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Farm Service Agency Electronic News Service

NEWSLETTER

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Nebraska State FSA Newsletter

Nebraska Farm Service Agency - State Office
7131 A Street
Lincoln, NE 68510

Phone: (402) 437-5581
Fax: (844) 930-0237

State Executive Director:
Nancy Johner

State Committee:
Scott Spilker, *chair*
Geoff Ruth

A Message from the State Executive Director

As the spring season turns into summer, county FSA offices across Nebraska are seeing office traffic pick up as most farmers have finally been able to complete their planting responsibilities.

We know it has been a long, slow, soggy season for putting crops in the ground. We'll do our best to work with you on completing important post-planting, FSA-related tasks, including FSA prevented plant and acreage certification reporting. The deadline associated with these two things is July 15, and our offices are working hard to get you all through the door as efficiently as possible. To that point, office appointments are critical to

Hilary Maricle
Mark Jagels

Program Chiefs:
Cathy Anderson, *Production/Compliance*
Doug Klein, *Conservation/Price Support*
Mark Wilke, *Farm Loans*
Tim Divis, *Executive Officer*

To find more information about FSA programming or contact information for your local office, go to www.fsa.usda.gov/ne.

completing acreage certification in a timely fashion. If you don't already have an appointment scheduled with your county FSA office for this purpose, please call and make one as soon as possible. If you already have an appointment scheduled, please do your best to make it into our office at the specified time. Thank you.

Several additional items have been added to our FSA plate since the last time I wrote, and I want to call your attention to them:

Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) Program: As noted in the article below, signup for this 2018 Farm Bill program is now underway. Dairy producers, please look at the DMC Decision Support Tool and then contact your county FSA office regarding enrollment.

Continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CRP): Signup also is open for certain practices under continuous CRP, as well as for the Nebraska Platte-Republican Resources Area Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program. See the article below for more information.

County Committee elections: It's the start of the FSA County Committee election season, with nominations for local county committee representatives now being accepted through Aug. 1. County Committees play an important role in your local agriculture community because they are made up of farmers and ranchers, elected by farmers and ranchers. County Committees provide a local voice on FSA programming and county office operations. We need you! Want to learn more? Read below and then stop in and visit with your County Executive Director.

That's it for this month. Best wishes.

--Nancy Johner

FSA Extends Prevented Plant Reporting Deadline to July 15

The U.S Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency (FSA) in Nebraska has extended the deadline for producers in the state to report their spring prevented plant crop acres to the agency.

Nebraska producers now have until July 15, 2019, to report to FSA acres they intended to plant to crops this spring but could not do so because of the difficult weather conditions. This new deadline coincides with the July 15, 2019, FSA acreage certification deadline that is already in place. The extension was granted to provide producers flexibility in the reporting timeline after delays in planting due to the challenging spring weather.

Producers need to report prevented plant acres to FSA to retain eligibility for FSA program benefits.

Normally, the prevented plant reporting deadline is 15 calendar days after the final planting date for a crop as established by FSA and the Risk Management Agency (RMA). The prevented plant reporting deadline extension to July 15 applies to FSA programs only and does not change any crop insurance reporting deadline requirements.

This reporting extension also does not apply to crops that producers have covered through FSA's Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). Producers should check with their county FSA office regarding prevented plant provisions for NAP-covered crops.

Even though this deadline has been extended, producers are encouraged to communicate with their county FSA office as soon as possible regarding completion of both their spring crop acreage certification and their prevented plant acres reports. While walk-in traffic will be accommodated as much as possible, county FSA offices prefer scheduled appointments with producers to facilitate the flow of business through their doors and make the most efficient use of time for all parties. To find contact information for a county FSA office, producers should type offices.usda.gov in their internet browser.

Acreage Reporting Deadline Quickly Approaching

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit their local FSA office as soon as they finish spring planting to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline.

Producers who file accurate and timely acreage certification reports, including prevented plant and failed acres, can prevent the potential loss of FSA program benefits. The acreage reporting deadline for all spring-seeded crops, Conservation Reserve Program acres and perennial grass is July 15, 2019. Nebraska FSA offices are scheduling acreage certification appointments now in order to complete this process by the deadline for all producers.

The following exceptions apply to acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the applicable acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the applicable acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendars days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.
- If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of "cover only," "green manure," "left standing," or "seed," then the acreage must be reported by July 15th.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP-covered crops is the earlier of the applicable dates or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact your local FSA office.

Dairy Margin Coverage Program Signup Underway

Signup is underway for the new Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) program, the cornerstone program of the dairy safety net that helps dairy producers manage the volatility of milk and feed prices, operated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA).

