

December 2019



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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Ohio FSA State Newsletter

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A Message from the State Executive Director

The holiday season is in full swing and I can't believe Christmas is less than two weeks away. This year has been challenging for our agricultural families and for our staff. I want to thank all our staff, without their support and dedication we wouldn't have been able to roll out and deliver all of our farm bill programs to you, our customers. I am truly blessed for being on a team that provides programs and loan assistance to support Ohio farmers.

We have a great deal of activity going on in our county offices, including some program deadline date extensions of which you should be aware. Please take a moment to consider whether you have business that needs to be addressed with your [FSA County office](#).

Sign-up was recently extended through **December 20** for the [2019 Market Facilitation Program and to enroll in the Dairy Margin Coverage Program](#) for the 2020 calendar year. Make an

Price Support Chief:
Mark VanHoose

appointment today to take care of this, if you haven't already done so.

**Production Adjustment,
Compliance and Risk
Management Chief:**
Matt Kleski

The ARC and PLC programs were reauthorized under the 2018 Farm Bill, and signup for the 2019 and 2020 crop years is ongoing in our offices. If you already know into which program you would like to enroll your farm(s), please make an appointment to stop in and complete the paperwork. The FSA and the Ohio State Extension Service are hosting several ARC/PLC education meetings across the state over the next few months. These meetings are designed to help you understand the changes in ARC/PLC from the 2014 Farm Bill to 2018 Farm Bill and learn how to use tools available to aid in your decision-making process. [Here's a link to Ohio FSA's Farm Bill Meeting scheduled throughout the state.](#)

State Committee Members:
Trish Levering, Chair
Ronnie Clifton
Daryl Knipp
Chase Powell
Joe Steiner

Visit the Ohio FSA website for additional information at: www.fsa.usda.gov/oh

Sign-up for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) started **December 9, 2019**. The deadline for agricultural producers to sign-up for general CRP is February 28, 2020, while signup for continuous CRP is ongoing. Additional information is provided in the article below.

Please contact your [FSA County Office](#) for questions specific to your operation.

While our offices and staff remain very busy it's important to call ahead to your [FSA County office](#) and schedule an appointment before stopping in. It helps us prepare for your visit, so you can complete your FSA business and be on your way.

[Current FSA Farm Loan Interest Rates](#)

[Current Commodity Credit Corporation \(CCC\) Interest Rates](#)

On behalf of FSA employees across Ohio, we wish you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Respectfully,

Leonard Hubert

Deadline to Report Fall Seeded Crops is Dec. 16

All producers are reminded that the acreage reporting date for fall seeded crops has changed and the acreage reporting date is **Dec. 16, 2019**. This applies to all fall seeded crops including fall barley, fall wheat and all other fall-seeded small grains. Please call to schedule an appointment to certify your crops.

USDA Opens Signup for Conservation Reserve Program

USDA opened signup for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) on December 9, 2019. The deadline for agricultural producers to sign up for general CRP is February 28, 2020, while signup for continuous CRP is ongoing.

Farmers and landowners who enroll in CRP receive a yearly rental payment for voluntarily establishing 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.

CRP has 22 million acres enrolled, but the 2018 Farm Bill lifted the cap to 27 million acres. This means farmers and landowners have a chance to enroll in CRP for the first time or continue their participation for another term.

By enrolling in CRP, producers are improving water quality, reducing soil erosion, and restoring habitat for wildlife. This in turn spurs hunting, fishing, recreation, tourism, and other economic development across rural America.

CRP Enrollment Options

General Signup

CRP general signup will be held annually. The competitive general signup will now include increased opportunities for enrollment of wildlife habitat through the State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) initiative.

Continuous Signup

While some practices under SAFE will remain available through continuous signup, CRP continuous signup will focus primarily on water quality with the Clean Lakes, Estuaries, and Rivers (CLEAR) Initiative. The 2018 Farm Bill prioritizes water quality practices such as contour grass strips, filter strips, riparian buffers, wetlands and a new prairie strip.

USDA will also be working with Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) partners to relaunch CREP continuous options in each state under new statutory provisions. CREP will continue to target high-priority local, state or regional conservation concerns.

Grasslands Signups

CRP Grasslands signup helps landowners and operators protect grassland, including rangeland, and pastureland and certain other lands while maintaining the areas as grazing lands. A separate CRP Grasslands signup will be offered each year following general signup.

Pilot Programs

Later in 2020, (FSA will roll out pilot programs within CRP: CLEAR 30, which allows contracts expiring with CLEAR practices to be reenrolled in 30-year contracts and in the Soil Health and Income Protection Program (SHIPP) in the prairie pothole region. More information on these programs will be announced in the new year.

Land Transition

The CRP Transition Incentives Program (TIP) is an option for producers interested in transitioning land to a beginning farmer landowner or a member of a socially disadvantaged group to return land to production for sustainable grazing or crop production. CRP contract holders no longer need to be a retired or retiring owner or operator to transition their land. TIP participants may have a lease less than five years with an option to purchase, and they have two years before the end of the CRP contract to make conservation and land improvements.

Previously Expired Land

Land enrolled in CRP under a 15-year contract that expired in September 2017, 2018 or 2019, may be eligible for enrollment if there was no opportunity for re-enrollment and the practice under the expired contract has been maintained.

