

August 2015



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## Nebraska FSA Newsletter

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### Nebraska Farm Service Agency

7131 A Street  
Lincoln, NE

[www.fsa.usda.gov/ne](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/ne)

### State Committee:

Bill Armbrust  
Fred Christensen  
Susan Frazier,  
Chairperson  
Leo Hoehn  
Linda Kleinschmit

### Complete Agricultural Risk Coverage/Price Loss Coverage (ARCPLC) Enrollment By September 30

September 30, 2015 is the deadline to submit completed ARCPLC contracts for both 2014 and 2015, and remain eligible for potential payments. If you have not started this process, contact your local county office immediately for an appointment. If you initiated your contracts, ensure that all necessary signatures from landowners and other producers on the farm have been obtained and the contract has been submitted back to FSA. Failure to complete this process timely will result in the farm being

**State Executive Director:** Dan Steinkruger ineligible for any earned payments in 2014 and/or 2015. Payments for 2014 will be determined and issued, if earned, in October.

**Division Chiefs:**

Cathy Anderson  
Doug Klein  
Greg Reisdorff  
Mike Sander  
Mark Wilke

Please contact your local FSA Office for questions specific to your operation or county.

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## **Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) Acreage Maintenance**

Producers enrolled in Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) must protect all cropland and noncropland acres on the farm from wind and water erosion and noxious weeds. Producers who sign ARC county or individual contracts and PLC contracts agree to effectively control noxious weeds on the farm according to sound agricultural practices. If a producer fails to take necessary actions to correct a maintenance problem on a farm that is enrolled in ARC or PLC, the County Committee may elect to terminate the contract for the program year.

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## **USDA Announces Conservation Incentives for Working Grass, Range and Pasture Lands**

Beginning Sept. 1, farmers and ranchers can apply for financial assistance to help conserve working grasslands, rangeland and pastureland while maintaining the areas as livestock grazing lands.

The initiative is part of the voluntary Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), a federally funded program that for 30 years has assisted agricultural producers with the cost of restoring, enhancing and protecting certain grasses, shrubs and trees to improve water quality, prevent soil erosion and reduce loss of wildlife habitat. In return, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. CRP has helped farmers and ranchers prevent more than 8 billion tons of soil from eroding, reduce nitrogen and phosphorous runoff relative to cropland by 95 and 85 percent respectively, and even sequester 43 million tons of greenhouse gases annually, equal to taking 8 million cars off the road.

The CRP-Grasslands initiative will provide participants who establish long-term, resource-conserving covers with annual rental payments up to 75 percent of the grazing value of the land. Cost-share assistance also is available for up to 50 percent of the covers and other practices, such as cross fencing to support rotational grazing or improving pasture cover to benefit pollinators or other wildlife. Participants may still conduct common grazing practices, produce hay, mow, or harvest for seed production, conduct fire rehabilitation, and construct firebreaks and fences.

With the publication of the CRP regulation, the Farm Service Agency will accept applications on an ongoing basis beginning Sept. 1, 2015, with those applications scored against published ranking criteria, and approved based on the competitiveness of the offer. The ranking period will occur at

least once per year and be announced at least 30 days prior to its start. The end of the first ranking period will be Nov. 20, 2015.

To learn more about participating in CRP-Grasslands or SAFE, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/crp](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/crp) or consult with the local Farm Service Agency county office. To locate a nearby Farm Service Agency office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>. To learn more about the 30th anniversary of CRP, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/CRPis30](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/CRPis30) or follow on Twitter using #CRPis30.

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## **Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Deadline Approaching for 2016 Crops**

Producers are reminded to apply for 2016 Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) benefits by September 1, 2015. The September 1, 2015 deadline includes value loss crops (Aquaculture, Christmas Trees, Ginseng, Turfgrass Sod, Nursery, Mushrooms, Floriculture and Propagation Stock Nonornamental Nursery). Fall seeded small grains have a sales closing date of September 30. Perennial fruit crops like apples, cherries, and plums have a sales closing date of December 1. The deadline for crops planted in the spring is March 15.

