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Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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Ohio FSA State Newsletter

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USDA Reopens Enrollment for Improved Dairy Safety Net Tool

USDA's Farm Service Agency encourages dairy producers to consider enrolling in the new and improved [Margin Protection Program for Dairy](#) (MPP-Dairy), which will provide better protections for dairy producers from shifting milk and feed prices. With changes authorized under the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) has set the enrollment period to run from April 9, 2018 to June 1, 2018.

About the Program:

The program protects dairy producers by paying them when the difference between the national all-milk price and the national average feed cost (the margin) falls below a certain dollar amount elected by the producer.

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State Committee Members:
Trish Levering, Chair
Ronnie Clifton
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Joe Steiner

Visit the Ohio FSA website for
additional information at:
www.fsa.usda.gov/oh

Please contact your [FSA
County Office](#) for questions
specific to your operation.

[Current FSA Farm
Loan Interest Rates](#)

[Current Commodity Credit
Corporation \(CCC\) Interest
Rates](#)

Changes include:

- Calculations of the margin period is monthly rather than bi-monthly.
- Covered production is increased to 5 million pounds on the Tier 1 premium schedule, and premium rates for Tier 1 are substantially lowered.
- An exemption from paying an administrative fee for limited resource, beginning, veteran, and disadvantaged producers. Dairy operators enrolled in the previous 2018 enrollment period that qualify for this exemption under the new provisions may request a refund.

Dairy operations must make a new coverage election for 2018, even if you enrolled during the previous 2018 signup period. Coverage elections made for 2018 will be retroactive to January 1, 2018. All dairy operations desiring coverage must sign up during the enrollment period and submit an appropriate form (CCC-782) and dairy operations may still “opt out” by not submitting a form. All outstanding balances for 2017 and prior years must be paid in full before 2018 coverage is approved.

Dairy producers can participate in FSA’s MPP-Dairy or the Risk Management Agency’s Livestock Gross Margin Insurance Plan for Dairy Cattle (LGM-Dairy), but not both. During the 2018 enrollment period, only producers with an active LGM-Dairy policy who have targeted marketings insured in 2018 months will be allowed to enroll in MPP-Dairy by June 1, 2018; however, their coverage will start only after active target marketings conclude under LGM-Dairy.

USDA has a web tool to help producers determine the level of coverage under the MPP-Dairy that will provide them with the strongest safety net under a variety of conditions. The online resource, which will be updated and available by April 9 at www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool, allows dairy farmers to quickly and easily combine unique operation data and other key variables to calculate their coverage needs based on price projections. Producers can also review historical data or estimate future coverage based on data projections. The secure site can be accessed via computer, smartphone, tablet or any other platform.

USDA is mailing postcards advising dairy producers of the changes. For more information, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/dairy or contact your [local USDA service center](#).

USDA to Immediately Assist Producers for Qualifying Livestock, Honeybee and Farm-raised Fish Program Losses

\$34 Million in Payments for 2017 Losses Part of Broad Suite of Programs Aiding Ag Operations

USDA will issue \$34 million to help agricultural producers recover from 2017 natural disasters through the [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-raised Fish Program](#) (ELAP), which covers losses not covered by certain other USDA disaster assistance programs. These payments are being made available and they are part of a broader USDA effort to help producers recover from hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria, wildfires and drought. A large portion of this assistance will be made available in [federally designated disaster areas](#).

ELAP aims to help eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish for losses due to disease, certain adverse weather events or loss conditions, including blizzards and wildfires, as determined by the Secretary. ELAP assistance is provided for losses not covered by other disaster assistance programs such as the [Livestock Forage Disaster Program \(LFP\)](#) and the [Livestock Indemnity Program \(LIP\)](#).

The increased amount of assistance through ELAP was made possible by the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, signed earlier this year. The Act amended the 2014 Farm Bill to enable USDA's [Farm Service Agency](#) (FSA) to provide assistance to producers without an annual funding cap and immediately for 2017. It also enables FSA to pay ELAP applications as they are filed for 2018 and subsequent program years.

Other USDA Disaster Assistance Programs

The Act removed program year payment limitations and increased the acreage cap for the [Tree Assistance Program](#) (TAP), a nationwide program that provides owners of orchards, vineyards and nurseries with cost share assistance to replant eligible trees, bushes, and vines following a natural disaster. For example, the program will help owners of citrus groves in Florida, avocado trees in California, coffee plantations in Puerto Rico and vineyards reduce the cost of replanting, and speed recovery from the loss of fruit and nut trees, bushes, and vines.

