



## August 2014

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## August 2014 Wisconsin State FSA Newsletter



**Brad Pfaff**  
State Executive Director

It is hard to believe that Summer is coming to an end. After last year's cold winter, it seemed as Spring would never arrive; now we await fall. I hope that this FSA newsletter finds you and your family well.

The Farm Bill (the Agricultural Act of 2014) was signed into law on February 7, 2014. The 2014 Farm Bill has major changes in many programs and minor adjustments in others. This newsletter provides you with information on FSA program highlights, as well as sign-up dates and deadlines.

I hope you find this newsletter helpful and informative. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your local FSA office. Thank you for your work and dedication to Wisconsin agriculture.

### 2014 FARM BILL

For the latest on 2014 Farm Bill programs administered by FSA, please visit the national FSA Farm Bill website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/farmbill](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/farmbill) or visit the Wisconsin FSA at [www.fsa.usda.gov/wi](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wi).

### FSA ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

FSA now uses an electronic email service called GovDelivery. FSA will utilize GovDelivery to publicize important program information timely via email. Contact your local FSA office to sign up for this service if you have an email address. If not, you may want to obtain copies from a neighbor.

### ACREAGE HISTORY AND YIELD NOTIFICATION BY USDA

Written notifications from USDA have been sent to all farmers (operators and owners) that provide updates on their current base acres, yields and 2009-2012 planting history. Local FSA offices are currently researching the historical data.

Please cross check the letter from USDA with your farm records. If the information is correct, no further action is needed at this time, but if our letter is incomplete or incorrect, contact your local FSA office.

Verifying the accuracy of data on a farm's acreage history is a required early step for enrolling in the upcoming Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) program and the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program. Later this summer/fall, farmers and ranchers will have an opportunity to update their crop yield information and reallocate base acres.

By mid-winter all producers on a farm will be required to make a one-time, unanimous and irrevocable election between price protection and county revenue protection or individual revenue protection for 2014-2018 crop years. Producers can expect to sign contracts for ARC or PLC for the 2014 and 2015 crop years in the spring of 2015.

Covered commodities 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 details, go to the WI FSA website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/wi](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wi) and click on the Base Reallocation, Yield Updates, etc.,” under the “Spotlights Section”.

## MARGIN PROTECTION PROGRAM FOR DAIRY PRODUCERS

The 2014 Farm Bill authorized the Margin Protection Program (MPP-Dairy) for dairy producers. The new, voluntary risk management program replaces the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program which expires on August 31, 2014.

MPP-Dairy offers protection to dairy producers when the difference (the margin) between the all-milk price and national average feed cost falls below a certain producer selected amount.

Eligible producers may purchase coverage for their dairy operation by paying an annual administrative fee of \$100 and a premium, as applicable, for higher levels of coverage. Producers in the dairy operation will have to select a desired coverage level ranging from \$4.00 to \$8.00, in \$0.50 increments and a desired coverage percentage level ranging from 25 to 90 percent, in 5 percent increments. Producers will also have to decide whether or not to participate in the MPP-Dairy Program or the Livestock Gross Margin Program administered by the Risk Management Agency (RMA). They will not be allowed to participate in both.

A decision tool will be made available in the fall of 2014 to help producers make coverage level decisions. Enrollment will also begin this fall. Dairy operators will establish their production history during signup. Verification of the production records will be required. The regulations for MPP-dairy are still being developed. Additional information will be provided as it becomes available.

**Informational meetings:** Dr. Mark Stephenson, Extension Dairy Policy Specialist from Madison will be the featured speaker for upcoming Dairy MPP informational meetings at the **locations listed to the right.** Contact your local FSA office for more details.

## DISASTER ASSISTANCE FOR 2012 FROST OR FREEZE FRUIT CROP LOSSES ANNOUNCED

Producers who experienced losses to bush or tree fruit crops in 71 of the 72 counties in Wisconsin (Iron County is not eligible) may be eligible for assistance through the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). The program, authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill, provides supplemental NAP payments to eligible producers.

Farmers who did not have access to crop insurance, have fruit tree or bush crops physically located in the eligible counties and had losses due to damaging weather or other adverse natural occurrences may qualify for program assistance.

Applications for the 2012 Frost or Freeze must be submitted to FSA county offices by **September 22, 2014**

Sept. 2 9:45 AM	City Hall/Library 203 N. First Street Abbotsford, WI 54405
Sept. 2 1:15 PM	Matsche Center/Village Hall 362 Railroad Street Birnawood, WI 54414
Sept. 3 9:45 AM	Cecil Village Hall 111 E Hofman Street Cecil, WI 54111
Sept. 3 1:15 PM	Crystal Foils 1500 Hondsckhe Drive New London, WI 54961
Sept. 4 9:45 AM	Millhome Supper Club 16524 Lox Chapel Road Kiel, WI 53042
Sept. 4 1:15 PM	Brown Co. Extension Office 1150 Bellevue Street Green Bay, WI 54302
Sept. 5 9:00 AM	Kimberly, WI
Sept. 8 9:45 AM	Dodge County Admin Building- Rooms F & G 127 East Oak Street Juneau, WI 53039
Sept. 15 9:45 AM	Jackson Electric Cooperative- Community Meeting Room N6868 Community Road F Black River Falls, WI 54615
Sept. 15 1:15 PM	Eau Claire County FSA 1304 N Hillcrest Pkwy Altoona, WI 54720
Sept. 16 9:45 AM	Dunn County- Judicial Center Room 1402 615 Stokke Pkwy Menomonie, WI 54751
Sept. 16 1:15 PM	AG Service and Education Center 1960 8 <sup>th</sup> Avenue - Baldwin, WI
Sept. 17 9:45 AM	WITC – Rice Lake Campus Conference Center - 1900 College Drive Rice Lake, WI 54868
Sept. 17 1:15 PM	Bremer Bank 104 Maple Street West Amery, WI 54001