Eligible producers can apply for 2016 NAP coverage at their local FSA Office using form CCC-471, Application for Coverage. The service fee for basic NAP coverage is the lesser of \$250 per crop or \$750 per producer per administrative county, not to exceed a total of \$1,875 for a producer with farming interest in multiple counties. Producers interested in buy-up coverage must pay a premium, in addition to the service fee. The maximum premium will be \$6,563.

Producers meeting the definition of a socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher, beginning farmer or rancher or limited resource farmer or rancher will have service fees waived. Producers meeting this definition that choose to purchase buy-up coverage will also have service fees waived and the premium will be capped at \$3,282.

The application and service fee must be filed by September 1, 2015 for value loss crops.

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## **Filing a Notice of Loss**

It is important to notify FSA timely if a crop has failed or if a crop is prevented from being planted. The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. Timely filing a Notice of Loss is required for all crops including winter wheat that may have failed over the winter.

A prevented planting claim must be submitted within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop. Failed acreage must be reported on a CCC-576 for losses to crops covered by the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). Losses on NAP crops must be filed within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent. In all other cases, the failed acreage must be reported prior to disposition of the crop. To be approved for either prevented planting or failed acreage credit, the reason for loss must be due to a weather related event.

For hand harvested crops, not limited to fruits and vegetables, producers must notify the County Office within 72 hours of the loss or damage becomes apparent. These types of losses may be made by phone, and must be followed up in office with a CCC-576, within 15 days of the reported loss by phone.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, or to request an appointment to report acreage, contact the local FSA office.

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## **Tree Assistance Program (TAP) Sign-up**

Orchardists and nursery tree growers who experience losses from natural disasters during calendar year 2015 must submit a TAP application either 90 calendar days after the disaster event or the date when the loss is apparent. TAP was authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014 as a permanent disaster program. TAP provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters.

Eligible tree types include trees, bushes or vines that produce an annual crop for commercial purposes. Nursery trees include ornamental, fruit, nut and Christmas trees that are produced for commercial sale. Trees used for pulp or timber are ineligible.

To qualify for TAP, orchardists must suffer a qualifying tree, bush or vine loss in excess of 15 percent mortality from an eligible natural disaster. The eligible trees, bushes or vines must have been owned when the natural disaster occurred; however, eligible growers are not required to own the land on which the eligible trees, bushes and vines were planted.

If the TAP application is approved, the eligible trees, bushes and vines must be replaced within 12 months from the date the application is approved. The cumulative total quantity of acres planted to trees, bushes or vines, for which a producer can receive TAP payments, cannot exceed 500 acres annually.

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## **Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) General Signup Begins December 1, 2015**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will accept new offers to participate in CRP under a general signup to be held Dec. 1, 2015, through Feb. 26, 2016. Eligible existing program participants with contracts expiring Sept. 30, 2015, will be granted an option for one-year extensions. Farmers and ranchers interested in removing sensitive land from agricultural production and planting grasses or trees to reduce soil erosion, improve water quality and restore wildlife habitat are encouraged to enroll.

For 30 years, the Conservation Reserve Program has helped farmers and ranchers prevent more than 8 billion tons of soil from eroding, reduce nitrogen and phosphorous runoff relative to cropland by 95 and 85 percent respectively, and even sequester 43 million tons of greenhouse gases annually, equal to taking 8 million cars off the road.

The voluntary Conservation Reserve Program allows USDA to contract with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive land is conserved. Participants establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat. In return, USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. Contract duration is between 10 and 15 years.

CRP protects water quality and restores significant habitat for ducks, pheasants, turkey, quail, deer and other important wildlife which spurs economic development like hunting and fishing, outdoor recreation and tourism across rural America.

Farmers and ranchers should consider the various CRP continuous sign-up initiatives that may help target specific resource concerns. Financial assistance is offered for many practices including conservation buffers and pollinator habitat plantings, and initiatives such as the highly erodible lands, bottomland hardwood tree and longleaf pine.

