

July 2017



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

# NEWSLETTER

GovDelivery

---

## Indiana Farm Service Agency Program Updates

---

### Indiana Farm Service Agency

5981 Lakeside Blvd.  
Indianapolis, IN 46278

Phone: 317-290-3315  
Fax: 855-374-4066  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/in](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/in)

#### Acting State Executive Director:

Nancy J. Best  
[nancy.best@in.usda.gov](mailto:nancy.best@in.usda.gov)

#### State Committee Members:

Travis Nolcox, Chairperson  
Harry Pearson, Member  
Wayne Vance, Member  
Kristin Whittington, Member

#### Administrative Officer:

Nancy Best  
[nancy.best@in.usda.gov](mailto:nancy.best@in.usda.gov)

#### Production Adjustment Chief:

Carl Schweikhardt  
[carl.schweikhardt@in.usda.gov](mailto:carl.schweikhardt@in.usda.gov)

#### Price Support/Disaster Chief:

Susan Houston  
[susan.houston@in.usda.gov](mailto:susan.houston@in.usda.gov)

### August 1 Deadline to Enroll in Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC)

Farmers have until Aug. 1 to enroll in Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and/or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2017 crop year. These programs trigger financial protections for participating agricultural producers when market forces cause substantial drops in crop prices or revenues.

Producers have already elected ARC or PLC, but to receive program benefits they must enroll for the 2017 crop year by signing a contract before the Aug. 1 deadline. Please contact your local FSA office to schedule an appointment if you have not yet enrolled.

Covered commodities under the programs include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium grain rice (which includes short grain and sweet rice), safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

For more program information, contact your local FSA office or visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc).

---

### August 1 Deadline for Nominations for the 2017 County Committee Elections

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) encourages all farmers and FSA program participants to take part in their local County Committee election nomination process. Nomination forms must be postmarked or received in your local county FSA office by close of business on Aug. 1, 2017.

County committees are unique to FSA and allow producers to have a voice on federal farm program implementation at the local level.

**Conservation/Compliance****Chief:**

Susan Hovermale

[susan.hovermale@in.usda.gov](mailto:susan.hovermale@in.usda.gov)**Farm Loan Chief:**

Greg Foulke

[greg.foulke@in.usda.gov](mailto:greg.foulke@in.usda.gov)**Public Affairs/Outreach****Coordinator:**

Donna Ferguson

[donna.ferguson@in.usda.gov](mailto:donna.ferguson@in.usda.gov)

To be eligible to serve on the FSA county committee, a person must participate or cooperate in an agency administered program, be eligible to vote in a county committee election and reside in the Local Administrative Area (LAA) where they are nominated. All producers, including women, minority and beginning farmers and ranchers are encouraged to participate in the nomination and election process.

Producers may nominate themselves or others as candidates. Organizations representing minority and women farmers and ranchers may also nominate candidates. To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign form FSA-669A. The form and more information about county committee elections is available online at: [www.fsa.usda.gov/elections](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections).

Elected county committee members serve a three-year term and are responsible for making decisions on FSA disaster, conservation, commodity and price support programs, as well as other important federal farm program issues. County committees consist of three to 11 members.

FSA will mail election ballots to eligible voters beginning Nov. 6. Ballots are due back in your local county office by mail or in person no later than Dec. 4. All newly elected county committee members and alternates will take office January 1, 2018.

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

---

## August 1 Deadline for Reconstitutions

To be effective for the current Fiscal Year (FY), farm combinations and farm divisions must be requested by **August 1 of the FY** for farms subject to the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program. A reconstitution is considered to be requested when all:

- of the required signatures are on form FSA-155
- other applicable documentation, such as proof of ownership, is submitted

---

## Be Palmer Amaranth Aware

Palmer amaranth is a fast-growing, problematic broadleaf weed native to the Southwest. Recently, this weed has been spread to other parts of the nation. It is a highly competitive weed that has developed resistance to many herbicides, making it difficult to control. It is a very prolific seed producer, producing up to 250,000 seeds from one plant.

As you spend time in your fields this summer, be on the lookout for Palmer amaranth. If you suspect Palmer amaranth is on your property, contact your local county extension agent or crop consultant for recommendations for control. You can take steps to help prevent further infestation by not entering affected areas, and always cleaning vehicles, equipment and clothing that has come in contact with the weed.

