

May 2015



## Oklahoma FSA Program Updates and Reminders

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### Hours:

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

### State Committee Members:

Cletus Carter, Beaver  
(Chairman)  
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

Shelly Bilderback,  
Public Relations/Outreach

## Reminder: June 1st Deadline - Certify Conservation Compliance

### *Producers May Need to Take Action to Remain Eligible for Crop Insurance Premium Support*

The 2014 Farm Bill implements a change that requires farmers 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 certification form must be on file with FSA. The Risk Management Agency (RMA), through the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC), 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 most financial assistance such as the new price and revenue protection programs, the Conservation Reserve Program, the Livestock Disaster Assistance programs and Marketing Assistance Loans and most programs implemented by FSA. It also includes the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, the Conservation Stewardship Program, and other conservation programs implemented by NRCS.

Many FSA and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) programs already have implemented this requirement and therefore most producers should already have an AD-1026 form on file for their associated lands. **If an AD-1026 form has not been filed or is incomplete, then farmers are reminded of the deadline of June 1, 2015.**

When a farmer completes and submits the AD-1026 certification form, FSA and NRCS staff will review the associated farm records and outline any additional actions that may be required to meet the required compliance with the conservation compliance provisions.

USDA launched a new digital resource to help guide agricultural producers through the conservation compliance process. The [Five Steps to Meet Conservation Compliance webpage](#) will help producers determine if conservation compliance provisions apply to them as well as how to become and remain compliant.

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## **Agricultural Producers Still Have Time to Apply for Direct Farm Ownership Loan Program**

### ***Low-Interest Loans Can Help Oklahoma Producers Start or Expand Farms***

Farmers and ranchers still have time to apply for low interest loans available through the FSA direct farm ownership program. Applications must be approved by Sept. 30, 2015, to take advantage of the funding available.

Eligible farmers and ranchers can borrow up to \$300,000 to buy farmland, construct or repair buildings, pay closing costs, or promote soil and water conservation. The interest rate can be as low as 1.5 percent with up to 40 years to repay.

New farmers and ranchers, military veterans, and underserved farmers and ranchers also are encouraged to apply. Each year Congress targets 80 percent of available loan funds to beginning and targeted underserved farmers and ranchers. Targeted underserved groups include American Indians or Alaskan Natives, Asians, Blacks or African Americans, Native Hawaiians, or other Pacific Islanders, Hispanics and women.

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

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## **FSA County Committee Nominations**

FSA is looking for candidates for an upcoming producer-elected county committee election. FSA offices throughout Oklahoma will accept nominations June 15 through August 3, 2015.

County Committees have a direct influence on the delivery of federal farm programs. They make decisions on disaster and conservation programs, emergency programs, commodity price support loan programs and other agricultural issues.

FSA encourages all interested agricultural producers, including women and minority growers, to seek nomination. Eligible candidates must participate or cooperate in any Farm Service Agency program and be of legal voting age. Even if farmers and ranchers are not currently participating in FSA programs, they are considered eligible to vote under the cooperation criteria if they have farm records on file with the agency.

Farmers and ranchers may nominate themselves or others, and organizations representing minorities and women also may nominate candidates. To become a candidate, an eligible individual must sign the nomination form, FSA-669A. The form and other information about FSA county committee elections are available online at [www.fsa.usda.gov/elections](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections). Nomination forms for the 2015 election must be postmarked or received in the local FSA Service Center by close of business on Aug. 3, 2015. Elections will take place this fall.

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## **Filing for NAP Losses**

The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. Timely filing a Notice of Loss is required for all crops including grasses. For losses on crops covered by NAP you must notify FSA of damage within 72 hours for hand harvested crops and you must 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, an acreage report and CCC-576 must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

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## Oklahoma Counties Eligible for Emergency Loans

Oklahoma has 54 counties that have been declared a primary/contiguous disaster due to drought and heat using the streamlined Secretarial Disaster Designation process. Under this designation, producers with operations in any primary or contiguous county are eligible to apply for low interest emergency loans.

Oklahoma counties included in the designation are: Alfalfa, Beaver, Beckham, Blaine, Bryan, Caddo, Canadian, Carter, Cimarron, Cleveland, Comanche, Cotton, Creek, Custer, Dewey, Ellis, Garfield, Garvin, Grady, Grant, Greer, Harmon, Harper, Jackson, Jefferson, Johnston, Kay, Kingfisher, Kiowa, Lincoln, Logan, Love, Major, Marshall, McClain, Murray, Noble, Okfuskee, Oklahoma, Okmulgee, Osage, Pawnee, Payne, Roger Mills, Rogers, Stephens, Texas, Tillman, Tulsa, Wagoner, Washington, Washita, Woods, and Woodward.

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.

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## Farm Loan Interest Rates:

- Farm Operating Loans = 2.500%
- Farm Ownership Loans = 3.625%
- Farm Ownership Down Payment Loans = 1.5%
- Micro Loans = 2.500%
- Youth Loans = 2.500%
- Emergency Loans = 3.500%

\*Rates effective May 1, 2015

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