Farmers and ranchers may visit their FSA county office for additional information. The 2014 Farm Bill authorized the enrollment of grasslands in CRP and information on grasslands enrollment will be available after the regulation is published later this summer.

For more information on CRP and other FSA programs, please visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

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## Farm Storage Facility Loan Program (FSFL)

The FSFL program allows producers of eligible commodities to obtain low-interest financing to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities. The maximum FSFL loan amount is \$500,000 per loan. Participants are required to provide a down payment of 15 percent, with Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) providing a loan for the remaining 85 percent of the net cost of the eligible storage facility, permanent drying and handling equipment. Loan terms of 7, 10 or 12 years are available depending on the amount of the loan. FSFL security requirements have been eased for loans in the amount of \$100,000 and less. Eligible commodities include grains, oilseeds, peanuts, pulse crops, hay, honey, renewable biomass commodities, fruits and vegetables. Qualified facilities include grain bins, grain handling and drying equipment, hay storage sheds, cold storage facilities and handling equipment for fruits and vegetables. Specialty crop fruit and vegetable growers can also use the FSFL loan program for sorting bins, wash stations and other food safety-related equipment. 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>.

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>.

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## Farm Loan Information Chart

A Farm Loan Information Chart Fact Sheet containing information on maximum loan amounts, loan terms, and use of proceeds is available. The fact sheet can be accessed by clicking [here](#). Additional details on available Farm Loan Programs can be obtained at local FSA offices and on FSA's website: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>

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## Loans for Targeted Underserved Producers

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating type loans and/or purchase or improve farms or ranches. While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for members of targeted underserved groups. A targeted underserved applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities. For purposes of this program, targeted underserved groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

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## August FSA Interest Rates

Farm Operating: 2.625%  
Microloan: 2.625%  
Farm Ownership: 4.00%  
Farm Ownership - Joint Financing: 2.50%  
Farm Ownership - Down Payment: 1.50%  
Emergency - Actual Loss: 3.625%  
Farm Storage Facility Loan 7 year term: 2.125%  
Farm Storage Facility Loan 10 year term: 2.375%  
Farm Storage Facility Loan 12 year term: 2.5%  
Commodity Loan: 1.25%

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## Dates to Remember

**September 1, 2015** - 2016 NAP sales closing date for value loss crops, nursery crops, turfgrass sod, Christmas trees, and aquaculture

**September 1, 2015** - CRP Grassland signup begins

**September 30, 2015** - Deadline to enroll into 2014/2015 ARCPLC Programs; Deadline to register and elect buy-up coverage for 2016 MPP-Dairy Program; Deadline to file a 2015 acreage report without a late-filed fee; 2016 sales closing date for fall-seeded annual crops (NAP)

**November 2, 2015** - Deadline to submit 2015 ELAP application for payment and supporting documentation

**November 16, 2015** - Deadline to report 2016 perennial forage or fall-seeded crops

**December 1, 2015** - 2016 NAP sales closing date for honey, apples, cherries, plums, strawberries, asparagus, and grapes

**December 1, 2015** - CRP General signup begins

**December 7, 2015** - Deadline for ballots postmarked or returned to County Office for COC elections

**January 4, 2016** - 2016 initial reports for honeybee colonies and locations

**February 1, 2016** - Deadline to submit 2015 LIP application for payment and supporting documentation

**February 1, 2016** - Deadline to request 2015 MAL or LDP for mohair, unshorn pelts (LDP Only), and wool

**February 26, 2016** - Deadline for CRP General signup

**March 15, 2016** - 2016 sales closing date for alfalfa, mixed forage, spring-seeded annual crops, grass, and sorghum forage (NAP)

**March 31, 2016** - Deadline to request 2015 MAL or LDP for barley, canola, crambe, flaxseed, honey, oats, rapeseed, wheat, and sesame seed

**May 31, 2016** - Deadline to request 2015 MAL or LDP for corn, dry peas, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, safflower seed, chickpeas, soybeans, sunflower seed

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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).