

December 21, 2017



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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Kansas FSA December Newsletter

State Farm Service Agency

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Dates to Remember

December 25 - Christmas holiday (offices closed)
January 1 - New Year's holiday (offices closed)
January 15 - Martin Luther King holiday (offices closed)

MUSINGS from the Desk

The Holiday season is always a special time of the year. It gives us the opportunity to reflect on the most important things in life and to look forward to the opportunities and challenges of a new year. I truly feel it is an honor for FSA to be a part of our American farm heritage that brings food, clothing, and shelter to all the people across this great nation. As we look at the challenging times American agriculture is facing in this coming year, I want all of our farmers and ranchers to know that we are the farm 'SERVICE' agency! Whether its drought, wildfires, the farm economy, or other challenges we face, FSA is here to help agriculture's greatest

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

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

Click [here](#) for current interest rates on various farm loans.

Sign up for important text message alerts from your local county FSA office! Text kscounty (ex: ksriley) to 372669. You will receive a subscription confirmation text.

asset... the men and women who take care of the land and livestock. Our focus is about service!

As I've been meeting with farm groups and visiting county FSA offices, I see the passion that everyone brings to their roles, not for personal glory, but to help the industry they are proud of—Agriculture. So, take a moment during this Holiday season to appreciate our ag community, thank a farmer, and thank the many people who support them, like the people at our county FSA offices.

David Schemm

Join us at the 2018 Women Managing the Farm Conference in Manhattan, Kansas, February 15-16. For registration information, see <http://womenmanagingthefarm.com/>

The Census of Agriculture: a Producer's Voice, Future, and Opportunity

In December farmers and ranchers across the nation will receive the 2017 Census of Agriculture. Producers can mail in their completed census form, or respond online via the improved web questionnaire. The online questionnaire has been revised extensively to make it more convenient for producers.

Conducted once every five years, the census of agriculture is a complete count of all U.S. farms, ranches, and those who operate them; it is the only source of uniform, comprehensive, and impartial agriculture data for every state and county in the nation.

Farmers and ranchers, trade associations, government, extension educators, researchers, and many others rely on census of agriculture data when making decisions that shape American agriculture – from creating and funding farm programs to boosting services for communities and the industry. The census of agriculture is a producer's voice, future, and opportunity.

For more information about the 2017 Census of Agriculture, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov or call (800) 727-9540.

Loan Servicing Options Available During Financial Hardship

Many farm loan borrowers' payments are due on January 1. FSA expects and encourages prompt payment. However, for borrowers who cannot make their payments due to adversity such as a natural disaster or production difficulties beyond their control, FSA is committed to providing our farm loan borrowers with the tools necessary to be successful. A part of ensuring this success is providing guidance and counsel from loan or loan servicing application, through the term of your loan, and after. In order for FSA to help, you must alert your local FSA office to any of the following:

- Any proposed or significant changes in the farming operation

- Any significant changes to family income or expenses
- The development of problem situations
- Any losses or proposed significant changes in security

There are options for FSA loan customers during financial stress. If you are a borrower who is unable to make payments on a loan, contact your local FSA Service Center to learn about the options available to you.

If past due on payments, FSA will notify you of your options with a Notice of Availability of Loan Servicing. Please pay special attention to this notice as it provides you with your options for FSA servicing programs and outlines specific deadlines that you must meet. Failure to meet these statutory deadlines may significantly limit your options and FSA's ability to help address your farm's financial difficulties.

For more information on FSA farm loan programs, visit www.fsa.usda.gov. Please contact your local FSA Service Center if you have any questions or would like to schedule an appointment to meet with the loan staff to discuss your options.

USDA to Measure Final 2017 Row Crop Production and Grain Stocks with Two End-of-Year Surveys

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is encouraging producers to respond to two upcoming surveys – the December Agricultural Survey and the County Agricultural Production Survey – that are critical to row crop producers around the country. The results of the surveys help determine the structure of the 2017 farm payment and risk management programs administered by USDA's Farm Service Agency and Risk Management Agency.

The County Agricultural Production Survey was sent to 170,000 row crop producers beginning Nov. 3. Responses are due by Jan. 15, 2018, and NASS will publish county-level results for corn, soybeans, sunflowers, and sorghum on Feb. 22, 2018, in the Quick Stats database. These county-level data are critical for USDA farm payment determinations.

The December Agricultural Survey will go to 84,000 producers beginning Nov. 29. Responses are due by Dec. 21, 2017, and NASS publishes results in the Crop Production 2017 Summary report on Jan. 12, 2018. Information collected in this survey also feeds into the county estimates for row crops. The survey also asks about grain stocks stored on-farm.

When producers receive the surveys, they have the option to respond using the secure online questionnaire or return it by mail. NASS safeguards the privacy of all respondents and publishes only aggregate data, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified.

These and all NASS data are available online at www.nass.usda.gov/Publications and the searchable [Quick Stats database](#). Watch a video on how NASS data are used at www.youtube.com/watch?v=rBW-g1FgLN8.

Farmers Turn Least Profitable Acres into Conservation Crop

In early 2017, USDA established a new CRP practice in Kansas and Nebraska, called the Migratory Birds, Butterflies, and Pollinators SAFE program. Eligibility for this SAFE practice—also known as 38B—is limited to those landowners and ag producers who want to enhance existing plays or

restore the many historic playas located within three distinct priority areas in Western Kansas. A map of the targeted priority areas is available at the [Playas Work for Kansas website](#).