To expedite applications, producers who experienced losses are encouraged to collect records documenting these losses in preparation for sign-up. Producers are also encouraged to contact their FSA county office to schedule an appointment. Limited resource, socially disadvantaged, and beginning producers are eligible for premium reductions and also may be eligible for fee reductions.

Interested producers can view the 2012 NAP Coverage for Frost, Freeze or Weather Related Fruit Losses Fact Sheet at <http://go.usa.gov/5kSQ> or visit a local FSA office. To find out if land is located in an eligible frost/freeze county, visit <http://go.usa.gov/53rz>.

## **LIVESTOCK DISASTER ASSISTANCE SIGNUP UNDERWAY**

Livestock disaster programs were authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill as permanent programs and provide retroactive authority to cover losses that occurred on or after October 1, 2011.

To expedite applications, all producers who experienced losses are encouraged to bring records documenting those losses to their local FSA office. Producers should record all pertinent information of natural disaster consequences including:

- Documentation of the number and kind of livestock that have died, supplemented if possible by photographs or video records of ownership and losses;
- Dates of death supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts;
- Costs of transporting livestock to safer grounds or to move animals to new pastures;
- Feed purchases if supplies or grazing pastures are destroyed;
- Crop records, including seed and fertilizer purchases, planting and production records.

Eligible producers can sign-up for three livestock disaster assistance programs:

1. Livestock Forage Disaster Program (**LFP**) for 2012;
2. Livestock Indemnity Program (**LIP**);
3. Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm Raised Fish (**ELAP**).

## **LIVESTOCK FORAGE DISASTER PROGRAM (LFP) PAYMENTS FOR 2012 GRAZING LOSSES IN CERTAIN COUNTIES**

LFP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that have suffered 2012 grazing losses due to drought on privately owned or cash leased land or fire on federally managed land. Eligible producers must be physically located in a county affected by a qualifying drought during the normal grazing period for the county. Producers who suffered eligible grazing losses should submit a completed CCC-853 and supporting documentation by January 30, 2015. Eligible livestock types under LFP include alpacas, beef cattle, buffalo, beefalo, dairy cattle, deer, elk, emus, equine, goats, llamas, poultry, reindeer, sheep or swine

A map of eligible counties for 2012 LFP drought may be found at <http://disaster.fsa.usda.gov> *In Wisconsin, the following counties are eligible:* Adams, Clark, Columbia, Crawford, Dane, Dodge, Fond du Lac, Grant, Green, Green Lake, Iowa, Jackson, Jefferson, Juneau, Kenosha, Lafayette, La Crosse, Marquette, Milwaukee, Monroe, Portage, Racine, Richland, Rock, Sauk, Vernon, Walworth, Waukesha, Waushara, Washington, Waupaca, and Wood.

## **LIVESTOCK INDEMNITY PROGRAM (LIP)**

LIP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that suffered livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather or attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law. The Farm Bill provided retroactive authority to cover livestock losses that occurred on or after October 1, 2011. The deadline for program years 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014 losses is January 30, 2015. The notice of loss deadline for 2015 and subsequent program years is the earlier of 30 days after death is apparent or January 30.

## **EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FOR LIVESTOCK, HONEYBEES AND FARM-RAISED FISH PROGRAM (ELAP)**

ELAP provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish that have losses due to disease, adverse weather, disease, colony collapse or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires. Eligible losses also include losses due to adverse weather to bee hives, harvested and stored feed, additional feed costs, additional cost for water transportation, grazing losses due to non-drought or wild fire related weather events and additional costs associated with treating cattle for cattle tick fever.

### **\*\* (New) White-Tailed Deer Disease Now Eligible for ELAP**

Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD), often referred to as "Blue Tongue," is now considered an eligible loss for deer death losses under ELAP

ELAP assistance is for losses not covered by other Supplemental Agricultural Disaster programs such as the Livestock Forage Program (LFP) and Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP). For 2014 program year losses, the notice of loss and application for payment must be submitted by November 3, 2014. The application deadline for losses occurring after October 1, 2011 and in program years 2012 and 2013 losses was April 15, 2014.

The 2014 Farm Bill authorized up to \$20 million annually for ELAP. Recipients of ELAP may receive a pro-rated reduced payment should the total annual national demand for ELAP exceed the \$20 million appropriated.

Additional information on ELAP is available at the local FSA county offices or on the internet at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

## **FARM RECORD CHANGES**

If there are any changes in the land that you operate or own, such as land sales or purchases, please inform the local FSA office right away with those changes. It is especially important that our records be up to date with the new Farm Bill programs being rolled out.