The 2018 Farm Bill allowed USDA to construct the new DMC, which replaces the Margin Protection Program for Dairy (MPP-Dairy). This new program offers protection to dairy producers when the difference between the all-milk price and the average feed cost (the margin) falls below a certain dollar amount selected by the producer.

The program provides coverage retroactive to January 1, 2019, with applicable payments following soon after enrollment. At the time of signup, dairy producers can choose between the $4.00 to $9.50 coverage levels. Learn more about coverage levels and premiums.

The Farm Bill also allows producers who participated in MPP-Dairy from 2014-2017 to receive a repayment or credit for part of the premiums paid into the program. FSA has been providing premium reimbursements to producers since last month and those that elect the 75 percent credit option will now have that credit applied toward 2019 DMC premiums.

The Department has built in a 50 percent blend of premium and supreme alfalfa hay prices with the alfalfa hay price used under the prior dairy program to provide a total feed cost that more closely aligns with hay rations used by many producers. At a milk margin minus feed cost of $9.50 or less, payments are possible. With the 50 percent hay blend, FSA's revised April 2019 income over feed cost margin is $8.82 per hundredweight (cwt). The revised margins for January, February and March are, respectively, $7.71, $7.91 and $8.66 – triggering DMC payments for each month.

DMC payments will be reduced by 6.2 percent in 2019 because of a sequester order required by Congress and issued in accordance with the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

DMC offers catastrophic coverage at no cost to the producer, other than an annual $100 administrative fee. Producers can opt for greater coverage levels for a premium in addition to the administrative fee. Operations owned by limited resource, beginning, socially disadvantaged or veteran farmers and ranchers may be eligible for a waiver of administrative fees. Producers have the choice to lock in coverage levels until 2023 and receive a 25-percent discount on their DMC premiums.

To assist producers in making coverage elections, USDA partnered with the University of Wisconsin to develop a DMC decision support tool, which can be used to evaluate various scenarios using different coverage levels through DMC.

All dairy operations in the United States are eligible for the DMC program. An operation can be run either by a single producer or multiple producers who commercially produce and market cows' milk.

Eligible dairy operations must have a production history determined by FSA. For most operations, production history is based on the highest milk production in 2011, 2012 and 2013. Newer dairy operations have other options for determining production history. Producers may contact their local FSA office to get their verified production history.

Dairy producers also are reminded that 2018 Farm Bill provisions allow for dairy operations to participate in both FSA's DMC program and the Risk Management Agency's Livestock Gross Margin (LGM-Dairy) program. There are also no restrictions from participating in DMC in conjunction with any other RMA insurance products.

For more information, visit farmers.gov DMC webpage or contact your local USDA service center. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

Nominations Now Open for 2019 FSA 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 candidate nomination forms for the 2019 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA service center by Aug. 1, 2019.

For information on the FSA county committee election in your county, please contact your county FSA office. To find contact information for a county FSA office, go to farmers.gov and scroll down to the office locator feature. You also can learn more by referencing the FSA fact sheet, *Eligibility to Vote and Hold Office as a COC Member,* available online at: **fsa.usda.gov/elections.**

FSA Loan Servicing, Other Organization Resources Available During Financial Stress

There are options for Farm Service Agency loan customers during financial stress. If you are a borrower who is unable to make payments on a loan, contact your local FSA Farm Loan Manager to learn about the options available to you.

Farmers and ranchers also can access assistance through other entities in Nebraska that offer services during financially challenging times. The Rural Response Hotline provides referral and support services for farmers, ranchers and rural residents and their families. The number to call is (800) 464-0258.

The Nebraska Department of Agriculture manages the Negotiations Program, which offers mediation services for agricultural borrowers, creditors and USDA program participants. Through this program, participants also can access free one-on-one education on agricultural financial and legal matters. For information, call (402) 471-4876.

Report Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Losses

The Noninsured 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 including freeze, hail, excessive moisture, excessive wind or hurricanes, flood, excessive heat and qualifying drought (includes native grass for grazing), among others.

Eligible producers must have purchased NAP coverage for 2019 crops. A notice of loss must be filed the earlier of 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent or 15 days of the final harvest date.

Producers of hand-harvested crops and certain perishable crops must notify FSA within 72 hours of when a loss becomes apparent.

Eligible crops must be commercially produced agricultural commodities for which crop insurance is not available, including perennial grass forage and grazing crops, fruits, vegetables, mushrooms, floriculture, ornamental nursery, aquaculture, turf grass, ginseng, honey, syrup, bioenergy, and industrial crops.

For more information on NAP, contact your local FSA office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov/nap.