Prior to the Act, there was a combined program year payment limitation of \$125,000 for ELAP, LIP and LFP per person or legal entity. The Tree Assistance Program (TAP) had its own \$125,000 payment limitation. The Act removed the program year per person and legal entity payment limitation for LIP and TAP. As a result of the Act, a \$125,000 per person and legal entity single payment limitation applies to the total amount of program year payments received under both ELAP and the [Livestock Forage Disaster Program](#) (LFP) and program payments under LIP and TAP no longer have payment limits.

Under the updated program, as amended by the Act, growers are eligible to be partly reimbursed for losses on up to 1,000 acres per program year, double the previous acreage limit of 500 acres.

In total, it is estimated that the Act will enable USDA to provide more than \$3 billion in disaster assistance, including the \$2.36 billion to be made available through FSA's new 2017 Wildfires and Hurricanes Indemnity Program. This includes \$400 million made available for the [Emergency Conservation Program](#), which helps farmers and landowners repair damage to farmlands caused by natural disasters. As signups across the country are completed, additional applications will be funded.

Producers with operations impacted by natural disasters and diseases in 2018 are encouraged to contact their [local USDA service center](#) to apply for assistance through ELAP, TAP, LIP and LFP. Producers with 2017 ELAP claims need to take no action as FSA will begin paying those claims today.

2018 Acreage Reporting Dates

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

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable:

May 31, 2018 --- Report Nursery Crop Acreage.

July 15, 2018 --- Report all your Burley Tobacco, Cabbage (Planted 3/19/18-5/31/18), Corn, Grain Sorghum, Hybrid Corn Seed, Spring Oats, Popcorn, Potatoes, Soybeans, Sugar Beets, Tomatoes and all other crops.

Aug. 15, 2018 --- Report Cabbage (Planted 6/1/18-7/20/18).

Sept. 30, 2018 --- Report Aquaculture.

Nov. 15, 2018 --- Report Perennial Forage Crops.

Dec. 15, 2018 --- Fall Barley, Fall Wheat, and all other Fall-Seeded Small Grains.

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above 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 above 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.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact your [County FSA office](#).

Report Failed Crop Acreage Prior to Destruction

With spring planting quickly approaching, FSA encourages farmers to report failed crop acreage that will not be brought to harvest to their FSA office. Failed acreage must be reported to FSA before destroying and replanting to allow time for a field check.

"It is very important that farmers report failed acreage that will not be brought to harvest to the FSA office prior to destruction," said State Executive Director, Leonard Hubert. "This simple act of insuring that failed acres are documented could be the determining factor in whether or not a farmer is eligible for future crop disaster program payments."

Form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. For crop losses covered by the Non-insured Assistance Program (NAP), producers must contact their local FSA office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent. Producers of hand-harvested crops and certain perishable crops must notify FSA within 72 hours of when a loss becomes apparent. Producers with crop insurance should also contact their local agent when losses occur and before destroying the crop.

Producers are encouraged to keep good production records on acreage with a low crop yield to document crop losses. To be eligible for crop disaster programs in the future, production records may help support crop loss claims.

Additional information in regard to failed crop acreage or crop losses covered by the Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) can be obtained by contacting your [County FSA office](#).

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.

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.

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.

Still Time to be Counted in the 2017 Census of Agriculture

NASS to follow-up with producers who have not yet responded

Farmers still have time to be counted in the 2017 Census of Agriculture, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). Although the first deadline has just passed, NASS will continue to accept Census information through the spring to get a complete and accurate picture of American agriculture that represents all farmers.

Federal law mandates that everyone who received the 2017 Census of Agriculture questionnaire complete it and return it even if not currently farming. NASS will continue to follow-up with producers through the spring with mailings, phone calls, and personal visits. To avoid these additional contacts, farmers and ranchers are encouraged to complete their Census either online at www.agcounts.usda.gov or by mail as soon as possible. Responding online saves time by skipping

sections that do not apply and automatically calculating totals. The online questionnaire is accessible on desktops, laptops, and mobile devices.

For more information about the 2017 Census of Agriculture, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov. For questions or assistance filling out the Census, call toll-free (888) 424-7828.

Dates to Remember

May 28 --- Memorial Day Holiday. FSA Offices Closed.

May 31 --- Deadline to apply for 2017 commodity loans and LDP's on feed grains, soybeans, pulse crops.

June 1 ---- Last day for dairy producers to enroll in the improved Margin Protection Program for Dairy (MPP-Dairy).

June 15 -- County Committee Nomination Period begins.

July 4 ---- Independence Day Holiday. FSA Offices Closed.

July 15 ---- Final certification date to report burley tobacco; cabbage planted through May 31; corn, grain sorghum, hybrid corn seed, spring oats, potatoes, popcorn, sugar beets, tomatoes and other crops.

Aug. 1 ---- Last day to file County Committee Nomination forms.

Aug. 1 ---- Last day to enroll in ARC/PLC coverage for 2018.

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).