## TREE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP) SIGNUP CONTINUES

Orchardists and nursery tree growers who experienced losses from natural disasters that occurred on or after October 1, 2011, can sign up for the Tree Assistance Program (TAP). TAP was authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014 as a permanent disaster program. TAP provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters.

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, orchardists 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.

January 31, 2015 is the deadline to apply for losses that occurred on or after October 1, 2011 through 2014. For 2015 and subsequent years, the deadline to apply is within 90 calendar days of the disaster event or the date the loss is apparent.

## EMERGENCY LOANS

FSA provides emergency loans to help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding, other natural disasters or quarantine. Producers with operations in any primary or contiguous county that is included in an emergency declaration are eligible to apply for low interest emergency loans.

The streamlined disaster designation process issues a drought disaster declaration when a county has experienced a drought intensity value of at least a D2 (severe drought) level for eight consecutive weeks based on the U.S. Drought Monitor during the crop year.

Emergency loans help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding and other natural disasters or quarantine.

Producers have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for emergency loan assistance. FSA will consider each loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability. Producers can borrow up to 100 percent of actual production or physical losses, to a maximum amount of \$500,000.

For more information about emergency loans, please contact your local FSA office or visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

## NEW FARM BILL OFFERS INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRODUCERS

The 2014 Farm Bill offers increased opportunities for producers including farm loan program modifications that create flexibility for new and existing farmers. A fact sheet outlining modifications to the USDA's FSA Farm Loan Programs is available at [www.fsa.usda.gov/wi](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wi).

The Farm Bill expands lending opportunities for thousands of farmers and ranchers to begin and continue operations, including greater flexibility in determining eligibility, raising loan limits, and emphasizing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers.

Changes that will take effect immediately include:

- Elimination of the 15 year term limit for guaranteed operating loans;
- Modification of the definition of beginning farmer, using the average farm size for the county as a qualifier instead of the median farm size;
- Modification of the Joint Financing Direct Farm Ownership Interest Rate to 2 percent less than regular Direct Farm Ownership rate, with a floor of 2.5 percent. Previously, the rate was established at 5 percent;
- Increase of the maximum loan amount for Direct Farm Ownership Down Payment Loan Program from \$225,000 to \$300,000;
- Elimination of rural residency requirement for Youth Loans by allowing urban youth to benefit;
- Debt forgiveness on Youth Loans which will not prevent borrowers from obtaining additional loans from the federal government;
- Increase of the guaranteed percentage on Conservation Loans from 75 to 80 percent and 90 percent for socially disadvantaged borrowers and beginning farmers;
- Microloans will not count toward direct operating loan term limits for veterans and beginning farmers.

Additional modifications must be implemented through the rulemaking processes. Visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/farmbill](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/farmbill) for detailed information and updates to farm loan programs.

## **USDA ANNOUNCES NEW SUPPORT FOR BEGINNING FARMERS AND RANCHERS**

*Department Implementing New Farm Bill Programs, Unveiling New Centralized Online Resource to Support Next Generation of Farmers*

USDA has announced the implementation of new Farm Bill measures and other policy changes to improve the financial security of new and beginning farmers and ranchers. USDA also unveiled a new website that will provide a centralized, one-stop resource where beginning farmers and ranchers can explore the variety of USDA initiatives designed to help them succeed. [www.USDA.gov/newfarmers](http://www.USDA.gov/newfarmers),

USDA's [www.usda.gov/newfarmers](http://www.usda.gov/newfarmers) has in depth information for new farmers and ranchers, including: how to increase access to land and capital; build new market opportunities; participate in conservation opportunities; select and use the right risk management tools; and access USDA education, and technical support programs. These issues have been identified as top priorities by new farmers. The website will also feature instructive case studies about beginning farmers who have successfully utilized USDA resources to start or expand their business operations.

Today's policy announcements in support of beginning farmers and ranchers include:

- Waiving service fees for new and beginning farmers or ranchers to enroll in the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the 2014 crop year. NAP provides risk management tools to farmers who grow crops for which there is no crop insurance product. Under this waiver, announced via an official notice to Farm Service Agency offices, farmers and ranchers whom already enrolled in NAP for the 2014 crop year and certified to being a beginning farmer or social disadvantaged farmer are eligible for a service fee refund.
- Eliminating payment reductions under the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) for new and beginning farmers which will allow routine, prescribed, and emergency grazing outside the primary nesting season on enrolled land consistent with approved conservation plans. Previously, farmers and ranchers grazing on CRP land were subject to a reduction in CRP payments of up to 25 percent. Waiving these reductions for new and beginning farmers will provide extra financial support during times of emergency like drought and other natural disasters.
- Increasing payment rates to beginning farmers and ranchers under Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP). Under this provision, beginning farmers can claim up 90 percent of losses for lost livestock, such as bees, under ELAP. This is a fifty percent increase over previously available payment amounts to new and beginning farmers.

- In the near future, USDA will also announce additional crop insurance program changes for beginning farmers and ranchers – including discounted premiums, waiver of administrative fees, and other benefits.

## **BEGINNING FARMER LOANS**

FSA assists beginning farmers to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years;
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm;
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program approved by FSA;
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's average size farm.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

## **LAND CONTRACT GUARANTEES**

The Land Contract (LC) Guarantee Program is a valuable tool to transfer farm real estate to the next generation of farmers and ranchers. Guarantees will be offered to the owner of a farm who wishes to sell real estate through a land contract to a beginning or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher. The guarantee reduces the financial risk to the seller.

