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November 2015



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## Delaware FSA Newsletter

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### Delaware State Farm Service Agency

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Web: [Delaware FSA](#)

### State Executive Director:

Bob Walls

### Kent County FSA Office

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### Office Hours:

### Safety-Net Payments Ease Market Downturn

#### USDA Issues Safety-Net Payments to Farmers Facing Market Downturn

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) has announced that beginning today, nearly one half of the 1.7 million farms that signed up for either the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs will receive safety-net payments for the 2014 crop year.

Unlike the old direct payments program, which paid farmers in good years and bad, the 2014 Farm Bill authorized a new safety-net that protects producers only when market forces or adverse weather cause unexpected drops in crop prices or revenues.

**Example:** The corn price for 2014 is 30 percent below the historical benchmark price used by the ARC-County program, and revenues of the farms participating in the ARC-County program are down by about \$20 billion from the benchmark during the same period. The nearly \$4 billion provided today by the ARC and PLC safety-net programs will give assistance to producers where revenues dropped below normal."

The ARC/PLC programs primarily allow producers to continue to produce for the market by making

Monday - Friday  
8:00 am - 4:30 pm

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**Office Hours**

Monday - Friday

8:00am - 4:30pm

payments on a percentage of historical base production, limiting the impact on production decisions.

Nationwide, 96 percent of soybean farms, 91 percent of corn farms, and 66 percent of wheat farms elected the ARC-County coverage option. Ninety-nine percent of long grain rice and peanut farms, and 94 percent of medium grain rice farms elected the PLC option. Overall, 76 percent of participating farm acres are protected by ARC-County, 23 percent by PLC, and 1 percent by ARC-Individual. For data about other crops, as well as state-by-state program election results, final PLC price and payment data, and other program information including frequently asked questions, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc).

Crops receiving assistance include barley, corn, grain sorghum, lentils, oats, peanuts, dry peas, soybeans, and wheat. In the upcoming months, disbursements will be made for other crops after marketing year average prices are published by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service. Any disbursements to participants in ARC-County or PLC for long and medium grain rice (except for temperate Japonica rice) will occur in November, for remaining oilseeds and also chickpeas in December, and temperate Japonica rice in early February 2016. ARC-individual payments will begin in November. Upland cotton is no longer a covered commodity.

The Budget Control Act of 2011, passed by Congress, requires USDA to reduce payments by 6.8 percent. For more information, producers are encouraged to visit their local Farm Service Agency office. To find a local Farm Service Agency office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

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## MPP, Protecting Your Milk Money

### USDA Extends Dairy Margin Protection Program Deadline

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced that the deadline to enroll for the dairy Margin Protection Program for coverage in 2016 has been extended until **Nov. 20, 2015**. The voluntary program, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, provides financial assistance to participating farmers when the margin – the difference between the price of milk and feed costs – falls below the coverage level selected by the farmer.

Producers are encouraged to use the online Web resource at [www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool) to calculate the best levels of coverage for their dairy operation. The secure website can be accessed via computer,

**County Office Staff:** smartphone or tablet.

Jamie Argo  
Lisa Ell  
Carrie Hudson  
Harry Hudson  
Tiria Wright

Producers who were enrolled in 2015 will need to make a coverage election for 2016 and pay the \$100 administration fee. Although any unpaid premium balances for 2015 must be paid in full by the enrollment deadline to remain eligible for higher coverage levels in 2016, premiums for 2016 are not due until Sept. 1, 2016. Also, producers can work with milk marketing companies to remit premiums on their behalf.

**County Executive Director:** To enroll in the Margin Protection Program for Dairy, contact your local FSA county office. To find your local FSA county office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Robin Talley (Acting)

**Stae Executive Committee:** Payments under the program may be reduced by a certain percentage due to a sequester order required by Congress and issued pursuant to the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985. Should a payment reduction be necessary, FSA will reduce the payment by the required amount.

Dale Scuse  
Cheryl Ockels  
Robert Baker

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**Farm Loan Specialist**

Jennifer Feindt  
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**Farm Loan Officer**

Colleen Reed  
(302) 856-3990 ext. 130

**Farm Loan Program Technician**

Kenneth Wise

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

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## Preventing Fraud, Waste, and Abuse

### Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Risk Management Agency (RMA) to Prevent Fraud, Waste, and Abuse

FSA supports the 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 county office staff, the RMA office, or the Office of the Inspector General.

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## Ask FSA

Are you looking for answers to your FSA questions? Then ASK FSA at [askfsa.custhelp.com](http://askfsa.custhelp.com).

AskFSA is an online resource that helps you easily find information and answers to your FSA questions no matter where you are or what device you use. It is for ALL customers, including underserved farmers and ranchers who wish to be enrolled in FSA loans, farm, and conservation programs.

**Through AskFSA you can:**

- Access our knowledge base 24/7
- Receive answers to your questions faster
- Submit a question and receive a timely response from an FSA expert
- Get notifications when answers important to you and your farming operation are updated
- Customize your account settings and view responses at any time

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## Did You Know...

### FSA has an Online Hay and Grazing Acres Locator Tool

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

If, due to extenuating circumstances, producers are in need of hay and/or grazing acres to support livestock, please 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 HayNet 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 and 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: [offices.usda.gov](http://offices.usda.gov).

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## Incentives for Working Grass, Range and Pasture Lands

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

The initiative is part of the voluntary Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), a federally funded program that for 30 years has assisted agricultural producers with the cost of restoring, enhancing and protecting certain grasses, shrubs and trees to improve water quality, prevent soil erosion and reduce loss of wildlife habitat. In return, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. CRP has helped farmers and ranchers prevent more than 8 billion tons of soil from eroding, reduce nitrogen and phosphorous runoff relative to cropland by 95 and 85 percent respectively, and even sequester 43 million tons of greenhouse gases annually, equal to taking 8 million cars off the road.

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 covers and other practices, such as cross fencing to support rotational grazing or improving pasture cover to benefit pollinators or other wildlife. 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 today, the Farm Service Agency 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**.

To learn more about participating in CRP-Grasslands or SAFE, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/crp](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/crp) or consult with the local Farm Service Agency county office. To locate a nearby Farm Service Agency office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>. To learn more about the 30th anniversary of CRP, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/CRPis30](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/CRPis30) or follow on Twitter using #CRPis30.

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## Get the Facts:

### **Maintaining the Quality of Farm-Stored Loan Grain**

Bins are ideally designed to hold a level volume of grain. When bins are overfilled and grain is heaped up, airflow is hindered and the chance of spoilage increases.

Producers who take out marketing assistance loans and use the farm-stored grain as collateral should remember that they are responsible for maintaining the quality of the grain through the term of the loan.

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### **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 any grain under loan.

### **Foreign Buyers Notification**

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA) requires all foreign owners of U.S. agricultural land to report their holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. The Farm Service Agency administers this program for USDA.

All individuals who are not U.S. citizens, and have purchased or sold agricultural land in the county are required to report the transaction to FSA with 90 days of the closing. Failure to submit the AFIDA form (FSA-153) could result in civil penalties of up to 25 percent of the fair market value of the property. County government offices, Realtors, attorneys and others involved in real estate transactions are reminded to notify foreign investors of these reporting requirements.

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## FSA Loan Programs

### ***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 sponsored 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).

### ***Loans for Targeted Underserved Producers***

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 to purchase or improve farms or ranches.

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

A targeted underserved 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, targeted underserved 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.

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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).

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