Those planting grasses and flower mixes for conservation plantings should only use local reputable sources. Obtaining a seed laboratory report before purchasing a seed mix is recommended. Reject any seed lots which have "pigweed" or "amaranth" as a weed component unless the pigweed seed has been genetically tested to not be Palmer amaranth.

[Click here](#) to learn more about Palmer amaranth and how to identify it.

## Required Management on CRP Acres

Participants in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) are responsible for maintaining the acreage under contract to the minimum specifications and acreages as required by their conservation plan and supporting documents. This includes not only controlling excessive weeds, invasive species, and trees in grass practices, but completing required management on CRP practices as scheduled in conservation plans as well.

The purpose of required management activities, commonly referred to as mid contract management (MCM), is to enhance the wildlife habitat value of the enrolled acres for species such as Northern Bobwhite, pollinators, and others. In grass practices, the perennial grasses tend to crowd out the desired broadleaf plants, litter accumulates and plant diversity declines. In tree practices, thinning or pruning may be needed to improve tree growth or enhancements needed in open areas to encourage plant diversity for wildlife. MCM is now required on all new practices and if not already required, is optional on all older contracts.

These activities (as well as any treatment for weed control or maintenance) must be completed outside of the primary nesting season. In Indiana, the primary nesting season for a contract that was approved for enrollment prior to February 8, 2007 is from March 1 through July 15th. For newer contracts, the primary nesting season is April 1 through August 1st. Any activities completed during this time period may result in a contract violation and payment reduction.

Required management activities include: prescribed burning, strip disking, strip spraying, inter-seeding forbs/legumes/pollinators, pruning/thinning, inner seedling or shrub planting for diversity. Cost Share is available for eligible practices up to a maximum of \$100 per acre for a 10-year contract or up to \$125 per acre for a 15-year contract over the duration of the contract.

---

## Direct Loans

FSA offers direct farm ownership and direct farm operating loans to producers who want to establish, maintain or strengthen their farm or ranch. 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.

---

## USDA Offers Targeted Farm Loan Funding for Underserved Groups and Beginning Farmers

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds producers that FSA offers targeted farm ownership and farm operating loans to assist underserved applicants as well as beginning farmers and ranchers.

USDA defines underserved applicants as a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of the group without regard to their individual qualities. For farm loan program purposes, targeted underserved groups are women, African Americans, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, Hispanics and Asians and Pacific Islanders.

Underserved or beginning farmers and ranchers who cannot obtain commercial credit from a bank can apply for either FSA direct loans or guaranteed loans. Direct loans are made to applicants by FSA. Guaranteed loans are made by lending institutions who arrange for FSA to guarantee the loan. FSA can guarantee up to 95 percent of the loss of principal and interest on a loan. The FSA guarantee allows lenders to make agricultural credit available to producers who do not meet the lender's normal underwriting criteria.

The direct and guaranteed loan program provides for two types of loans: farm ownership loans and farm operating loans. In addition to customary farm operating and ownership loans, FSA now offers Microloans through the direct loan program. The focus of Microloans is on the financing needs of small, beginning farmer, niche and non-traditional farm operations. Microloans are available for both ownership and operating finance needs. To learn more about microloans, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/microloans](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/microloans).

To qualify as a beginning producer, the individual or entity must meet the eligibility requirements outlined for direct or guaranteed loans. Additionally, individuals and all entity members must have operated a farm for less than 10 years. Applicants must materially or substantially participate in the operation.

For more information on FSA's farm loan programs and targeted underserved and beginning farmer guidelines, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/farmloans](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/farmloans).

---

## Farm Storage Facility Loans

FSA's Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program provides low-interest financing to producers to build or upgrade storage facilities.

The low-interest funds can be used to build or upgrade permanent facilities to store commodities. Eligible commodities include corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley, minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain, pulse crops (lentils, chickpeas and dry peas), hay, honey, renewable biomass, fruits, nuts and vegetables for cold storage facilities, floriculture, hops, maple sap, rye, milk, cheese, butter, yogurt, meat and poultry (unprocessed), eggs, and aquaculture (excluding systems that maintain live animals through uptake and discharge of water). Qualified facilities include grain bins, hay barns and cold storage facilities for eligible commodities.

