

November 2019



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

GovDelivery

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

- [A Message from our State Executive Director](#)
- [November Interest Rates](#)
- [Important Dates](#)
- [FSA Encourages Farmers and Ranchers to Vote in County Committee Elections](#)
- [Livestock Inventory Records](#)
- [USDA Invites Input on Conservation Stewardship Program Rule](#)
- [USDA Packages Disaster Protection with Loans to Benefit Specialty Crop and Diversified Producers](#)
- [USDA Announces Streamlined Guaranteed Loans and Additional Lender Category for Small-Scale Operators](#)
- [Weather the Storm: FEMA Mobile App Provides Weather Alerts and Safety Tips](#)

Oregon FSA Newsletter

Oregon Farm Service Agency

7620 SW Mohawk St.
Tualatin, OR 97062

Phone: 503-692-3688
Fax: 855-824-6185
www.fsa.usda.gov/or

State Executive Director:
Barry Bushue

State Committee:
Anna Sullivan, Chair
Sam Asai, Member
Phil Hassinger, Member
TJ Hansell, Member
Denver Pugh, Member

A Message from our State Executive Director

As the weather starts to slowly get colder and wetter, most of the crops are harvested and equipment cleaned up and put away for the winter. It's the time of year when farm organizations have their annual meetings and farmers get together to talk about the past year and what the future holds.

There are a number of challenges the industry faces, and these meetings provide farmers with information and tools to help and educate.

Kellie Frank, District Director, Karie Walker, Farm Loan Manager and I attended parts of the 2019 Tri-State Grain Growers Convention in Spokane, Washington. We provided updates to the Oregon Wheat League on ARC/PLC, Margin Facilitation Program, and had some discussions about hemp production.

We also had the opportunity to hear from USDA's Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Stephen Censky, who joined the convention as the keynote speaker for the luncheon. We also received a state

Administration:
Martin Nguyen,
Administrative Officer

Farm Programs:
Kent Willett, Acting Chief

Farm Loan Programs:
Kathey Brucker, Chief

Next STC Meeting:
December 18-19, 2019, STO.

To find contact information for
your local office go to
www.fsa.usda.gov/or

**Sign up for important text
message alerts from your
local county FSA office! To
subscribe, text FSNOW
(372-669).**

ASKFSA
Are you looking for answers to
your FSA questions? Then
ASK FSA at
askfsa.custhelp.com.

legislative update. Peter Zeihan, Geopolitical Strategist, was a keynote speaker for Friday's breakfast and spoke at length about trade and the world economy. The conference was a great opportunity to hear from farmers and ranchers from Oregon and other states.

Oregon FSA will also have representation at the Farm Fair to be held in Hermiston December 4-5. Outreach and education are important parts of our goal to provide excellent customer service to Oregon's farmer and ranchers.

Oregon FSA recently held a very successful training for our Conservation programs that reflected any changes or updates resulting from the 2018 Farm Bill. It was held at the Pendleton Convention Center and attended by our District Directors, County Executive Directors and Program Technicians, and local NRCS Conservation Specialists. These trainings are also an important part of our ability to enhance customer service.

As Thanksgiving approaches, I look forward to spending time with family and friends. It is always a good time to reflect on the bounty that Oregon farmers and ranchers provide. It reminds me of the diversity of Oregon's agriculture. I am glad to be part of an agency that serves our dedicated and committed farmers and ranchers.

November Interest Rates

90 Day Treasury Bill: 2.000%
Direct Operating Loans: 2.500%
Farm Ownership and Conservation Loans: 3.000%
Farm Ownership Down Payment: 1.500%
Farm Ownership Joint Financing: 2.500%
Emergency Loans Actual Loss: 3.500%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 3 Year: 1.500%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 5 Year: 1.500%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 7 Year: 1.625%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 10 Year: 1.625%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 12 Year: 1.750%

Important Dates

Applications accepted for WHIP+, milk loss, and loss of on-farm stored commodities resulting from eligible disaster (into 2020).

Nov. 28: Closed for Thanksgiving Day holiday.

Dec. 2: COC Elections: Last day to return voted COC Election Ballots to the USDA Service Center

Dec. 6: Margin Facilitation Program (MFP) sign-ups end.

Dec. 13: Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) Program 2020 signup ends.

