

June 2015



Indiana Farm Service Agency Program Updates

Indiana State Farm Service Agency

5981 Lakeside Blvd.
Indianapolis, IN 46278

Phone: 317-290-3315
Fax: 855-374-4066
www.fsa.usda.gov/in

State Executive Director:
Julia A. Wickard

State Committee Members:
Travis Nolcox, Chairperson
Harry Pearson, Member
Wayne Vance, Member
Kristin Whittington, Member

Administrative Officer:
Nancy Best

Production Adjustment Chief:
Carl Schweikhardt

Price Support/Disaster Chief:
Steve Brown

Conservation/Compliance Chief:
Susan Hovermale

Farm Loan Chief:
Greg Foulke

Communications Coordinator:
Donna Ferguson

From the FSA Farm Fields

Although there have been several Indiana summer days that feel more like late fall or early spring, the county fair season is upon us and farmers across this great state are comparing crop stories. It's been extremely wet in many parts of the state with up to eight inches of rainfall in some locations. Crops in many locations in the Hoosier state have been negatively impacted by the heavy rainfall in short periods of time. According to Purdue University experts, the torrential rains and resulting flooding have destroyed as much as five percent of Indiana's corn and soybean crops and potentially have caused about \$475 million in crop damage since the beginning of June.

FSA county offices are working diligently to survey the damage to determine if 30 percent production loss county-wide of at least one crop in the county has occurred. This 30 percent production loss is necessary for the state to apply for disaster assistance from the USDA Secretary of Agriculture. We are assessing the damage in the hardest-hit parts of the state and hope to have the data collected in the next few weeks. If the 30 percent benchmark is reached, this will qualify farmers in those regions of the state for low interest emergency loans.

As more information is made available, County FSA offices will be communicating what tools are available to farmers. If you believe you have a qualifying loss, please notify your county FSA office immediately.

In Indiana Agriculture,

Julia A. Wickard

Flooding Assistance Available from FSA: Report Your Acres and Losses

The USDA Farm Service Agency has several federal farm bill program benefits that could assist Indiana farmers across the State of Indiana impacted from heavy rains and flooding. These significant rain and flood events in Indiana have left extensive damage behind. As much, many farmers are experiencing preventive planting, failed acreage and property damage. FSA offers several disaster assistance programs and low interest loan programs to assist agricultural producers in their recovery efforts following flooding. First and foremost for disaster assistance to become available, a USDA Secretarial Disaster Declaration must be issued. It requires that a natural disaster to have occurred and that 30 percent production loss county-wide of at least one crop in the county must have occurred.

County FSA offices are completing loss assessment reports to document production losses. Those losses are reported to FSA through an online reporting system. The reports are completed based upon recommendations of the County Emergency Board. The reports are forwarded to the State Office for further analysis, and if justified, provided to the Secretary of Agriculture for a Disaster Designation. Once a Disaster Designation is issued by the Secretary of Agriculture, low interest emergency loans are available from FSA which can assist with restoration or replacement of essential property, coverage of production losses, refinancing certain debts and reorganizing the farming operation. Applications for emergency loans must be received within eight months of the date the county is declared a disaster area.

Prevented planting requests must be received within 15 days of the final planting date for a crop. June 5 was the final planting date for corn in Indiana. June 22 was the final date to file a timely prevented planting request at FSA. June 20 was the final planting date for soybeans in Indiana. July 6 will be the final date to file a timely prevented planting request at FSA. Late filed prevented planting requests will be accepted at FSA when proof is provided that a timely prevented planting claim was filed with a crop insurance agent. Otherwise, if a late claim is filed, it will be considered by the local County Committee on a case by case basis.

Failed acreage credit must be filed at FSA before destruction of the crop occurs. Late filed requests for failed acreage credit at FSA will be accepted when proof is provided that a timely claim was filed with a crop insurance agent. Please note that the final acreage reporting date for corn, soybeans, hay, pasture and the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is July 15. As the wet weather has caused delay of planting, please note that if soybeans are planted after July 15, the crop acreage report must be filed within 15 days of the planting date. Prevented and failed acres credit is requested on form CCC-576, Notice of Loss.

Thankfully, the 2014 Farm Bill reinstated these safety-net programs for farmers suffering the devastating impacts of natural disasters, such as these epic flood events. Because of the farm bill, we, as an agency and our 75 Indiana county FSA offices and dedicated employees can quickly respond to the recovery needs of our producers.

Enrollment for 2016 Dairy Margin Protection Program to Begin July 1

FSA announced that starting July 1, 2015, dairy farmers can enroll in [Margin Protection Program](#) for **coverage in 2016**. The voluntary program, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, provides financial assistance to participating dairy operations when the margin – the difference between the price of milk and feed costs – falls below the coverage level selected by the farmer.

