

February 10, 2017



Farm Service Agency

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**NEWSLETTER**

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## Kansas FSA February Newsletter

Kansas Farm Service  
Agency

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**State Committee:**

Timothy Peterson  
Nicholas Bowser  
Louise Ehmke  
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Mark Treaster

**Acting State Executive  
Director:** Jack R. Salava

### Dates to Remember

**February 20**—USDA Service Centers closed for President's Day

**March 15**—Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) application closing deadline for millet, sorghum forage, pecans, walnuts, safflower, sesame and most annual fruits and vegetables

**March 31**—Deadline to request Marketing Assistance Loans and Loan Deficiency payments for 2016 harvested wheat, barley, canola, crambe, flaxseed, honey, oats, rapeseed and sesame

**May 31**—Deadline to request Marketing Assistance Loans and Loan Deficiency payments for 2016 harvested corn, grain sorghum, and soybeans

**July 15**—Reporting deadline for all spring-planted crops

**August 1**—Final date to enroll in the 2017 ARCPLC program

To find your local FSA county office, click <http://offices.usda.gov>

Need more info about a specific program? Read FSA program fact sheets [here](#), or watch video webinars [here](#).

[FSAfarm+](#) is available! To enroll in this online service, producers should contact their local FSA office to obtain Level 2 eAuthentication.

#### **Selected Interest Rates for February 2017**

Farm Operating Loans, Direct -- 2.875%  
Farm Ownership Loans, Direct -- 4.00%  
Farm Ownership Loans, Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher -- 1.50%  
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years) -- 2.25%  
Commodity Loans -- 1.875%

## **Loans Available for Farm Storage Facilities**

FSA's Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program provides low-interest financing to producers to build or upgrade storage facilities and to purchase portable (new or used) structures, equipment and storage and handling trucks.

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 some loans between \$50,000 and \$100,000 will no longer 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.

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## **USDA Expands Grasslands Conservation Program to Small-Scale Livestock Producers**

### ***Helping Dairy, Beef and Other Producers Protect Working Grasslands in 43 States***

USDA recently accepted 7410 acres on 85 offers into the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Grasslands Program. These acres were offered by producers during the most recent ranking period for this enrollment with emphasis placed on small-scale livestock operations. Overall, USDA will accept over 300,000 acres in 43 states. Through the voluntary CRP Grasslands program, grasslands threatened by development or conversion to row crops are maintained as livestock

grazing areas, while providing important conservation benefits. Approximately 200,000 of the accepted acres were offered by small-scale livestock operations.

The most recent—and third—ranking period closed on Dec. 16, 2016, and included for the first time a CRP Grasslands practice specifically tailored for small-scale livestock grazing operations to encourage broader participation. Under this ranking period and for future periods, small-scale livestock operations with 100 or fewer head of grazing cows (or the equivalent) can submit applications to enroll up to 200 acres of grasslands per farm. Larger operations may still make offers through the normal process. USDA met its goal of 200,000 acres under this small-scale initiative. The new practice for small-scale livestock grazing operations encourages greater diversity geographically and in all types of livestock operations. Visit <http://go.usa.gov/x9PFS> to view the complete list of acres accepted by state.

Participants in CRP Grasslands establish or maintain long-term, resource-conserving grasses and other plant species to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat on marginally productive agricultural lands. CRP Grasslands participants can use the land for livestock production (e.g. grazing or producing hay), while following their conservation and grazing plans in order to maintain the cover.

Small livestock operations or other farming and ranching operations interested in participating in CRP Grasslands should contact their local FSA office. To learn more about FSA's conservation programs, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation).

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## Preauthorized Debit Available for Farm Loan Borrowers

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) has implemented pre-authorized debit (PAD) for Farm Loan Program (FLP) borrowers. PAD is a voluntary and alternative method for making weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual payments on loans.

PAD payments are pre authorized transactions that allow the National Financial and Accounting Operations Center (NFAOC) to electronically collect loan payments from a customer's account at a financial institution.

PAD may be useful for borrowers who use nonfarm income from regular wages or salary to make payments on loans or adjustment offers or for payments from seasonal produce stands. PAD can only be established for future payments.

To request PAD, customers, along with their financial institution, must fill out form RD 3550-28. This form has no expiration date, but a separate form RD 3550-28 must be completed for each loan to which payments are to be applied. A fillable form can be accessed on the USDA Rural Development (RD) website at <http://www.rd.usda.gov/publications/regulations-guidelines>. Click forms and search for "Form 3550-28."

If you have a "filter" on the account at your financial institution, you will need to provide the financial institution with the following information: Origination ID: 1220040804, Agency Name: USDA RD DCFO.

PAD is offered by FSA at no cost. Check with your financial institution to discuss any potential cost. Preauthorized debit has no expiration date, but you can cancel at any time by submitting a written request to your local FSA office. If a preauthorized debit agreement receives three payment rejections within a three month period, the preauthorized debt agreement will be cancelled by FSA.

The payment amount and due date of your loan is not affected by a cancellation of preauthorized debit. You are responsible to ensure your full payment is made by the due date.

