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Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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Nebraska FSA Newsletter

Nebraska Farm Service Agency

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State Committee:
Scott Spilker, Chair

A Message from the State Executive Director

I had the pleasure last week of traveling across Nebraska to Alliance for an event with U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue. As I traveled, I saw many of you working away in your fields, getting corn, soybeans and other spring-planted crops in the ground. According to the National Agricultural Statistics Service, you are making good progress, with over three-fourths of the corn planted and over 40 percent of the soybeans planted. Good luck and be safe as you work to finish up.

Cindi Allen
Geoff Ruth
Hilary Maricle
Mark Jagels

Program Chiefs:

Bob Herchenbach, Acting
Cathy Anderson
Doug Klein
Greg Reisdorff
Mark Wilke

To find contact information for your local office or learn more about the programs mentioned here, go to www.fsa.usda.gov/ne.

It was an honor for Nebraska to be part of Secretary Perdue's fourth "Back to Our Roots" tour, which was the reason for his visit to Alliance. While there, the Secretary toured Ackerman Ag Service and Supply and then hosted a discussion with local leaders and others on various rural issues. The Secretary received great information, direct from Nebraska farmers, ranchers and rural business representatives, about the challenges you are facing in your operations. I enjoyed the opportunity to listen to the conversation and learn from it as well.

From an FSA business standpoint, I want to call your attention to the articles shared below. There have been some policy changes to both the Livestock Indemnity Program and the Tree Assistance Program, and these are noted in separate articles. If you are a producer who has accessed these programs in the past, or think you might need them in the future, it's worth your time to take a quick read of the articles.

We also note below the importance of getting to your county office as soon as you finish planting in order to complete the acreage certification process. Certification is a huge task for our offices, but also critically important as it's essential for your program eligibility. We look forward to working with you to get this done as soon as possible.

Below we also highlight the availability of youth loans and the opportunity for landowners with expiring Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contracts to receive two additional years of rental payments. Read below for more information.

That's all for this month.

--Nancy Johner

Secretary Perdue Names FSA Administrator

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue has announced the appointment of Richard Fordyce to serve as Administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA). In his role, Fordyce will provide leadership for FSA and its mission to support agricultural production across America through a network of over 2,100 county and 50 state offices.

Richard Fordyce, a fourth-generation farmer, most recently served as State Executive Director for FSA in Missouri. Prior to his appointment by the Trump Administration, Fordyce served as the director of the Missouri Department of Agriculture from 2013 to 2017. In 2015, Fordyce was awarded the Missouri Farm Bureau Distinguished Service Award and the Agricultural Leaders of Tomorrow Alumnus of the Year. He and his wife, Renee, have two children and grow soybeans, corn and beef cattle on the family farm.

For more information about the Farm Service Agency, please visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

FSA Makes Administrative Change to Livestock Indemnity Program

Agricultural producers who have lost livestock to disease, resulting from a weather disaster, now have an additional way to become eligible for the [Livestock Indemnity Program](#).

In the event of disease, this change by USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) authorizes local FSA county committees to accept veterinarian certifications that livestock deaths were directly related to adverse weather and unpreventable through good animal husbandry and management. The committees may then use this certification to allow eligibility for producers on a case-by-case basis for LIP.

LIP provides benefits to agricultural producers for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality caused by adverse weather, disease or attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government. Eligible weather events include earthquakes, hail, tornadoes, hurricanes, storms, blizzard and flooding.

Producers interested in LIP or other USDA disaster assistance programs should contact their [local USDA service center](#).

Make an Appointment Now to Complete Acreage Certification

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

Producers who file accurate and timely acreage certification reports, including failed and prevented planted acreage, can prevent the potential loss of FSA program benefits. The acreage reporting deadline for all spring-seeded crops and Conservation Reserve Program acres is July 16, 2018. Nebraska FSA county offices are scheduling acreage certification appointments now in order to complete this process by the deadline for all producers.

The following exceptions apply to acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the applicable 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 applicable 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 16.

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

Final Planting Dates

All producers are encouraged to contact their local FSA office for more information on the final planting date for specific crops. The final planting dates vary by crop, planting period and county so please contact your local FSA office for a list of county-specific planting deadlines. The timely planting of a crop, by the final planting date, may prevent loss of program benefits.