FSA offers two types of guarantees:

- Prompt Payment Guarantee - A guarantee up to the amount of three amortized annual installments plus the cost of any related real estate taxes and insurance.
- Standard Guarantee - A guarantee of 90 percent of the outstanding principal balance under the land contract.

The guarantee period is 10 years and the contract payments must be amortized for a minimum of 20 years. The purchase price of the farm cannot exceed the lesser of \$500,000 or the market value of the property.

## **BANK ACCOUNT CHANGES**

Current policy mandates that FSA payments be electronically transferred into a bank account. In order for timely payments to be made, producers need to notify the FSA county office when an account has been changed or if another financial institution purchases the bank where payments are sent. Payments can be delayed if the FSA office is not aware of updates to bank accounts and routing numbers.

## **LOANS FOR THE SOCIALLY DISADVANTAGED**

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 purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for members of socially disadvantaged applicants.

A socially disadvantaged applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities.

For purposes of this program, socially disadvantaged 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.

## **YOUTH LOANS**

The Farm Service Agency 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 advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5000.

### **Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:**

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

## **MICROLOAN PROGRAM**

FSA developed the Microloan program to better serve the unique financial operating needs of beginning, niche and small family farm operations.

FSA offers applicants a microloan designed to help farmers with credit needs of \$35,000 or less. The loan features a streamlined application process built to fit the needs of new and smaller producers. This loan program will also be useful to specialty crop producers and operators of community supported agriculture (CSA).

Eligible applicants can apply for a maximum amount of \$35,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses to extend the growing season, essential tools, irrigation and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing, and distribution expenses. As financing needs increase, applicants can apply for a regular operating loan up to the maximum amount of \$300,000 or obtain financing from a commercial lender under FSA's Guaranteed Loan Program.

Individuals who are interested in applying for a Microloan or would like to discuss other farm loan programs available should contact their local FSA office.

## **GUARANTEED LOAN ELIGIBILITY**

Changes to FSA regulations have removed Guaranteed Operating Loan term limits. Previous and current guaranteed loan borrowers who were not eligible for further guaranteed loans due to the previous 15 year eligibility term limit may now be eligible for further guaranteed loans through their commercial lender

## **PLEASE TAKE ACTION! THIS COULD BE YOUR LAST PAPER NEWSLETTER FROM FSA**

Due to budget constraints, hard copy newsletters like this are becoming a thing of the past. Please take your time to read all articles carefully, as this may be the last opportunity we have to publish and mail a hard copy of valuable information.

All FSA newsletters are now being issued by email through our GovDelivery email system. Please contact your local FSA office to provide them your email so you can continue to receive current and useful information. Your local office phone number can be found by visiting [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) and clicking on "State Offices" in the top toolbar. Then click on the map of Wisconsin and select your county.

If you are unable to receive email, you can still pick up a copy of monthly e-newsletters at your local office. A suggested alternative would be to contact a friend or neighbor and ask if they would like to receive the email to keep you both informed!

## **USDA ENHANCES FARM STORAGE FACILITY LOAN PROGRAM**

USDA announced the expansion of the Farm Storage and Facility Loan program, which provides low-interest financing to producers. The enhanced program includes 22 new categories of eligible equipment for fruit and vegetable producers.

Producers with small and mid-sized operations, and specialty crop fruit and vegetable growers, now have access to needed capital for a variety of supplies including sorting bins, wash stations and other food safety-related equipment. A new more flexible alternative is also provided for determining storage needs for fruit and vegetable producers, and waivers are available on a case-by-case basis for disaster assistance or insurance coverage if available products are not relevant or feasible for a particular producer.

Additionally, Farm Storage Facility Loan security requirements have been eased for loans up to \$100,000. Previously, all loans in excess of \$50,000 and any loan with little resale value required a promissory note/security agreement and additional security, such as a lien on real estate. Now loans up to \$50,000 can be secured by only a promissory note/security agreement. Some loans between \$50,000 and \$100,000 will no longer require additional security.

The low-interest funds can be used to build or upgrade permanent facilities to store commodities. Eligible commodities include grains, oilseeds, peanuts, pulse crops, hay, honey, renewable biomass commodities, fruits and vegetables. Qualified facilities include grain bins, hay barns and cold storage facilities for fruits and vegetables.

Contact your local FSA office or visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) for more about FSA programs and loans, including the Farm Storage Facility Loan Program.

## **UNAUTHORIZED DISPOSITION OF GRAIN**

If loan grain has been disposed of through feeding, selling or any other form of disposal without prior written authorization from the county office staff, it is considered unauthorized disposition. The financial penalties for unauthorized dispositions are severe and a producer's name will be placed on a loan violation list for a two-year period. Always call before you haul or feed any grain under loan.

## **COMPLIANCE SPOT CHECKS**

Compliance spot checks will be conducted on 2014 crops. Instead of locally selecting farms, contracts, deficiency loans, etc. for review, a nationwide selection of producers is employed. Spot check selections are to be conducted based on a producer's participation in Conservation Reserve Program and other FSA programs.

For more information about the spot check selection procedure, feel free to contact your local Farm Service Agency office for additional clarification.