Research has shown that properly functioning playas are a primary source of recharge for the Ogallala Aquifer—by contributing up to 95 percent of inflow to the aquifer and improving the quality of that water—and also provide critical habitat for migrating waterfowl, cranes and shorebirds. You can read about how this CRP practice is now being implemented in Western Kansas and its impact on the region in this [article](#) by Miruh Hamend, Communications Director for [Playa Lakes Joint Venture](#).

SAFE is a continuous CRP signup conservation practice, with offers accepted during established ranking periods. Although offers on most CRP practices are not being accepted at this time due to the national acreage limit, offers ARE still currently being accepted for Migratory Bird SAFE. Previous offers not accepted in the previous ranking period may also be modified to increase competitiveness. The next ranking period is unknown at this time. Currently, Kansas has had 3687 acres on 95 offers accepted on Kansas playa lakes. To learn more about eligibility and enrollment into CRP, contact your local county FSA office.

USDA Offers Drought Impacted Farmers and Ranchers Disaster Assistance

Farm Service Agency Stands Ready to Assist Agricultural Producers Affected by Drought

FSA offers disaster assistance and low-interest loan programs to assist agricultural producers in their recovery efforts during drought or similar qualifying natural disasters. Available programs and loans include:

- **Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)** – provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters (includes native grass for grazing). Eligible producers must have purchased NAP coverage for 2017 crops.
- **Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP)** – provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who suffered grazing losses for covered livestock due to drought on privately owned or cash leased land or if a federal agency prohibits producers from grazing normally permitted livestock on federally managed lands due to qualifying fire. Producers must provide a completed application for payment and required supporting documentation to their FSA office within 30 calendar days after the end of the calendar year in which the grazing loss occurred.
- **Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)** – LIP provides benefits to livestock producers for livestock deaths in excess of normal mortality caused by eligible adverse weather conditions. Drought is not an eligible adverse weather event, except when associated with anthrax, a condition that occurs because of drought and directly results in the death of eligible livestock. Producers must submit a notice of loss within 30 days after the death is first apparent.
- **Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP)** – provides emergency relief for losses due to feed or water shortages, disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, which are not adequately addressed by other disaster programs. Producers must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent.
- **Emergency Loan Program** – Available to producers with agriculture operations located in a county under a primary or contiguous **Secretarial Disaster designation**. These low

interest loans help producers recover from production and physical losses. Applicants must meet eligibility and approval requirements, including:

- Have suffered at least a 30 percent loss in crop production or a physical loss to livestock, livestock products, real estate or chattel property
- Project a feasible cash flow
- Provide adequate security
- Are unable to receive credit from commercial sources

- **Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)** – provides emergency funding for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate land severely damaged by natural disasters and to implement emergency water conservation measures in periods of severe drought. Submit an application at your local FSA office.
- **HayNet** – is an internet-based Hay and Grazing Net Ad Service allowing farmers and ranchers to share 'Need Hay' ads and 'Have Hay' ads online. Farmers also can use another feature to post advertisements for grazing land, specifically ads announcing the availability of grazing land or ads requesting a need for land to graze. www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet.
- **Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Emergency Grazing** – authorized to provide relief to livestock producers in areas affected by a severe drought or similar natural disaster on qualifying CRP acres. Emergency authorization is provided by either a national FSA office authorization or by a state FSA committee determination utilizing the U.S. Drought Monitor.

To establish or retain FSA program eligibility, farmers and ranchers must report prevented planting and failed acres (crops and grasses). Prevented planting acreage must be reported on form FSA-576, Notice of Loss, no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date as established by FSA and Risk Management Agency (RMA).

For more information on disaster assistance programs and loans visit www.fsa.usda.gov/disaster or contact your local FSA Office. Information about state specific drought impact maps can be found on the U. S. Drought Monitor homepage: <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/CurrentMap.aspx>

Annual Review of Payment Eligibility for New Crop Year

All participants of FSA programs who request program benefits are required to submit a completed CCC-902 (Farming Operation Plan) and CCC-941 Average Gross Income (AGI) Certification and Consent to Disclosure of Tax Information to be considered for payment eligibility and payment limitation applicable for the program benefits.

Participants are not required to annually submit new CCC-902s for payment eligibility and payment limitation purposes unless a change in the farming operation occurs that may affect the determination of record. A valid CCC-902 filed by the participant is considered to be a continuous certification used for all payment eligibility and payment limitation determinations applicable for the program benefits requested.

Participants are responsible for ensuring that all CCC-902 and CCC-941 and related forms on file in the county Office are correct at all times. Participants are required to timely notify the county office of any changes in the farming operation that may affect the determination of record by filing a new or updated CCC-902 as applicable.

Changes that may require a NEW determination include, but are not limited to, a change of:

- Shares of a contract, which may reflect:
 - A land lease from cash rent to share rent
 - A land lease from share rent to cash rent (subject to the cash rent tenant rule)
 - A modification of a variable/fixed bushel-rent arrangement

- The size of the producer's farming operation by the addition or reduction of cropland that may affect the application of a cropland factor
- The structure of the farming operation, including any change to a member's share
- The contribution of farm inputs of capital, land, equipment, active personal labor, and/or active personal management
- Farming interests not previously disclosed on CCC-902 including the farming interests of a spouse or minor child
- Financial status that may affect the 3-year average for the determination of average AGI or other changes that affects eligibility under the average adjusted gross income limitations.

Participants are encouraged to file or review these forms within the deadlines established for each applicable program for which program benefits are being requested.

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).