

June 2019



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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

- [Message from the SED](#)
- [Upcoming Events and Workshops](#)
- [USDA Offers Flood Impacted State Farmers and Ranchers Immediate Disaster Assistance](#)
- [How to Document Flood Losses](#)
- [Nominations Open for the 2019 County Committee Elections](#)
- [USDA Reopens Continuous CRP Signup](#)
- [Reminder to FSA Direct and Guaranteed Borrowers with Real Estate Security](#)
- [Maintaining Good Credit History](#)
- [Preauthorized Debit Available for Farm Loan Borrowers](#)
- [ASKFSA](#)
- [Rates and Dates](#)

Arkansas FSA Newsletter

Arkansas Farm Service Agency

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Phone: 501-301-
3000
www.fsa.usda.gov/ar

State Committee:

Chairman: Ron
Chastain

Members:

Gary Churchill, Sarah
Dunklin, Nathan
Reed, & Vivian
Wright

State Committee Meeting:

2nd Wednesday and

Message from the SED

Recent extreme weather conditions have impacted Arkansas' farmers like never before. Farm Service Agency (FSA) has disaster assistance programs available to help agricultural producers recover after natural disasters, including floods and tornadoes.

Once losses are evaluated, contact your local FSA office. Report the information and learn more about ways in which we can provide assistance. USDA offers a [disaster assistance discovery tool](#) that ask five questions to assist producers in identifying what USDA disaster assistance programs meet their needs.

Also, please join FSAs National Outreach Team for a public webinar on the Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) Program. The webinar will be from 12:30pm-1:30pm, June 17th, via Ready Talk. Here is the registration link:
<https://cc.readytalk.com/r/baz8opacdomu&eom>.

For more information, contact your [local USDA service center](#) or farmers.gov/recover.

Upcoming Events and Workshops

Thursday of each
Quarter

**State Executive
Director:** David
Curtis

**Administrative
Officer:**
Sharon Baker

Farm Programs:
Terri McManus

**Farm Loan
Programs:**
James Culpepper

Please contact your
local FSA Office for
questions specific to
your operation or
county. To find
contact information
for your local office
go to
www.fsa.usda.gov/ar.

The USDA Arkansas Farm Service Agency (FSA) is committed to educating producers on available programs and loans. FSA representatives will be available at the following workshops and conferences. Producers interested in attending these conferences/workshops should follow the registration or RSVP instructions listed below.

Jun. 17th – Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) Program Public Webinar FSAs National Outreach Team will be hosting a public webinar on the Dairy margin Coverage (DMC) Program. The webinar will be from 12:30pm-1:30pm, June 17th, via Ready Talk. Here is the registration link: <https://cc.readytalk.com/r/baz80pacdomu&eom>. Please review the FSA Bulletin at the following link: <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USFSA/bulletins/24ae5ca?reqfrom=share> for additional information. If you are unable to participate in the webinar at the aforementioned date and time, a recorded version of the webinar will be posted afterwards to our FSA Outreach page: <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/outreach-and-education/webinars/index>. Please take advantage of this opportunity.

June 27th - 2019 Arkansas Land Community Development Corporation (ALCDC) Symposium Arkansas Land and Community Development Corporation is partnering with USDA, the City of Earle, and the Earle Alumni "Cardinal Club" to host a Community Economic Development Symposium. **Hendra Woodfork, Farm Loan Manager, will represent FSA and present on financing for New & Beginning Farmers & Ranchers, as well as other FSA programs.** The conference will be held Thursday, June 27, 2019, and is free to attend. Registration begins at 5:30pm and the opening session begins at 6:00pm. Pre-registration is not required. The conference will be held at the Earle Community Center, 18255 Hay 64, Earle, Arkansas 72331. Refreshments will be served. Please contact ALCDC at 870.734.3005 for additional information.