## **2014 MARKETING ASSISTANCE CROP LOANS (MALs) AND LOAN DEFICIENCY PAYMENT (LDP) REQUESTS**

FSA is accepting requests for MALs and LDPs for eligible 2014 commodities.

MALs and LDPs for the 2014 crop year become available to eligible producers beginning with harvest/shearing season and extending through a specific commodity's final loan availability date.

MALs and LDPs provide short-term financing and marketing assistance for wheat, feed grains, soybeans and other oilseeds, pulse crops, wool, mohair and honey. MALs provide producers interim financing after harvest to help them meet cash flow needs without having to sell their commodities when market prices are typically at harvest-time lows. A producer who is eligible to obtain a loan, but agrees to forgo the loan, may obtain an LDP if such a payment is available.

The 2014 Farm Bill also establishes payment limitations per individual or entity not to exceed \$125,000 annually on certain commodities for the following program benefits: price loss coverage payments, agriculture risk coverage payments, marketing loan gains (MLGs) and LDPs. These payment limitations do not apply to MAL loan disbursements.

Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) provisions were modified by the 2014 Farm Bill, which states that a producer whose total applicable three-year average AGI exceeds \$900,000 is not eligible to receive an MLG or LDP.

Interest rates change monthly and are available on the FSA website and also at your local FSA office.

National and county loans rates for 2014 crops are posted on the FSA website at: [www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport).

## **PREVENTING FRAUD**

The Farm Service Agency supports the Risk Management Agency (RMA) in the prevention of fraud, waste and abuse of the Federal Crop Insurance Program. FSA has been, and will continue to, assist RMA and insurance providers by monitoring crop conditions throughout the growing season. FSA will continue to refer all suspected cases of fraud, waste and abuse directly to RMA.

Producers can report suspected cases to the FSA office, RMA, or the Office of the Inspector General.

## **NON-INSURED CROP DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM DEADLINE DATES**

Producers interested in participating in the Farm Service Agency's (FSA) Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) need to be aware of the upcoming application deadlines that must be met for NAP qualification. NAP will also offer buy-up coverage for the 2015 program year at a later date.

NAP was designed to reduce financial losses that occur when natural disasters cause catastrophic losses of production or prevented planting of eligible crop by providing coverage equivalent to catastrophic (CAT) insurance.

Application deadline dates for specific NAP qualifying crops are listed:

- The application deadline date for the 2015 NAP coverage for "value loss" crops such as ginseng, turf grass sod, Christmas trees, aquaculture, floriculture, mushrooms, and ornamental nursery is September 1, 2014.
- The deadline date for perennial forage, including most fall and spring planted small grain forages and pasture land forages, not covered by federal crop insurance, is September 2, 2014.
- September 30, 2014 - application closing date for winter/spring plantings of wheat, barley, rye, and mint.
- Perennial crop deadlines on fruit and other crops such as apples, pears, blueberries, strawberries, grapes, honey, maple sap, asparagus and other perennial fruits is November 20, 2014.

Those currently with coverage on 2014 NAP crops may choose to continue coverage on the same crops for 2015, if the applicable service fee is submitted by the application closing date. A new CCC-471, Application for Coverage, is not required to be signed when applying for continuous coverage of the same crop or crops. However, if producers choose to add new crops or remove crops from the previous year's coverage or change crop shares, a new CCC-471 must be filed with signatures and the applicable service fee paid.

The 2015 NAP fees are \$250 per crop with a limit of \$750 per county. The national limit is \$1875 per producer if farming in more than two counties.

A waiver of the basic service fees for NAP coverage is available for limited resource farmers (income determination based on total household income and income from farming, beginning farmers (someone is considered a beginning farmer if they have not operated or not substantially participated in the operation of a farm for more than 10 years) and socially disadvantaged farmers (someone is considered socially disadvantaged if they are a member of a group whose members have been subject to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identities as members of a group without regard to their individual qualities) Females are considered SDA producers.

Producers with NAP coverage must remember to timely file acreage reports and or inventories, and keep track of harvested production using acceptable methods. A "Notice of Loss" must also be filed within 15 days of when a loss is apparent due to drought, hail, flood, etc., to qualify for NAP.

For more information on NAP coverage and crop specific acreage, inventory and production reporting deadlines, please contact your nearest FSA county office.

## **2015 BUY-UP COVERAGE TO BE AVAILABLE**

The 2014 Farm Bill expanded NAP to include buy-up protection, similar to buy-up provisions offered under the federal crop insurance program. Producers may elect buy up coverage for each individual crop between 50 and 65 percent of yield, in 5 percent increments, at 100 percent of the average market price. Producers will pay a fixed premium equal to 5.25 percent of the liability.

Details regarding the buy up coverage options are still being developed. Until these options are available producers are encouraged to enroll in NAP under the basic coverage, 50 percent of the yield and 55 percent of the established price, by the applicable crop application deadlines. The NAP service fee for this coverage is \$250 per crop per county not to exceed \$750 per producer, but not to exceed \$1875 nationally. In addition, the premiums for buy-up coverage will be reduced by 50 percent for limited resource, beginning farmers and socially disadvantaged farmers.

## **USDA ANNOUNCED CHANGES TO FRUIT AND VEGETABLE PLANTING RULES**

FSA has announced fruit, vegetable and wild rice provisions that affect producers who intend to participate in certain programs authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014.