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

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## **Time to Plan Spring CRP Maintenance Activities**

As we approach spring, Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) participants should plan to complete any required maintenance or management activities on CRP contract acres. Producers need to review their individual CRP contract Conservation Plan of Operations (CPO) to determine what is required of them.

As a general rule, maintenance activities may not be performed during the primary nesting season of April 15 through July 15. The management or maintenance activities must be planned and completed to maintain the required practice cover as specified in the CRP contract and plan. Failure to maintain CRP cover can result in contract violations and loss of annual rental payments. An example of failure to maintain cover would be volunteer trees or brush in grassland practices where trees are not included as part of the approved practice components in the Conservation Plan.

All stands must be maintained by mowing, burning or chemicals to control noxious weeds, trees/brush, pests, etc. Firebreaks are available for installation on CRP acreage following NRCS standards for prescribed burning or prevention of wildfires. In addition, all State designated noxious weeds such as Sericea Lespedeza, Musk Thistle, Johnson Grass and Bind Weed must be controlled.

For more information about required maintenance or management activities, contact your local Farm Service Agency or Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) at your local USDA Service Center.

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## **FSA Offers Improved Program to Limit Losses on Forages**

Reduced forage quality is now considered a production loss for weather disaster assistance coverage under the new buy-up provisions of the Farm Service Agency (FSA) Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP).

This safety net is important for cattlemen who produce non-insurable forages for feeding livestock. Previously, FSA only considered a decrease in overall forage tonnage produced when determining if the producer suffered a compensable loss after a qualifying weather event. Under FSA's new NAP buy-up provisions, a decrease in forage quality – such as protein content – is also considered.

To receive coverage for the 2017 crop year, producers must enroll their eligible forage in NAP by March 15, 2017. Beginning, limited resource and targeted underserved farmers or ranchers are eligible for a waiver of the NAP service fee and a 50 percent premium reduction in buy-up provisions.

For more information on NAP, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/nap](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/nap).

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## Filing CCC-941 Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) Certifications

Many producers have experienced delays in receiving Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) payments, Loan Deficiency Payments (LDPs) and Market Gains on Marketing Assistance Loans (MALs) because they have not filed form CCC-941, Adjusted Gross Income Certification. LDPs will not be paid until all eligible producers, including landowners who share in the crop, have filed a valid CCC-941.

Producers without a valid CCC-941 certifying their compliance with the average adjusted gross income provisions will not receive payments that have been processed. All farm operator/tenants/owners who have not filed a CCC-941 and have pending payments should IMMEDIATELY file the form with their recording county FSA office. Farm operators and tenants are encouraged to ensure that their landowners have filed the form. FSA has been issuing 2016 LDPs and Market Gains.

FSA can accept the CCC-941 for 2015, 2016 and 2017. Unlike the past, producers must have the CCC-941 certifying their AGI compliance before any payments can be issued.

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## USDA Creates More Bird Habitat Opportunities on Irrigated Farmland

Declines in upland bird populations, such as the northern bobwhite, pheasant, and prairie chicken, led to the creation of the Conservation Reserve Program practice CP33 to help restore habitats for these species in these agricultural areas. Since the program's creation in 2004, more than 240,000 acres of marginal cropland has been converted to native grasslands, spurring an increase in upland bird populations.

In recent years, however, applications for this type of habitat creation have slowed. To encourage more participation, USDA's new policy focuses on farmland with center-pivot irrigation systems where there are circular areas of cropland with patches of land beyond the reach of irrigation. Until now, these patches – known as pivot corners – were only eligible for habitat creation when connected by a linear strip of grassland also enrolled in the program. The new policy allows producers interested in habitat creation to use disconnected pivot corners to help increase the population of upland birds.

Other species that can benefit from today's change include the mourning dove, wild turkey, several sparrows, meadowlark and bobolinks.

The Conservation Reserve Program is a voluntary program. FSA contracts with agricultural landowners so that environmentally sensitive land is not farmed but instead used for conservation. Participants establish long-term plant species that control soil erosion, sequester carbon, improve water quality, and strengthen declining wildlife populations. In return, participants receive annual rental payments between 10 and 15 years.

Interested landowners can enroll pivot corners in the Conservation Reserve Program at any time. Participants and land must meet certain eligibility requirements. Other restrictions may apply. For additional details, contact your local Farm Service Agency office at [offices.usda.gov](https://www.offices.usda.gov) or visit the website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation](https://www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation).

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## Farmers to Receive Documentation of USDA Services

Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds agricultural producers that FSA provides a receipt to customers who request or receive assistance or information on FSA programs.

The 2014 Farm Bill requires a customer receipt to be issued for any agricultural program assistance requested from FSA, the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Rural Development (RD). Receipts include the date, summary of the visit and any agricultural information, program and/or loan assistance provided to an individual or entity. Electronic receipts for acreage reports began on Aug. 1, 2016.

A service is any information, program or loan assistance provided whether through a visit, email, fax or letter.

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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).