Jul 18th - 2019 NBGC Model Farm Series – Dell-Cam Farm and Conyer Farm, Altheimer, AR The National Black Growers Council (NBGC) has announced its 2019 Model Farm Series. Field Days will be held in Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, and North Carolina. This series gives area growers a glimpse of new technologies and practices. Dell-Cam Farm and Conyer Farm will host on Thursday, July 18, 2019, in Altheimer, Arkansas. **Rod Woods, Jefferson County Executive Director, and Vanessa Moore, FSA Farm Loan Manager, will be in attendance to answer any questions pertaining to FSA Programs.** For more information, please visit www.nationalblackgrowerscouncil.com or call 202.544.6513

If you have any questions regarding FSA programs or loans, please contact your local USDA Service Center. To locate a USDA Service Center near you, visit: <http://offices.usda.gov>.

USDA Offers Flood Impacted State Farmers and Ranchers Immediate Disaster Assistance

Farm Service Agency Stands Ready to Assist Agricultural Producers Slammed by Recent Heavy Rains

Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds farmers and ranchers across the state of federal farm program benefits that may be available to help eligible producers recover from recent heavy rains and flooding.

FSA offers disaster assistance and low-interest loan programs to assist agricultural producers in their recovery efforts following floods or similar qualifying natural disasters. Available programs and loans include:

- o **Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)** - provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters (includes native grass for grazing). Eligible producers must have purchased NAP coverage for 2019 crops.
- **Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)** - offers payments to eligible producers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather. Eligible losses may include those determined by FSA to have been caused by hurricanes, floods, blizzards, wildfires, tropical storms, tornados lightening, extreme heat, and extreme cold. Producers will be required to provide verifiable documentation of death losses resulting from an eligible adverse weather event and must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent.
- **Tree Assistance Program (TAP)** – provides assistance to eligible orchardists and nursery tree growers for qualifying tree, shrub and vine losses due to natural disaster.
- **Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP)** - provides emergency relief for losses due to feed or water shortages, disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, which are not adequately addressed by other disaster programs. ELAP covers physically damaged or destroyed livestock feed that was purchased or mechanically harvested forage or feedstuffs intended for use as feed for the **producer's** eligible livestock. In order to be considered eligible, harvested forage must be baled; forage that is only cut, raked or windrowed is not eligible. Producers must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent. For beekeepers, ELAP covers beehive losses (the physical structure) in instances where the hive has been destroyed by a natural disaster including flooding, high winds and tornadoes.
- ELAP also covers up to 150 lost grazing days in instances when a producer has been forced to remove livestock from a grazing pasture due to floodwaters.
- **Emergency Loan Program** – Available to producers with agriculture operations located in a county under a primary or contiguous **Secretarial Disaster designation**. These low interest loans help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding.
- **Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)** - provides emergency funding for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate land severely damaged by natural disasters; includes fence loss.
- **HayNet** - is an Internet-based Hay and Grazing Net Ad Service allowing farmers and ranchers to share 'Need Hay' ads and 'Have Hay' ads online. Farmers also can use another feature to post advertisements for grazing land, specifically ads announcing the availability of grazing land or ads requesting a need for land to graze. www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet.

To establish or retain FSA program eligibility, farmers and ranchers must report prevented planting and failed acres (crops and grasses). Prevented planting acreage must be reported on form *FSA-576, Notice of Loss*, no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date as established by FSA and Risk Management Agency (RMA).

For more information on disaster assistance programs and loans visit www.fsa.usda.gov/ or contact your local FSA Office. To find your local FSA county office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

How to Document Flood Losses

Producers who suffered excessive livestock death losses and grazing or feed losses due to recent floods may be eligible for disaster assistance programs through the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) offers payments to eligible producers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) provides emergency relief for losses due to feed or water shortages, disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, which are not adequately addressed by other disaster programs.

To participate in LIP, producers will be required to provide verifiable documentation of death losses resulting from an eligible adverse weather event and must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent. To participate in ELAP, producers must

submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent and should maintain documentation and receipts.

