

September 2014



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

**In order for us to better serve you –
Schedule an Appointment with FSA**

To insure maximum use of your time and to insure that you are afforded our full attention to your important business needs, **please call our office ahead of your visit to set up an appointment** and to discuss any records or documentation that you may need to have with you when you arrive for your appointment. FSA Office contact information can be located online at www.fsa.usda.gov/ok.

Livestock Disaster Assistance Available - Producers Urged to Enroll Before Oct. 1 to Avoid Reduction

Livestock producers are encouraged to schedule an appointment with their County 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. LFP covers losses that occurred the last 3 months of 2011, and calendar years 2012, 2013, and 2014.

The Budget Control Act passed by Congress in 2011, requires USDA to reduce payments by 7.3% to LFP payments beginning Oct. 1. However, producers who have scheduled an appointment or begin an application with the FSA office before Oct. 1, even if the appointment occurs after Oct. 1, will not see a reduction in their payment.

An on-line registration is available to producers to sign up electronically before October 1st to avoid a payment reduction. This is an alternative to contacting the county FSA office. To register for a LFP appointment on-line, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/disaster-register.

Producers who already contacted the county office and have an appointment scheduled need do nothing more.

Since LFP began on April 15th, some changes to the program have occurred in regard to contract growers. Those contract growers that have already visited a county office are encouraged to contact them again to see if any changes may apply to their application.

The Livestock Indemnity Program, the Tree Assistance Program and the Noninsured Disaster Assistance Program will also be cut by 7.3 percent on Oct. 1, 2014. Unlike LFP, applications for these programs must be fully completed by Sept. 30, to avoid reduction.

Enrollment Open for Cotton Transition Assistance Program

Farmers can enroll in the Cotton Transition Assistance Program (CTAP) through October 7, 2014.

The program, created by the 2014 Farm Bill, provides interim payments to cotton producers during the 2014 crop year until the Stacked Income Protection Plan, a new insurance product also created by the legislation, is available.

CTAP applications approved before Oct. 1, are subject to congressionally mandated automatic reductions of 7.2 percent for the 2014 crop year. Applications approved after Oct. 1 will be reduced the required 7.3 percent. The Budget Control Act of 2011 requires USDA to implement these reductions to program payments.

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 expired on Sept. 1, 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), but they will not be allowed to participate in both.

A decision tool is now available to help producers make coverage level decisions. The online resource, available at www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool or <http://dairy.wisc.edu/Tools/MPP.html>, allows dairy farmers to quickly and easily combine unique operation data and other key variables to calculate their coverage needs based on price projections. Producers can also review historical data or estimate future coverage based on data projections. The secure site can be accessed via computer, Smartphone, tablet or any other platform, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

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.

FSA Offers Financial Assistance to Beginning Farmers

FSA assists beginning farmers in financing 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.

FSA encourages all interested applicants to apply for direct or guaranteed loans. To learn more, contact your local FSA office to set up an appointment with a loan official. Additionally, you can visit our [Farm Loan Website](#) for more information and to access applications.

September Farm Loan Interest Rates:

- Farm Operating Loans = 2.125%
- Farm Ownership Loans = 3.750%
- Farm Ownership Down Payment Loans = 1.5%
- Micro Loans = 2.125%
- Youth Loans = 2.125%
- Emergency Loans = 3.125%

Youth Loans Available

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 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.

To learn more, contact your local FSA office to set up an appointment with a loan official. Additionally, you can visit our [Farm Loan Website](#) for more information and to access applications.

FSA wants you to be Better Prepared for Disasters

Based on the 2012 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Survey, 54 percent of the U.S. population does not believe their community will experience a natural disaster. Only 39 percent have a plan they have discussed with their family members, and almost 50 percent do not have supplies set aside in their home for use in a disaster. Unfortunately, a disaster will likely impact you at some point in your life, and when it does, you may only have seconds to respond.

Your family, friends, and community are depending on you if a disaster happens. Are you ready to act?

As a proud supporter of America's PrepareAthon, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) wants to share important information that will help you and your family be better prepared in case of a disaster.

America's PrepareAthon is a nationwide, community-based campaign for action to increase emergency preparedness and resilience. Every spring and fall, organizations around the country will focus on preparedness during a national day of action. These national days of action drive participation in hazard-specific drills, group discussions, and exercises.

Visit www.ready.gov/prepare to learn more about America's PrepareAthon and how you can improve your preparedness plan for your family and your community.

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).