

December 2015



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

- [Enrollment Period for 2016 USDA Safety Net Coverage Begins Today](#)
- [CRP General Sign-Up 49 Underway](#)
- [2016 Acreage Reporting Deadline For Small Grains & Canola - January 15th](#)
- [Livestock Forage Program Deadline is February 1st](#)
- [Beginning Farmer Loans](#)
- [Loans for Targeted Underserved Producers](#)
- [Oklahoma Farmers to Receive Documentation of USDA Services](#)
- [FSA Signature Policy](#)
- [Bank Account Changes](#)
- [Filing CCC-941 Adjusted Gross Income \(AGI\) Certifications](#)
- [Farm Loan Interest Rates:](#)
- [Upcoming Important Dates:](#)

---

## Oklahoma State FSA Newsletter

---

### Oklahoma Farm Service Agency

**Terry Peach**  
State Executive Director

100 USDA, Suite 102  
Stillwater, OK 74074  
405-742-1130 phone  
855-416-9557 fax  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/ok](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ok)

Hours:  
Monday - Friday  
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

**State Committee Members:**  
Cletus Carter, Beaver  
(Chairman)

### Enrollment Period for 2016 USDA Safety Net Coverage Begins Today

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) has announced that producers who chose coverage from the safety net programs established by the 2014 Farm Bill, known as the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs, can begin visiting FSA county offices **starting Dec. 7, 2015**, to sign contracts to enroll in coverage for 2016. **The enrollment period will continue until Aug. 1, 2016.**

Although the choice between ARC and PLC is completed and remains in effect through 2018, producers must still enroll their farm by signing a contract each year to receive coverage.

Producers are encouraged to contact their local FSA office to schedule an appointment to enroll. If a farm is not enrolled during the 2016 enrollment period, producers on that farm will not be eligible for financial assistance from the ARC or PLC programs

Steve Nunley, Marlow  
Brenda Neufeld, Fairview  
Steve Butler, Wagoner  
Jo Jennings, Depew

**State Staff:**

Phil Estes,  
Farm Loan Programs

Tona Huggins,  
Production & Payment  
Eligibility

Rod Wanger,  
Conservation Programs

Danny Lee,  
Compliance & Price Support

Krey Reimer,  
Administration

Please contact your local FSA Office for questions specific to your operation or county. FSA Office contact information can be located on our [online Directory](#).

should crop prices or farm revenues fall below the historical price or revenue benchmarks established by the program.

The two programs were authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill and offer a safety net to agricultural producers when there is a substantial drop in prices or revenues for covered commodities. Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium grain rice (which includes short grain and sweet rice), safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat. Upland cotton is no longer a covered commodity. For more details regarding these programs, go to [www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc).

For more information, producers are encouraged to visit their local FSA office. To find a local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

---

## CRP General Sign-Up 49 Underway

Farmers and ranchers are reminded that the general enrollment period for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Sign-Up 49 is currently underway. The sign-up period began on Monday, **December 1, 2015 and will end on Friday, February 26, 2016.** December 2015 also marks the 30th anniversary of CRP, a federally funded program that assists 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. Producers with expiring contracts or producers with environmentally sensitive land are encouraged to evaluate their options under CRP.

Participants in CRP establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees (known as “covers”) to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat on marginally productive agricultural lands. In return, FSA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. At times when commodity prices are low, enrolling sensitive lands in CRP can be especially attractive to farmers and ranchers, as it softens the economic hardship for landowners at the same time that it provides ecological benefits. Contract duration is between 10 and 15 years. The long-term goal of the program is to re-establish native plant species on marginal agricultural lands for the primary purpose of preventing soil erosion and improving water quality and related benefits of reducing loss of wildlife habitat.

For more information FSA conservation programs, visit a local FSA office or [www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation). To find your local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

---

## **2016 Acreage Reporting Deadline for Small Grains & Canola - January 15th**

Producers are reminded that the 2016 acreage reporting deadline for fall seeded grains (including winter wheat) and canola is **January 15, 2016**. All acreage must be reported for a farm, including crops on non-cropland such as hayed or grazed grassland. It is also important to accurately report crops intended use. Intended use is used to determine eligibility in many FSA programs and cannot be revised once reported. Producers should contact their local FSA county office if they are uncertain about reporting deadlines. In order to meet FSA program eligibility requirements, producers must submit timely acreage reports. **Reports filed after the established deadlines must meet certain requirements to be accepted and will be charged late fees.**

Note: Any crop that has Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage must be reported 15 calendar days before the onset of harvest or grazing of the specific crop acreage being reported.