Producers should record all pertinent information regarding livestock losses due to the eligible adverse weather or loss condition, including:

- Documentation of the number, kind, type, and weight range of livestock that have died, supplemented if possible by photographs or video records of ownership and losses;
- Rendering truck receipts by kind, type and weight - important to document prior to disposal;
- Beginning inventory supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts;
- Documentation from Animal Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Natural Resources, or other sources to substantiate eligible death losses due to an eligible loss condition;
- Documentation that livestock were removed from grazing pastures due to an eligible adverse weather or loss condition;
- Costs of transporting livestock feed to eligible livestock, such as receipts for equipment rental fees for hay lifts and snow removal;
- Feed purchase receipts if feed supplies or grazing pastures are destroyed;

For more information on these programs and documentation requirements, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/disaster or contact your local FSA office.

Nominations Open for the 2019 County Committee Elections

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) encourages all farmers, ranchers, and FSA program participants to take part in the County Committee election nomination process.

FSA's county committees are a critical component of the day-to-day operations of FSA and allow grassroots input and local administration of federal farm programs.

Committees are comprised of locally elected agricultural producers responsible for the fair and equitable administration of FSA farm programs in their counties. Committee members are accountable to the Secretary of Agriculture. If elected, members become part of a local decision making and farm program delivery process.

A county committee is composed of three to 11 elected members from local administrative areas (LAA). Each member serves a three-year term. One-third of the seats on these committees are open for election each year.

County committees may have an appointed advisor to further represent the local interests of underserved farmers and ranchers. Underserved producers are beginning, women and other minority farmers and ranchers and landowners and/or operators who have limited resources.

All nomination forms for the 2019 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA service center by Aug. 1, 2019. For more information on FSA county committee elections and appointments, refer to the FSA fact sheet: *Eligibility to Vote and Hold Office as a COC Member* available online at: fsa.usda.gov/elections.

USDA Reopens Continuous CRP Signup

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will accept applications beginning June 3, 2019, for certain practices under the continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) signup and will offer extensions for expiring CRP contracts. The 2018 Farm Bill reauthorized CRP, one of the country's largest conservation programs.

FSA stopped accepting applications last fall for the continuous CRP signup when 2014 Farm Bill authority expired. Since passage of the 2018 Farm Bill last December, Fordyce said FSA has carefully analyzed the

language and determined that a limited signup prioritizing water-quality practices furthers conservation goals and makes sense for producers as FSA works to fully implement the program.

Continuous CRP Signup

This year's signup will include such practices as grassed waterways, filter strips, riparian buffers, wetland restoration and others. [View a full list of practices approved for this program.](#)

Continuous signup enrollment contracts are 10 to 15 years in duration. Soil rental rates will be set at 90 percent of the existing rates. Incentive payments will not be offered for these contracts.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program Signup

FSA will also reopen signup for existing Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) agreements. Fact sheets on current CREP agreements are available on [this webpage](#).

Other CRP Signup Options

FSA will open a CRP general signup in December 2019 and a CRP Grasslands signup later.

CRP Contract Extensions

A one-year extension will be offered to existing CRP participants who have expiring CRP contracts of 14 years or less. Producers eligible for an extension will receive a letter describing their options.

Alternatively, producers with expiring contracts may have the option to enroll in the Transition Incentives Program, which provides two additional annual rental payments on the condition the land is sold or rented to a beginning farmer or rancher or a member of a socially disadvantaged group.

More Information

Producers interested in applying for continuous CRP practices, including those under existing CREP agreements, or who need an extension, should contact their USDA service center beginning June 3. To locate your local FSA office, visit www.farmers.gov. More information on CRP can be found at www.fsa.usda.gov/crp.

Reminder to FSA Direct and Guaranteed Borrowers with Real Estate Security

Farm Service Agency would like to remind farm loan borrowers who have pledged real estate as security for their loans, of key items for maintaining loan collateral. It is required that borrowers must obtain prior consent, or approval, by either FSA, for direct loans, or by a guaranteed lender, for any transaction affecting real estate security. Examples of these transactions include, but are not limited to:

- Leases of any kind;
- Easements of any kind;
- Subordinations;
- Partial releases, and
- Sales

Failure to meet or follow the requirements set forth in the loan agreement, promissory note, and other security instruments could lead to nonmonetary default which could jeopardize your current and future loans.