Dec. 25: Closed for Christmas Day holiday.

Jan. 1, 2020: Closed for New Years Day holiday.

Within 15 Days – earlier of (A) when a disaster occurred or damage to the crop or commodity becomes apparent or (B) normal harvest date for reporting a Notice of Loss for NAP*

Within 30 Days – when loss is apparent for reporting a Notice of Loss for LIP and ELAP.

TAP - Eligible producers should file for TAP assistance by the later of these two dates - 90 days of the disaster or when damages from the disaster are noticed; or 60 days after the regulation is

published on the Federal Register later this summer.
March 15, 2020: ARC-PLC Program Year 2019 signup ends.
June 30, 2020: ARC-PLC Program Year 2020 signup ends.

FSA Encourages Farmers and Ranchers to Vote in County Committee Elections

The 2019 Farm Service Agency County Committee Elections begins on Nov. 4, when ballots were mailed to eligible voters. The deadline to return the ballots to local FSA offices, or to be postmarked, is **Dec. 2, 2019**.

County committee members are an important component of the operations of FSA and provide a link between the agricultural community and USDA. Farmers and ranchers elected to county committees help deliver FSA programs at the local level, applying their knowledge and judgment to make decisions on commodity price support programs; conservation programs; incentive indemnity and disaster programs for some commodities; emergency programs and eligibility. FSA committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws. To be an eligible voter, farmers and ranchers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm, may also be eligible to vote.

Newly elected committee members will take office Jan. 1, 2020.

Eligible voters who do not receive a ballot can obtain one from their local USDA Service Center. More information on county committees, such as the new 2019 fact sheet, can be found on the FSA website at fsa.usda.gov/elections or at a local USDA Service Center.

Livestock Inventory Records

Producers are reminded to keep updated livestock inventory records. These records are necessary in the event of a natural disaster.

When disasters strike, the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) can assist producers who suffered excessive livestock death losses and grazing or feed losses due to eligible natural disasters.

To participate in livestock disaster assistance programs, 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. For grazing or feed losses, 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 inventory records including:

- Documentation of the number, kind, type, and weight range of livestock
- Beginning inventory supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts;

For more information on documentation requirements, contact your local FSA office.

USDA Invites Input on Conservation Stewardship Program Rule

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) seeks public comments on its interim final rule for the Conservation Stewardship Program. CSP, the nation's largest conservation program in terms of participating land, is designed to help farmers have more robust conservation activities. The rule – now available on the Federal Register – takes effect upon publication and includes changes to the program prescribed by the 2018 Farm Bill.

"We're excited to roll out an updated Conservation Stewardship Program," NRCS Chief Matt Lohr said. "We know the program is important to American farmers and ranchers, especially those who want to build on existing conservation efforts while strengthening their operations."

Changes to CSP include:

- Increasing payment rates for adoption of cover crop rotations.
- Introducing a new supplemental payment for advanced grazing management.
- Creating one-time payment for developing a comprehensive conservation plan.
- Providing specific support for organic and transitioning to organic production activities.

As part of implementing the 2018 Farm Bill, NRCS has streamlined CSP by basing contracts on funds instead of acres, bringing it in line with the agency's other large conservation program, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Additionally, NRCS is aligning CSP with EQIP through common applications, contracting operations, conservation planning, conservation practices and related administrative procedures.

"These changes will result in greater efficiency in program delivery and reduced burden on producers," Lohr said.

Submitting Comments

The interim final rule becomes effective upon publication in the Federal Register. NRCS invites comments on this interim rule through January 13, 2020. Electronic comments must be submitted through [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) under Docket ID NRCS-2019-0020. All written comments received will be publicly available on <http://www.regulations.gov>.

NRCS will evaluate public comments to determine whether additional changes are needed. The agency plans on publishing a final rule following public comment review.

Applying for CSP

CSP is offered in all 50 states and the Pacific and Caribbean areas through continuous sign-ups. The program provides many benefits, including increased crop yields, decreased inputs, wildlife habitat improvements and increased resilience to weather extremes. CSP is for working lands including cropland, pastureland, rangeland, nonindustrial private forest land and agricultural land under the jurisdiction of an Indian tribe.