### **Things to Remember**

- Changes in farming operation – If you have acquired some new land for 2016 you need to notify your administrative county as soon as possible. These changes must be processed before we can accept an acreage report for the subject acres.
- Ensure you are aware of the acreage reporting deadlines and visit our office timely so we can process your acreage report prior to the deadline.
- Don't forget to bring your planting dates when you report your acres.
- You are reporting your intended use, so if your actual use differs from the intended use you originally reported we need to know! Failure to report changes in use can have implications with FSA programs.
- If you have a commercial or residential development (e.g. well sites, disposal ponds, residential or commercial building sites, etc) on acres enrolled in a FSA program and it has not yet been reported, please do so. In most cases we can use current digital imagery to measure impacted acres.

---

## **Livestock Forage Program Deadline is February 1st**

Livestock producers in eligible counties are encouraged to schedule an appointment with their local FSA office to sign up for the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) which provides payments to eligible livestock producers for grazing losses due to drought, or fire on federal lands.

Producers located in Atoka, Bryan, Choctaw, Johnston, Marshall, and Pushmataha counties are now eligible 2015 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP). Producers in Alfalfa, Beaver, Beckham, Blaine, Caddo, Canadian, Carter, Cimarron, Comanche, Cotton, Creek, Custer, Dewey, Ellis, Garfield, Grady, Grant, Greer, Harmon, Harper, Jackson, Jefferson, Kay, Kingfisher, Kiowa, Logan, Love, Major, McCurtain, Noble, Osage, Payne, Pawnee, Roger Mills, Stephens, Texas, Tillman, Tulsa, Washita, Woods, and Woodward counties are still eligible for assistance.

**2015 eligible livestock producers must complete a CCC-853 and submit the required supporting documentation no later than February 1, 2016.**

## **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.

---

## **Oklahoma Farmers to Receive Documentation of USDA Services**

Local Offices Issue Receipts for Services Provided

Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds agricultural producers that FSA provides a receipt to customers who request or receive assistance or information on FSA programs.

As part of FSA's mission to provide enhanced customer service, producers who visit FSA will receive documentation of services requested and provided. From December through June, FSA issued more than 327,000 electronic receipts.

The 2014 Farm Bill requires a receipt to be issued for any agricultural program assistance requested from FSA, the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Rural Development (RD). Receipts include the date, summary of the visit and any agricultural information, program and/or loan assistance provided to an individual or entity.

In some cases, a form or document – such as a completed and signed program enrollment form – serve as the customer receipt instead of a printed or electronic receipt. A service is any information, program or loan assistance provided whether through a visit, email, fax or letter.

To learn more about FSA, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) or to find your local USDA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

---

## **FSA Signature Policy**

Using the correct signature when doing business with FSA can save time and prevent a delay in program benefits. The following are FSA signature guidelines:

- Spouses may sign documents on behalf of each other for FSA and CCC programs in which either has an interest, unless written notification denying a spouse this authority has been provided to the county office
- Spouses shall not sign on behalf of each other as an authorized signatory for partnerships, joint ventures, corporations, or other similar entities

If a producer has a durable power of attorney, while that may be sufficient to take care of most non-FSA business, the durable power of attorney may not suffice for FSA purposes. Producers should complete an FSA-211, Power of Attorney, to enable the attorney in fact to take care of FSA business as necessary.

For additional clarification on proper signatures contact your local FSA office.

---

## **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.

---

## **Filing CCC-941 Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) Certifications**

Many producers have experienced delays in receiving Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) payments, Loan Deficiency Payments (LDPs) and Market Gains on Marketing Assistance Loans (MALs) because they have not filed form CCC-941, Adjusted Gross Income Certification. LDPs will not be paid until all eligible producers, including landowners who share in the crop, have filed a valid CCC-941.

Producers without a valid CCC-941 certifying their compliance with the average adjusted gross income provisions will not receive payments that have been processed. All farm operator/tenants/owners who have not filed a CCC-941 and have pending payments should IMMEDIATELY file the form with their recording county FSA office. Farm operators and tenants are encouraged to ensure that their landowners have filed the form. FSA has been issuing 2014 ARC/PLC payments, 2015 LDPs and Market Gains.

FSA can accept the CCC-941 for 2014, 2015 and 2016. Unlike the past, producers must have the CCC-941 certifying their AGI compliance before any payments can be issued.

---

## **Farm Loan Interest Rates:**

- Farm Operating Loans = 2.375%
- Farm Ownership Loans = 3.750%
- Farm Ownership Down Payment Loans = 1.5%
- Micro Loans = 2.375%
- Youth Loans = 2.375%
- Emergency Loans = 3.375%

\*Rates effective as of December 1, 2015

---

## **Upcoming Important Dates:**

- **December 1, 2015** - Start of CRP General Sign-Up 49
  - **December 7, 2015** - Start of 2016 ARC/PLC Sign-Up
  - **January 15, 2016** – Final date for producers to report fall seeded crops/small grains.
  - **February 1, 2016** – Deadline to schedule an appointment to sign up for the Livestock Forage Program, for losses that occurred during 2015.
  - **February 26, 2016** - Deadline to make offer for CRP General Sign-Up 49
- 

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).