It is critical that borrowers keep an open line of communication with their FSA loan staff or guaranteed lender when it comes to changes in their operation. For more information on borrower responsibilities, read [Your FSA Farm Loan Compass](#).

Maintaining Good Credit History

Farm Service Agency (FSA) Farm Loan programs require that applicants have a satisfactory credit history. A credit report is requested for all FSA direct farm loan applicants. These reports are reviewed to verify outstanding debts, if bills are paid timely and to determine the impact on cash flow.

Information found on a customer's credit report is strictly confidential and is used only as an aid in conducting FSA business.

Our farm loan staff will discuss options with you if you have an unfavorable credit report and will provide a copy of your report. If you dispute the accuracy of the information on the credit report, it is up to you to contact the issuing credit report company to resolve any errors or inaccuracies.

There are multiple ways to remedy an unfavorable credit score.

- Make sure to pay bills on time. Setting up automatic payments or automated reminders can be an effective way to remember payment due dates.
- Pay down existing debt.
- Keep your credit card balances low.
- Avoid suddenly opening or closing existing credit accounts.

FSA's farm loan staff will guide you through the process, which may require you to reapply for a loan after improving or correcting your credit report.

For more information on FSA farm loan programs, visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

Preauthorized Debit Available for Farm Loan Borrowers

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) has implemented pre-authorized debit (PAD) for Farm Loan Program (FLP) borrowers. PAD is a voluntary and alternative method for making weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual payments on loans.

PAD payments are pre-authorized transactions that allow the National Financial and Accounting Operations Center (NFAOC) to electronically collect loan payments from a customer's account at a financial institution.

PAD may be useful for borrowers who use nonfarm income from regular wages or salary to make payments on loans or adjustment offers or for payments from seasonal produce stands. PAD can only be established for future payments.

To request PAD, customers, along with their financial institution, must fill out form RD 3550-28. This form has no expiration date, but a separate form RD 3550-28 must be completed for each loan to which payments are to be applied. A fillable form can be accessed on the USDA Rural Development (RD) website at <http://www.rd.usda.gov/publications/regulations-guidelines>. Click forms and search for "Form 3550-28."

If you have a "filter" on the account at your financial institution, you will need to provide the financial institution with the following information: Origination ID: 1220040804, Agency Name: USDA RD DCFO.

PAD is offered by FSA at no cost. Check with your financial institution to discuss any potential cost. Preauthorized debit has no expiration date, but you can cancel at any time by submitting a written request to your local FSA office. If a preauthorized debit agreement receives three payment rejections within a three month period, the preauthorized debt agreement will be cancelled by FSA. The payment amount and due date of your loan is not affected by a cancellation of preauthorized debit. You are responsible to ensure your full payment is made by the due date.

For more information about PAD, contact your local FSA office. To find a local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

ASKFSA

Are you looking for answers to your FSA questions? Then ASK FSA at 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

Rates and Dates

Selected Interest Rates for June 2019		Dates to Remember	
		6/3/19 thru 8/23/19	CRP Continuous Signup
90-Day Treasury Bill	2.500	6/14/19	COC Election Nomination Period begins
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	3.250	6/17/19 thru 9/20/19	DMC (Dairy) Signup
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	3.875	7/15/19	Acreage reporting deadline for spring seeded crops (NAP crops check with local county office for dates).
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.500		
Emergency Loans	3.750	8/1/19	COC Election nomination Period Ends
Farm Storage Facility Loans (5 years)	2.250	11/4/19	COC Election Ballots Mailed to Eligible Voters
Farm Storage Facility Loans (10 years)	2.500	12/2/19	COC Election Voting Ends
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	3.375	1/1/19	Newly Elected COC members take office

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. 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).

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in this meeting/function/event should contact their local County Executive Director or Sharon Baker at 501-301-3014, (TDD# or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339, and Sharon.Baker@ar.usda.gov).