Livestock Indemnity Program Assists With Impact of Losses

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides assistance to eligible producers for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality caused by adverse weather, disease and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law.

LIP compensates livestock owners and contract growers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather, including losses due to hurricanes, floods, blizzards, wildfires, extreme heat or extreme cold.

For disease losses, FSA county committees can accept veterinarian certifications that livestock deaths were directly related to adverse weather and unpreventable through good animal husbandry and management.

For 2019 livestock losses, eligible livestock owners must file a notice within 30 calendar days of when the loss is first apparent.

Participants must provide the following supporting documentation to their local FSA office no later than 60 calendar days after the end of the calendar year in which the eligible loss condition occurred.

- Proof of death documentation
- Copy of growers contracts
- Proof of normal mortality documentation

USDA has established normal mortality rates for each type and weight range of eligible livestock, i.e. Adult Beef Cow = 1.5% and Non-Adult Beef Cattle (less than 400 pounds) = 5%. These established percentages reflect losses that are considered expected or typical under “normal” conditions.

In addition to filing a notice of loss, producers must also submit an application for payment by March 1, 2020.

Additional information about LIP is available at your local FSA office or online at: www.fsa.usda.gov.

Youth Loans An Option Through FSA

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 $5,000.

Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

- Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) 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.

Individuals interested in this program should stop by the county FSA office for more information and for assistance with the application forms.

Continuous CRP Signup Now Open, Includes Platte-Republican CREP in Nebraska

Transition Incentives Program may be option for those with expiring contracts

USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) is accepting applications for certain practices under continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) signup and is offering extensions for some 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, FSA Administrator Richard 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.

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 also has reopened signup for existing Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) agreements. A fact sheet for the Nebraska Platte-Republican Resources Area CREP can be found at 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/Transition Incentives Program

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 county FSA office. More information on CRP can be found at www.fsa.usda.gov/crp.

Requirements Outlined for CRP Haying, Grazing

Haying and grazing of land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is authorized under certain conditions to improve the quality and performance of the CRP cover or to provide emergency relief to livestock producers due to certain natural disasters. There are two types of haying and grazing authorizations: emergency and managed.

In certain drought or excessive moisture conditions, emergency haying and grazing can be authorized by the State FSA Committee when requested by county FSA committees.

Under normal conditions, managed haying and grazing can be requested at the local county office by the landowner or producer on the CRP contract.

Both managed and emergency haying and grazing have restrictions. This includes how frequently the CRP acres can be harvested, the amount of acres that can be harvested and which practices are eligible. The date of the contract initiation usually determines the frequency and number of acres that can be harvested.

CRP acres must be considered fully established before haying or grazing under either the emergency and managed provisions. In addition, haying or grazing CRP acres is not authorized during the primary nesting season. For Nebraska, the primary nesting season is May 1 through July 15.

Haying is limited to one cutting and grazing and haying cannot occur on the same acreage. Participants agree to graze with certain grazing height limitations. For managed haying and/or grazing, there is a reduction to the annual CRP payment.

For managed haying/harvesting, the authorization expires August 31 and all hay bales must be completely removed from CRP contract acres by no later than October 15. CRP participants must report the number of acres hayed to FSA by no later than October 1.

For managed/routine grazing, this authorization expires September 30 and all livestock must be removed by October 1. CRP participants must report the number of acres grazed to FSA by no later than October 1.

All hayed and grazed acres are subject to FSA spot-check at any time during the authorization period.

It is important to contact your local FSA office prior to any haying or grazing activities on CRP acres to ensure your contract remains in compliance.

Dates to Remember

July 4, 2019 – FSA offices closed for federal holiday
July 15, 2019 – Deadline to report all spring-seeded crops, perennial forage and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage
July 15, 2019 - Deadline to report prevented plant acres
Aug. 1, 2019 – Deadline to request farm transfers or reconstitutions for 2019
Aug. 23, 2019 – Deadline to submit applications for certain practices as part of a continuous signup for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP signup 52)

****Please note the above NAP calendar references may not be inclusive for all NAP-covered crops; NAP participants should contact their County FSA Office to confirm important program deadlines.**

June FSA Interest Rates

OPERATING/OWNERSHIP
Farm Operating: 3.25%
Microloan Operating: 3.25%
Farm Ownership: 3.875%
Farm Ownership - Joint Financing: 2.5%
Farm Ownership - Down Payment: 1.5%
Emergency - Actual Loss: 3.75%

FARM STORAGE
Farm Storage Facility Loan 3 year term: 2.25%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 5 year term: 2.25%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 7 year term: 2.375%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 10 year term: 2.5%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 12 year term: 2.5%

MARKETING ASSISTANCE
Commodity Loan: 3.375%