Producers who intend to participate in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs are subject to an acre-for-acre payment reduction when fruits, nuts and vegetables are planted on the payment acres of a farm. Payment reductions do not apply to mung beans, dry peas, lentils or chickpeas. Planting fruits and vegetables on acres that are not considered payment acres will not result in a payment reduction. (Farms that are eligible to participate in ARC/PLC but are not enrolled for a particular year may plant unlimited fruits and vegetables for that year but will not receive ARC/PLC payments for that year). Eligibility for succeeding years is not affected.

Planting and harvesting fruits and vegetables on ARC/PLC acreage is subject to the acre-for-acre payment reduction when those crops are planted on either more than 15 percent of the base acres of a farm enrolled in ARC using the county coverage or PLC, or more than 35 percent of the base acres of a farm enrolled in ARC using the individual coverage.

Fruits and vegetables that are planted in a double-cropping practice will not cause a payment reduction if the farm is in a double-cropping region as designated by the USDA.

## REPORT PERENNIAL FORAGES AND FALL SEEDED CROPS TO FSA BY NOVEMBER 17

Producers are reminded of the new requirement to report their perennial forages and fall seeded crops by November 15, 2014 to meet FSA program eligibility requirements. FSA and the Risk Management Agency (RMA), which oversees the Federal Crop Insurance Program, now have common acreage reporting dates. Due to this, perennial forages and fall seeded small grains must be reported to FSA by the November 17th deadline.

A late-file fee will apply to producers who are unable to meet the reporting deadline of November 15<sup>th</sup>, and will a late-filing fee which amounts to a minimum of \$46.00 per FSA established farm number.

Perennial forages include alfalfa, alfalfa grass mixtures, red clover and others that are intended for harvest in 2015. This also includes pasture acreage, waterways, etc. Fall seeded small grains include winter wheat, rye and others.

Producers who are interested in participating in any 2015 USDA farm programs or just want to keep their acreage history up to date need to report the location, acreage and planting date of the applicable crop.

Producers with crop insurance must also report their applicable forages and fall seeded small grains to their insurance company.

Producers should contact their local FSA office to make an appointment to complete perennial forage and fall seeded crop acreage reporting by the deadline. More information on FSA programs is at: [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov)

## FSA ANNOUNCES ONLINE HAY AND GRAZING LAND LOCATOR TOOL

FSA's *Hay Net* website [www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet) has been the "go to" online resource for agricultural producers to list information concerning the need for hay or the availability of hay.

Now, in response to requests from livestock producers and landowners, FSA has expanded the site to include the option to list a need for grazing acres or to list acres available for grazing.

Due to extenuating circumstances, producers in need of hay and/or grazing acres to support livestock, are encouraged to use *Hay Net* to post an advertisement seeking these resources. Likewise, landowners who have hay and/or grazing acres available for livestock producers should post a *Hay Net* advertisement as well.

A few things to remember when using the *Hay Net* website:

- There is a one-time registration process that should be completed by all users who want to post an ad online;

- Users who just want to browse ads DO NOT NEED to have an eAuthentication USER ID;
- Hay and grazing acre ads will be automatically removed after a period of 13 months;
- Please help your fellow farmer and rancher by keeping ads current and up to date and remove ads you no longer need or want advertised on *Hay Net*. Please, no corporate advertisements on this site.

*Hay Net* is brought to you by FSA as a public service. The sole purpose of this online resource is to provide a site for the exchange of information. FSA does not endorse, guarantee, or otherwise make representations of any kind regarding any user of this site. FSA is not responsible for defining the terms of grazing agreements or lease contracts.

For more information about *Hay Net* and other FSA services and programs, please contact your local FSA office. For local FSA Service Center contact information, please visit: <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>.

## FSA ELECTRONIC MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS – CHECK OUT!!!!!!

The new Farm Bill has provided a rare opportunity to issue this hardcopy newsletter. In 2012, FSA started to utilize an electronic email service called GovDelivery. FSA will continue to utilize GovDelivery to publicize important program information timely.

Through GovDelivery, subscribers receive bulletins and monthly newsletters related to FSA program information.

To subscribe to GovDelivery, you can contact your local FSA office or you may subscribe by accessing the Wisconsin FSA website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/wi](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wi) and completing the subscription process in the "I Want To" section on the right hand side of the screen.

Farmers and owners and others who do not have the ability to receive newsletters and bulletins by email can pick up a copy at their local FSA office.

A suggested alternative would be to contact a friend or neighbor and ask if they would like to receive the email to keep you both informed!

## DAIRY INDEMNITY PAYMENT PROGRAM EXTENSION

The 2014 Farm Bill authorized the extension of the Dairy Indemnity Payment Program (DIPP). DIPP provides payments to dairy producers and manufacturers of dairy products when they are directed to remove raw milk or products from the market because of contamination. Contact the local FSA office for more details.