FSA Releases Signup Information for Tree Assistance Program

USDA's Farm Service Agency has released signup information for the [Tree Assistance Program](#), a nationwide program that provides orchardists and nursery tree growers with cost share assistance to replant eligible trees, bushes, and vines following a natural disaster.

The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 prescribed several changes to the program, including the removal of the \$125,000 per person and legal entity payment limitation. The [notice](#) outlined when producers should file applications for any recent losses, given the changes to the program.

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.

The following producers can file applications:

- Producers who did not previously apply for TAP for 2017 or 2018 losses; and
- Producers who had applied and received an adverse determination that their 2017 or 2018 TAP application was filed late.

Additionally, producers with 2017 losses can also file an application or revise an original application because of the changes made through the Act.

For more information on TAP, producers should contact their [local USDA service center](#).

Transitioning Expiring CRP Land to Beginning, Veteran or Underserved Farmers and Ranchers

Retired or retiring landowners or operators are encouraged to transition their Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres to beginning, veteran or underserved farmers or ranchers through the Transition Incentives Program (TIP). TIP provides annual rental payments to the retiring farmer for up to two additional years after the CRP contract expires, provided the transition is not to a family member.

Enrollment in TIP is on a continuous basis. Beginning, veteran or underserved farmers and ranchers and retiring CRP participants may enroll in TIP beginning one year before the expiration date of the CRP contract or Aug. 15. For example, if a CRP contract is scheduled to expire on Sept. 30, 2018, the land may be offered for enrollment in TIP beginning Oct. 1, 2017, through Aug. 15, 2018. The Aug. 15 deadline allows the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) time to

complete the TIP sustainable grazing or crop production conservation plans. The TIP application must be submitted prior to completing the lease or sale of the affected lands.

New landowners or renters must return the land to production using sustainable grazing or farming methods.

For more information on TIP, visit <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation>.

Loans Available for Women, Other 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 to purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, FSA has provided priority funding for members of targeted underserved applicants.

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.

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 adviser, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5,000.

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 adviser. 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.

Program Participants Must Maintain Acres Enrolled in CRP

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) participants are responsible for ensuring adequate, approved vegetative and practice cover is maintained to control erosion throughout the life of the contract after the practice has been established. Participants also must control undesirable vegetation, weeds (including noxious weeds), insects and rodents that may pose a threat to existing cover or adversely impact other landowners in the area.

All CRP maintenance activities, such as mowing, burning, disking and spraying, must be conducted outside the primary nesting or brood rearing season for wildlife, which for Nebraska is May 1 through July 15. However, spot treatment of the acreage may be allowed during the primary nesting or brood rearing season if, left untreated, the weeds, insects or undesirable species would adversely impact the approved cover. In this instance, spot treatment is limited to the affected areas in the field and requires County Committee approval prior to beginning the spot treatment.

The County Committee will consult with Natural Resources Conservation Service to determine if such activities are needed to maintain the approved cover.

In addition, the county FSA office will complete field visits and spot-checks of CRP acreage and will consult with county weed authorities as necessary. This effort usually begins the later part of May and continues through the summer months.

Annual mowing of CRP for generic weed control, or for cosmetic purposes, is prohibited at all times.

Dates to Remember

May 31, 2018 – 2017 Marketing Assistance Loan availability deadline for corn, dry peas, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, safflower seed, chickpeas, soybeans and sunflower seed

June 1, 2018 – Deadline for enrollment in the revised Margin Protection Program for Dairy, as altered by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018

July 16, 2018 – Deadline to report all spring-seeded crops and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage

Aug. 1, 2018 – Enrollment period for ARC/PLC ends

Aug. 1, 2018 – Deadline to request farm transfers or reconstitutions for 2018

May FSA Interest Rates

Farm Operating: 3.625%

Microloan Operating: 3.625%

Farm Ownership: 4.125%

Farm Ownership - Joint Financing: 2.50%

Farm Ownership - Down Payment: 1.50%
Emergency - Actual Loss: 3.75%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 3 year term: 2.5%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 5 year term: 2.625%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 7 year term: 2.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 10 year term: 2.875%
Farm Storage Facility Loan 12 year term: 2.875%
Commodity Loan: 3.125%

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