NRCS will make available \$750 million for interested producers in fiscal 2020. NRCS state offices will announce sign-up periods for CSP in the coming weeks. Additionally, CSP participants may have an opportunity to renew their contracts in the first half of the fifth year of the five-year contract.

For more information on how to sign up for CSP in Oregon, visit www.or.nrcs.usda.gov or contact your [local NRCS field office](#).

Contact:

Amy Fischer, CSP Program Manager
Email: Amy.Fischer@usda.gov
Phone: 503-414-3292

USDA Packages Disaster Protection with Loans to Benefit Specialty Crop and Diversified Producers

Free basic coverage available for new and underserved loan applicants

Producers who apply for FSA farm loans will be offered the opportunity to enroll in the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). NAP is available to producers who grow noninsurable crops and is especially important to fruit and vegetable producers and other specialty crop growers.

New, underserved and limited income specialty growers who apply for farm loans could qualify for basic loss coverage at no cost.

The basic disaster coverage protects at 55 percent of the market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of production. Covered crops include “specialty” crops, for instance, vegetables, fruits, mushrooms, floriculture, ornamental nursery, aquaculture, turf grass, ginseng, honey, syrup, hay, forage, grazing and energy crops. FSA allows beginning, underserved or limited income producers to obtain NAP coverage up to 90 days after the normal application closing date when they also apply for FSA credit.

Producers also may work with FSA to protect value-added production, such as organic or direct market crops, at their fair market value in those markets. Targeted underserved groups eligible for free or discounted coverage are American Indians or Alaskan Natives, Asians, Blacks or African Americans, Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, and women.

FSA offers a variety of loan products, including farm ownership loans, operating loans and microloans that have a streamlined application process.

Growers need not apply for an FSA loan, nor be a beginning, limited resource, or underserved farmer, to be eligible for Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program assistance. To learn more, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/nap or www.fsa.usda.gov/farmloans, or contact your local FSA office at <https://offices.usda.gov>.

USDA Announces Streamlined Guaranteed Loans and Additional Lender Category for Small-Scale Operators

Options Help More Beginning, Small and Urban Producers Gain Access to Credit

Producers can apply for a streamlined version of USDA guaranteed loans, which are tailored for smaller scale farms and urban producers. The program, called EZ Guarantee Loans, uses a simplified application process to help beginning, small, underserved and family farmers and ranchers apply for loans of up to \$100,000 from USDA-approved lenders to purchase farmland or finance agricultural operations.

A new category of lenders will join traditional lenders, such as banks and credit unions, in offering USDA EZ Guarantee Loans. Microlenders, which include Community Development Financial Institutions and Rural Rehabilitation Corporations, will be able to offer their customers up to \$50,000 of EZ Guaranteed Loans, helping to reach urban areas and underserved producers. Banks, credit unions and other traditional USDA-approved lenders, can offer customers up to \$100,000 to help with agricultural operation costs.

EZ Guarantee Loans offer low interest rates and terms up to seven years for financing operating expenses and 40 years for financing the purchase of farm real estate. USDA-approved lenders can issue these loans with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) guaranteeing the loan up to 95 percent.

More information about the available types of FSA farm loans can be found at www.fsa.usda.gov/farmloans or by contacting your local FSA office.

Weather the Storm: FEMA Mobile App Provides Weather Alerts and Safety Tips

USDA offers programs to help producers recover from disasters; FEMA can help you prepare ahead of time.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recently launched a free mobile app that will instruct the public on what to do before, during and after emergencies. The app is available for download for Apple, Android and Blackberry mobile devices.

Download the app to:

- Receive alerts from the National Weather Service for up to five locations.
- Get safety reminders, read tips to survive natural disasters and customize your emergency checklist.
- Locate open shelters and where to talk to FEMA in person (or on the phone).
- Upload and share your disaster photos to help first responders.

For more information about the FEMA app, visit fema.gov/mobile-app. To download the FEMA app from the Apple Store visit <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/fema/id474807486?mt=8>. To download the FEMA app on Google Play for Android visit: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=gov.fema.mobile.android&hl=en>

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).

 SHARE



Questions?
[Contact Us](#)

STAY CONNECTED:



SUBSCRIBER SERVICES:

[Manage Preferences](#) | [Delete Profile](#) | [Help](#)