## **PRODUCER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

In order to remain eligible for most FSA program benefits, certain eligibility requirements must be met. These include the following:

- Participants must be in compliance with Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions. Conservation compliance will also be linked to eligibility for crop insurance premium subsidies in future years.
- Participants must have an average Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) of \$900,000 or less to remain eligible for commodity and conservation programs. "Average AGI" is the average of the adjusted gross income (both farm and nonfarm) for the person or legal entity for the three taxable years preceding the most immediately preceding complete taxable year. (Example: For 2014 program eligibility, consider the average AGI from tax years 2012, 2011 and 2010). AGI requirements extend to individuals, entities, and members of entities.
- ARC/PLC participants must meet the "actively engaged in farming" and "cash rent tenant" requirements, considering their contributions to the farming operation of land, capital, equipment, active personal labor and active personal management. In addition, participants must make contributions that are at risk, and that are commensurate with their claimed share.

## **CONTINUOUS CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP) RESUMES**

On June 9, 2014, signup for the continuous CRP program resumed at FSA. Under continuous signup authority, environmentally sensitive land devoted to certain conservation practices can be enrolled at any time. Offers are automatically accepted provided the land and producers meet certain eligibility requirements and are not subject to competitive bidding.

The effective date of the CRP contract is the first day of the month following the month of approval. In certain circumstances, producers may defer the effective date for up to six months.

Possible CRP benefits to the participant include rental payments based on county average dryland cash rent, cost share payments of up to 50 percent of the average cost, practice incentive payment (PIP) equal to 40 percent of the eligible installation costs for certain practices and an upfront signing incentive payment (SIP) of up to \$150 per acre for certain practices.

Generally, a producer must have owned or operated the land for at least 12 months prior to submitting the offer. Eligible land includes land that is planted or considered planted for four out of the previous six crop years from 2008 to 2013 and is physically and legally capable of being planted in a normal manner to an agricultural commodity. Expiring continuous CRP signup contracts are eligible for re-enrollment under a new contract.

## **CRP CONTRACT EXTENSIONS**

In lieu of a general CRP signup this year, USDA will allow producers with general CRP contracts expiring September 30, 2014 the option of a one year contract extension if the contract has been in effect for less than 15 years.

## **CRP TRANSITION INCENTIVE PROGRAM (TIP)**

CRP TIP assists with the transition of expiring CRP land from a retired or retiring owner or operator to a beginning, veteran, or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher to return land to production for sustainable grazing or crop production. The 2014 Farm Bill authorized \$33 million for fiscal years 2014 through 2018. Enrollment in TIP is on a continuous basis until the funds authorized for the program are exhausted.

Retired or retiring owners and operators participating in TIP may receive up to two additional annual rental payments after their CRP contract expires provided the beginning, veteran or socially disadvantaged farmer is not a family member.

Retired or retiring owner or operator means an owner or operator of land enrolled in a CRP contract that has ended active labor in farming operations as a producer of agricultural commodities or expects to do so within five years of the CRP contract modification. The retiring owner or operator must agree to sell, have a contract to sell, or agree to lease long-term (at least five years). The land enrolled in an expiring CRP contract must be rented to a beginning, veteran, or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher. The retiring farmer must agree to permit the beginning, veteran, or socially disadvantaged farmer to make conservation and land improvements according to an approved conservation plan.

Beginning farmer means any person or entity that has not been a farmer or rancher for more than 10 years and materially and substantially participates in the operation of the farm or ranch involved in CRP contract modification. A veteran farmer or rancher is one who served in the Armed Forces and who has operated a farm or ranch for no more than 10 years. A socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher means a farmer or rancher who is a member of a socially disadvantaged group whose members have been subject to racial or ethnic prejudice because of their identity as members of a group with regard to their individual qualities. Gender is not included.

## **SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS**

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact their local FSA office staff directly or by phone.

## USDA REMINDS FARMERS OF 2014 FARM BILL CONSERVATION COMPLIANCE CHANGES

Changes mandated through the 2014 Farm Bill require producers to have a Highly Erodible Land Conservation and Wetland Conservation Certification (AD-1026) on file.

For farmers to be eligible for premium support on their federal crop insurance, a completed and signed AD-1026 form must be on file with the FSA. Since many FSA and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs have this requirement, most producers should already have an AD-1026 on file. If producers have not filed, they must do so by June 1, 2015.

When a farmer completes the AD-1026, FSA and NRCS staff will outline any additional actions that may be required for compliance with the provisions. The Risk Management Agency, through the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation manages the federal crop insurance program that provides the modern farm safety net for American farmers and ranchers.

Since enactment of the 1985 Farm Bill, eligibility for most commodity, disaster, and conservation programs has been linked to compliance with the highly erodible land conservation and wetland conservation provisions. The 2014 Farm Bill continues the requirement that producers adhere to conservation compliance guidelines to be eligible for most programs administered by FSA and NRCS. This includes the new price and revenue protection programs, the Conservation Reserve Program, the Livestock Disaster Assistance programs and Marketing Assistance Loans implemented by FSA. It also includes the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, the Conservation Stewardship Program, and other conservation programs.

FSA recently released a revised form AD-1026, which is available at USDA Service Centers and online at: [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov). USDA will publish a rule later this year that will provide details outlining the connection of conservation compliance with crop insurance premium support. Producers can also contact their local USDA Service Center for information. A listing of USDA Service Center locations is available at [www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/contact/local/](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/contact/local/).

## DAIRY INDEMNITY PAYMENT PROGRAM

The 2014 Farm Bill authorized the extension of the Dairy Indemnity Payment Program (DIPP) through September 30, 2018. DIPP provides payments to dairy producers and manufacturers of dairy products when they are directed to remove their raw milk or products from the market because of contamination.