CRP Rates and Payments

FSA recently posted updated soil rental rates for CRP. County average rates are posted on the [CRP Statistics webpage](#). Soil rental rates are statutorily prorated at 90 percent for continuous signup and 85 percent for general signup. The rental rates will be assessed annually. Under continuous signup, producers also receive incentives, including a signup incentive payment and a practice incentive payment.

To enroll in CRP, contact your [FSA County office](#) or visit fsa.usda.gov/crp.

USDA Extends Deadlines for Dairy Margin Coverage Program and Market Facilitation Program to Dec. 20, 2019

Due to the prolonged and extensive impacts of weather events this year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently extended the deadline to December 20 for producers to enroll in the [Dairy Margin Coverage](#) (DMC) program for the 2020 calendar year. The deadline had been December 13. USDA announced is also continuing to accept applications for the [Market Facilitation Program](#) through December 20.

2019 has challenged the country's ag sector – prevented or late planting followed by a delayed harvest has been further complicated by wet and cold weather. Because many producers are still in the field, time to conduct business at the local USDA office is at a premium. USDA hopes this deadline extension will allow producers the opportunity to participate in these important programs.

Authorized by the 2018 Farm Bill and available through USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), the program offers reasonably priced 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 Market Facilitation Program is part of a relief strategy to support American agricultural producers while the Administration continues to work on free, fair, and reciprocal trade deals to open more markets to help American farmers compete globally. MFP payments are aimed at assisting farmers suffering from damage due to unjustified trade retaliation by foreign nations.

For more information, visit the [DMC webpage](#), the [MFP webpage](#) or contact your [FSA County office](#).

Ohio FSA and OSU Extension Service Jointly Host Farm Bill Education Meetings Across the State

The Ohio State University Extension Service and FSA County offices are hosting a series of 2018 Farm Bill education meetings across the state. All producers are invited to attend these informational meetings, which are designed to provide important information to assist producers as they begin to make farm-bill related program decisions. The 2018 Farm Bill, signed into law last December, reauthorized the existing Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) safety net programs that were in the 2014 Farm Bill, however producers will need to make new program enrollment decisions over the coming months.

More information on these meetings can be found online at Ohio FSA's website: <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/Ohio/state-events/index> or the Ohio State Extension Service website: <https://aede.osu.edu/research/osu-farm-management/2018-farm-bill/county-meetings> . The

meetings are scheduled from November through early February in advance of the coming ARC/PLC enrollment deadlines in 2020.

There also are resources available online that can educate producers in their ARC/PLC decision-making process. Links to these resources are available from FSA at https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/arcplc_program/index.

Submit Loan Requests for Financing Early

FSA offers a wide range of low-interest loans that can meet the financial needs of any farm operation for just about any purpose. The traditional **farm operating and farm ownership loans** can help large and small farm operations take advantage of early purchasing discounts for spring inputs as well expenses throughout the year.

Microloans are a simplified loan program that will provide up to \$50,000 for both Farm Ownership and Operating Microloans to eligible applicants. These loans, targeted for smaller operations and non-traditional operations, can be used for operating expenses, starting a new agricultural enterprise, purchasing equipment, and other needs associated with a farming operation. The staff can provide more details on farm operating and microloans and provide loan applications. Loans to beginning farmers and members of underserved groups are a priority.

Other types of loans available include:

Marketing Assistance Loans allow producers to use eligible commodities as loan collateral and obtain a 9-month loan while the crop is in storage. These loans provide cash flow to the producer and allow them to market the crop when prices may be more advantageous.

Farm Storage Facility Loans can be used to build permanent structures used to store eligible commodities, or for storage and handling trucks, or portable or permanent handling equipment. A variety of structures are eligible under this loan, including bunker silos, grain bins, hay storage structures and refrigerated structures for vegetables and fruit. A producer may borrow up to \$500,000 per loan.

Please call your [FSA County office](#) if you have questions about any of the loans available through FSA.

Farm Loan Year End Reviews

Producers that have a farm loan with FSA are reminded they must provide data for their Year-End Analysis (YEA) to their loan officer each year. Borrowers are urged to provide this information timely so that their files can be maintained. The office will contact you for the data you will need to provide us.

Operating Loan Applications Needed Now

Farmers that plan to apply to the Farm Service Agency for annual operating loan assistance this year are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. The earlier an application for loan assistance is filed, the quicker the FSA staff can process your request. Decisions on loans cannot be made until a complete application is received.

Farmers should also contact their [County FSA office](#) to setup an appointment with a Farm Loan Official for information as to what is required in order to have a complete loan application on file.

Dates to Remember

Dec. 16 --- Deadline to report the 2020 Fall Seeded Crops for fall barley, fall wheat and all other fall-seeded small grains.

Dec. 20 ---- Deadline to sign up for the 2019 Market Facilitation Program (MFP).

Dec. 20 ---- Election period deadline for 2020 Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) Program.

Dec. 25 ---- Christmas Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed.**

Jan. 1 ----- Elected Committee Members and alternates take office.

Jan. 1 ----- New Year's Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed.**

Jan. 20 ---- Martin Luther King Jr. Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed.**

Jan. 31 ---- Deadline on 2019 LDPs for wool and unshorn lamb pelts.

Feb. 17 ---- President's Day Holiday. **FSA Offices Closed.**

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).