The Margin Protection Program gives participating dairy producers the flexibility to select coverage levels best suited for their operation. Enrollment begins July 1 and ends on Sept. 30, 2015, for coverage in 2016. Participating farmers will remain in the program through 2018 and pay a \$100 administrative fee each year. Producers also have the option of selecting a different coverage level during open enrollment each year. Margin Protection Program payments are based on an operation's historical production. An operation's historical production will increase by 2.61 percent in 2016 if the operation participated in 2015, providing a stronger safety net.

USDA also has an online resource available to help dairy producers decide which level of coverage will provide them with the strongest safety net under a variety of conditions. The enhanced Web tool, available at www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool, allows dairy farmers to quickly and easily combine their 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, mobile phone, or tablet, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Dairy operations enrolling in the program must meet conservation compliance provisions. Producers participating in the Livestock Gross Margin insurance program may register for the Margin Protection Program, but this new margin program will only begin once their livestock dairy insurance coverage has ended. Producers must also submit form CCC-782 for 2016, confirming their Margin Protection Program coverage level selection, to the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office. If electing higher coverage for 2016, dairy producers can either pay the premium in full at the time of enrollment or pay a minimum of 25 percent of the premium by Feb. 1, 2016.

For more information, visit FSA online at www.fsa.usda.gov/dairy for more information, or stop by a local FSA office to learn more about the Margin Protection Program. To find a local FSA office in your area, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

2015 Acreage Reporting Dates

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

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for Indiana:

January 2 - Honey

January 15 - Apples

June 15 - Cucumbers (Planted 5/1-5/31 in Knox County)

July 15 - Cucumbers (Planted 5/10-6/15 in all counties), all other crops

August 15 - Cucumbers (Planted 6/16-8/5 in Fulton, LaPorte, Porter, and St. Joseph Counties)

September 15 - Cucumbers (Planted 6/1-8/15 in Knox County)

September 30 - Value Loss and Controlled Environment Crop (for the coming program year)

December 15 - Fall Mint, Fall-Seeded Small Grains

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above 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 above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar 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.
- Cucumbers and crops for NAP coverage may have dates not included on the chart above. Visit your local county office for details.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above 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 county FSA office.

Deadline Change for Timely Reporting Losses for NAP Assistance

Timely filing a Notice of Loss is required for all crops. For losses on crops covered by the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), producers must timely report damage or loss to their administrative County Office. For all low yield and value-loss crop claims, a CCC-576 Notice of Loss must be filed within 15 calendar days of earlier of the date disaster occurs (or becomes apparent) or the normal harvest date. However, all producers should be aware that deadlines to provide initial notice to FSA do now vary by method of harvest and crop.

Crops that are either hand-harvested or other crops determined by FSA to deteriorate quickly and therefore need prompt appraisal must notify FSA within 72 hours of the date of damage or loss first becomes apparent. This initial notice may be by the filing of the CCC-576, e-mail, FAX, or a phone call. When initial notice is by email, FAX, or phone, County Offices will provide a Receipt for Service with additional requirements. A CCC-576 Notice of Loss will still be required within 15 calendar days of earlier of date of occurrence/appearance of damage or harvest date.

Other crops, such as forages and grains, continue to have the 15 day requirement to file a required CCC-576, Notice of Loss, to report failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. This Notice of Loss must be filed within 15 calendar days of the earlier of date of occurrence/appearance of damage or harvest date.

If filing for prevented planting, an acreage report and CCC-576 must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

Direct Loans

FSA offers direct farm ownership and direct farm operating Loans to producers who want to establish, maintain or strengthen their farm. FSA loan officers process, approve and service direct loans.

Direct farm operating loans can be used to purchase livestock and feed, farm equipment, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance and other costs including family living expenses. Operating loans can also be used to finance minor improvements or repairs to buildings and to refinance some farm-related debts, excluding real estate.

Direct farm ownership loans can be used to purchase farmland, enlarge an existing farm, construct and repair buildings, and to make farm improvements.

The maximum loan amount for both direct farm ownership and operating loans is \$300,000 and a down payment is not required. Repayment terms vary depending on the type of loan, collateral and the producer's ability to repay the loan. Operating loans are normally repaid within seven years and farm ownership loans are not to exceed 40 years.

Please contact your local FSA office for more information or to apply for a direct farm ownership or operating loan.

Youth Loans

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 (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.

Stop by the county office for help preparing and processing the application forms.

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).