## WISCONSIN COUNTY FSA OFFICE PHONE DIRECTORY

Below is the phone directory for the local county FSA offices located in USDA Service Centers throughout Wisconsin. Please contact your local office if you have any questions or concerns with the programs and services that we offer. Thank you!

Ashland	Ashland Service Center	(715) 682-9117
Barron	Barron Service Center	(715) 537-5645
Brown	Green Bay Service Center	(920) 884-3910
Buffalo	Alma Service Center	(608) 685-4454
Calumet	Chilton Service Center	(920) 849-1444
Chippewa	Chippewa Falls Service Center	(715) 723-8556
Clark	Neillsville Service Center	(715) 743-3164
Columbia	Portage Service Center	(608) 742-5361
Crawford	Prairie du Chien Service Center	(608) 326-7179
Dane	Madison Service Center	(608) 224-3767
Dodge	Juneau Service Center	(920) 386-9999
Door	Sturgeon Bay Service Center	(920) 743-3595
Dunn	Menomonie Service Center	(715) 232-2614
Eau Claire	Altoona Service Center	(715) 839-5081
Fond du Lac	Fond du Lac Service Center	(920) 923-3033
Grant	Lancaster Service Center	(608) 723-7697
Green	Monroe Service Center	(608) 325-4195
Green Lake	Green Lake Service Center	(920) 294-6474
Iowa	Dodgeville Service Center	(608) 935-2791
Jackson	Black River Falls Service Center	(715) 284-4515
Jefferson	Jefferson Service Center	(920) 674-2020
Juneau	Mauston Service Center	(608) 847-7221
Kewaunee	Luxemburg Service Center	(920) 845-1360
La Crosse	Onalaska Service Center	(608) 782-0180
Lafayette	Darlington Service Center	(608) 776-4028
Lincoln, Langlade	Wausau Service Center	(715) 848-2330
Manitowoc	Manitowoc Service Center	(920) 683-5119
Marathon	Wausau Service Center	(715) 848-2330
Marquette, Adams, Waushara	Westfield Service Center	(608) 296-2815
Monroe	Sparta Service Center	(608) 269-8136
Oconto, Marinette	Oconto Service Center	(920) 834-2366
Oneida, Florence, Forest, Vilas	Rhineland Service Center	(715) 362-5941
Outagamie	Appleton Service Center	(920) 733-1575
Pepin	Durand Service Center	(715) 672-8663
Pierce	Ellsworth Service Center	(715) 273-5522
Polk	Balsam Lake Service Center	(715) 485-3138
Portage	Stevens Point Service Center	(715) 346-1313
Racine	Union Grove Service Center	(262) 878-3353
Richland	Richland Center Service Center	(608) 647-8874
Rock	Janesville Service Center	(608) 754-6617
Rusk	Ladysmith Service Center	(715) 532-3786
Saint Croix	Baldwin Service Center	(715) 684-2874
Sauk	Baraboo Service Center	(608) 355-4420
Shawano, Menominee	Shawano Service Center	(715) 524-4814
Sheboygan	Sheboygan Falls Service Center	(920) 467-9917
Taylor	Medford Service Center	(715) 748-4121
Trempealeau	Whitehall Service Center	(715) 538-4396
Vernon	Viroqua Service Center	(608) 637-2183
Walworth	Elkhorn Service Center	(262) 723-3216
Washburn	Spooner Service Center	(715) 635-8228
Washington	West Bend Service Center	(262) 335-4801
Waukesha	Waukesha Service Center	(262) 547-8241
Waupaca	Waupaca Service Center	(715) 258-8380
Winnebago	Oshkosh Service Center	(920) 424-0329
Wood	Wisconsin Rapids Service Center	(715) 423-3610



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All future newsletters will be issued via email. Please provide your email address to the local FSA to get their monthly updates!

### Important Dates to Remember

August 15, 2014	2012 and 2013 ELAP notice of loss and application for payment deadline;
September 2, 2014	Application Deadline for 2015 NAP “Value Loss” Crops
September 2-17, 2014	Dairy Margin Protection Program Informational Meetings
September 22, 2014	Disaster Assistance for 2012 Frost/Freeze Fruit Crop Losses Application Deadline
September 26, 2014	Final day to request a Farm Reconstitution for 2014 – farm/tract division or combination
September 30, 2014	NAP Application Deadline for Perennial Forage, Fall and Spring Planted Grain and Pasture Land Forage.
November 3, 2014	Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm Raised Fish 2014 Application Deadline
November 17, 2014	Deadline to Report all 2015 Crop Year Perennial Forages and Fall Seeded Grains/Crops to FSA
November 20, 2014	NAP Application Deadline for Perennial Fruit & other Perennial crops
December 1, 2014	Official ballot for FSA committee elections (FSA-669) must be returned to the County FSA Office or postmarked.
January 30, 2015	2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 LFP and LIP notice of loss and application for payment deadline
January 31, 2015	TAP Application Deadline for Orchard or Nursery Tree losses (since October 2011)

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual’s income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department (not all prohibited bases apply to all programs). Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities and wish to file a program complaint must contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish). Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) must contact USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax at (202) 690-7442 or e-mail at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at **program.intake@usda.gov**.