Loans up to \$50,000 can be secured by a promissory note/security agreement and loans between \$50,000 and \$100,000 may require additional security. Loans exceeding \$100,000 require additional security.

Producers do not need to demonstrate the lack of commercial credit availability to apply. The loans are designed to assist a diverse range of farming operations, including small and mid-sized businesses, new farmers, operations supplying local food and farmers markets, non-traditional farm products, and underserved producers.

To learn more about the FSA Farm Storage Facility Loan, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport) or contact your local FSA county office. To find your local FSA county office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

---

## 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 Average Adjusted Gross Income Compliance Reviews

The AGI verification and compliance reviews for 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017 are conducted on producers who the IRS indicated may have exceeded the adjusted gross income limitations described in [7 CFR 1400.500]. Based on this review, producers will receive determinations of eligibility or ineligibility.

If the producer is determined to have exceeded the average AGI limitation of \$900,000, receivables will be established for payments earned directly or indirectly by the producer subject to the \$900,000

limitation. The Indiana FSA Office has begun notifying producers selected for review. If you have any questions about the review process or determinations, please contact the Indiana FSA Office at 317-290-3315. Producers who receive initial debt notification letters may only appeal the amount of the debt to their local FSA office. Payment eligibility adverse determinations become administratively final 30 days from the date of the payment eligibility adverse determination letter and can only be reopened if exceptional circumstances exist that prevented the producer from timely filing the appeal.

---

## Purdue Extension Invites Military Veterans and Active Duty Personnel to Beginning Farmer Veteran Tour and Workshop

Purdue Extension invites all military veterans and active duty personnel and their families to attend a Beginning Farmer Veteran Tour and Workshop on **August 12th, 2017** at Crowl Cattle in Lafayette, IN. Cadel, a U.S. Army veteran and Rebecca Crowl run their farm with a focus on herd genetics, management practices, and quality. Cows are grazed on locally rented pastures and weaned calves are retained for replacement heifers and freezer beef for families across Indiana.

The morning session will be held at the [ADM Agricultural Innovation Center](#) at Purdue, 698 Ahlers Dr, West Lafayette, IN 47906 and will focus on basic herd management, fertility, as well as farm and freezer beef marketing. Lunch will be provided and a tour of Crowl Cattle will follow in the afternoon.

Registration is limited so please register soon! You can register at <http://www.cvent.com/events/beginning-farmer-tours-and-workshops/event-summary-0f7526f0380a432788708b2f2edcf1e7.aspx>.

For more information and other e-mail updates, please contact Cindy Chastain at [chastai1@purdue.edu](mailto:chastai1@purdue.edu) or Katherine Prasuhn at [kslong@purdue.edu](mailto:kslong@purdue.edu), or 765-496-2377.

---

## Special Accommodations

Special accommodations will be made upon request for individuals with disabilities, vision impairment or hearing impairment. If accommodations are required, individuals should contact the county FSA office directly or by phone.

---

## Dates to Remember

**August 1:** Deadline to enroll in 2017 Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs

**August 1:** Deadline to request farm reconstitutions and transfers for 2017

**August 1:** Deadline for 2017 County Committee election nomination forms - postmarked or delivered to the local FSA office

**August 15:** Reporting date for cucumbers (planted 6/16-8/5 in Fulton, LaPorte, Porter and St. Joseph Counties)

**September 1:** MPP-Dairy 2018 registration and election begins

**September 1:** 2017 MPP-Dairy premiums due

**September 1:** Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) application closing date for value loss crops for the following year (flowers for fresh cut, onion sets, turfgrass sod, Christmas trees, aquaculture, ginseng, mushrooms, etc.)

**September 4:** Offices closed in observance of Labor Day

**September 15:** Reporting date for cucumbers (planted 6/1-8/15 in Knox County)

**September 30:** Reporting date for value loss and controlled environment crop (for the coming program year)

**September 30:** Deadline to report changes in interest on ARC or PLC contracts

**September 30:** NAP application closing date for garlic, wheat, barley, rye and mint for the following year's crop

**October 9:** Offices closed in observance of Columbus Day

---

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).