscal year. 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, payments will be reduced to ensure that all eligible applicants receive a prorated share.

2015 losses (Oct. 1, 2014 - Sept. 30, 2015) must be reported within 30 days of when the loss becomes apparent and application for payment must be submitted by November 1, 2015.

To learn more about ELAP, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/elap. For more information about USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) disaster assistance programs, visit disaster.usda.fsa.gov or contact your local FSA office at <http://offices.usda.gov>.

USDA Grants Help Cut Energy Costs for Farmers and Rural Small Businesses

USDA is offering grants and loan guarantees to help rural businesses and agricultural producers reduce their energy costs and consumption.

The funding is being provided through USDA Rural Development's Rural Energy for America Program (REAP). Loans and grants are available to purchase and install renewable energy systems or make energy efficiency improvements to a farm or business.

Renewable energy systems include solar, wind, geothermal, anaerobic digesters, and renewable biomass. Energy efficiency improvements include grain drying and handling, lighting, refrigeration, facility improvements (such as adding insulation or replacing windows), heating and cooling upgrades, motor replacements and automated control upgrades.

Grants of up to 25% of a project's total costs are available. The maximum grants are \$250,000 for energy efficiency improvements and \$500,000 for renewable energy systems. The REAP program also provides for the guarantee of loans for up to 75% of the cost of a renewable energy or energy efficiency project.

Grant application deadlines are **April 30, 2015**, and **June 30, 2015**. Guaranteed loan applications will be reviewed on a monthly basis. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis. Residential projects are not eligible for the REAP program.

Missouri has nearly \$2 million in grant funding available for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects. For information on REAP contact (573) 876-9321 or email nathan.tutt@mo.usda.gov.

Bobwhite Quail Habitat Management Field Day 2015

Bobwhite Quail Management in Modern Agriculture: Back to the Basics

Saturday, June 27, 2015

8 a.m. to Noon

Bradford Research Center, Columbia, Mo.

Sponsored by Missouri Department of Conservation, University of Missouri College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, MU Extension, Missouri Soybean Association and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency.

[Click here](#) for more information.

Dates to Remember and Interest Rates

Selected Interest Rates for April 2015	
90-Day Treasury Bill	.125%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	2.375%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	3.375%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Direct Farm Ownership - Joint Financing	2.50%
Emergency Loans	3.375%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years)	1.875%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (10 years)	2.125%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (12 years)	2.250%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.250%

Dates to Remember	
May 1	NAP application closing date for ornamental nursery
May 1	Beginning of primary nesting season for Missouri. No maintenance (spraying, burning, mowing or disking) on CRP acreage.
May 15	Final date to report spring oats and potatoes.
May 25	Memorial Day holiday. FSA offices are closed.
June 1	MPP-Dairy premium balances are due.
July 15	Final date to report CRP, burley tobacco, corn, cotton, grain sorghum, hybrid seed corn, popcorn, rice, soybean and all other crops.

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).