

May 2017



Farm Service Agency

# GovDelivery Electronic News Service

## NEWSLETTER



- [Sonny Perdue Sworn in as 31st U.S. Secretary of Agriculture](#)
- [Just Around the Corner](#)
- [USDA Announces New Conservation Opportunities to Improve Water Quality and Restore Wildlife Habitat](#)
- [2017 Acreage Reporting Dates](#)
- [Emergency Disaster Declarations and Designations](#)
- [Unauthorized Disposition of Grain](#)
- [May 2017 Interest Rates](#)

---

## Michigan FSA Newsletter

---

### Michigan Farm Service Agency

3001 Coolidge Road,  
Suite 350  
East Lansing, MI 48429

Phone: 517-324-5110  
Fax: 855-647-0827

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

**State Executive Director:**  
Troy Nichols (acting)

**State Committee:**  
Cheryl Kobernik, Chair  
Art Lister, Jr.  
Annette Magda  
Dr. Eddie Moore  
Robert Walther

**Division Chiefs:**  
David Russ, Farm Loan  
Greg Todd, Prod. Adjustment  
Ken Schapman, Price Spt.  
Dale Allen, Conservation

To find contact information for your local office go to [www.fsa.usda.gov/mi](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mi)

### Sonny Perdue Sworn in as 31st U.S. Secretary of Agriculture

Sonny Perdue was sworn in as the 31st U.S. Secretary of Agriculture by fellow Georgian and Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court Clarence Thomas in a brief ceremony on April 25 at the Supreme Court building.

Perdue grew up on a dairy and diversified row crop farm in Bonaire, Georgia. Being uniquely qualified as a former farmer, agribusinessman, veterinarian, state legislator and governor of Georgia, he has experienced the agriculture industry from every possible perspective throughout his life.

As secretary, Perdue says he will champion the concerns of farmers, ranchers, foresters and producers, and will work tirelessly to solve the issues facing our farm families.

Perdue's policies as U.S. Secretary of Agriculture will be guided by four principles which will inform his decisions. First, he will maximize the ability of the men and women of America's agriculture and agribusiness sector to create jobs, to produce and sell the foods and fiber that feed and clothe the world, and to reap the earned reward of their labor. Second, he will prioritize customer service every day for American taxpayers and consumers. Third, as Americans expect a safe and secure food supply, USDA will continue to serve in the critical role of ensuring the food we put on the table to feed our families meets the strict safety standards we've established. And fourth, Perdue will always remember that America's agricultural bounty comes directly from the land.

For more information about Secretary Perdue, visit [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov).

---

## Just Around the Corner

**May 29:** USDA offices closed for Memorial Day

**May 31:** Commodity Loan Deadline for prior year harvested corn, soybeans and oilseeds, sorghum and pulse crops

**May 31:** Acreage reports due for nursery crops

**June 15:** County Office Committee nomination period begins

**July 4:** USDA offices closed for Independence Day

**July 15:** Acreage reports due for spring planted feed grains, CRP and most other crops. Contact your local service center for full list.

**August 1:** ARC/PLC annual enrollment deadline

**August 1:** County Office Committee nominations deadline

\* The dates here are provided for general reference. Some areas and crops may have dates that differ from the general guidelines above. It is the producer's responsibility to personally verify deadlines applicable to each farm's crops with the appropriate Farm Service Agency county office.

---

## USDA Announces New Conservation Opportunities to Improve Water Quality and Restore Wildlife Habitat

USDA will offer farmers and ranchers more opportunities to participate in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). The announcement includes new CRP practices to protect water quality and adds an additional 1.1 million acres targeted to benefit wildlife, pollinators and wetlands.

The new conservation initiative known as Clean Lakes, Estuaries and Rivers (CLEAR) will add new tools to CRP that can help to improve water quality. CLEAR will assist landowners with the cost of building bioreactors and saturated buffers that filter nitrates and other nutrients from tile-drained cropland. Early estimates indicate that CLEAR could help to reduce nitrate runoff by as much as 40 percent over traditional conservation methods. CLEAR may cover up to 90 percent of the cost to install these new practices through incentives and cost-share. These new methods are especially important in areas where traditional buffers have not been enough to prevent nutrients from reaching bodies of water.

USDA will also add an additional 1.1 million acres to a number of key CRP practices that are critically important to wildlife and conservation. These include 700,000 acres for State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) efforts, which restore high-priority wildlife habitat tailored to a specific state's needs. In addition to SAFE, 300,000 acres will be added to target wetlands restoration that are nature's water filters and 100,000 acres for pollinator habitat that support 30 percent of agricultural production.

The continued strong demand for CRP combined with the limited acreage available for enrollment and lower land rental rates, allows USDA to modify certain program components without affecting the integrity of the program. Signing incentives are being reduced by \$25 per acre on certain practices for fiscal year 2018 enrollments (incentives are currently between \$100 and \$150 per acre) and a cap on the maximum soil rental rate is being instituted for Continuous CRP at \$300 per acre. The savings from these changes are being reinvested back in CRP, including the additional acres for SAFE, pollinator habitat and wetlands restoration.

To learn more about FSA's conservation programs, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation) or contact your local FSA office.

---

## 2017 Acreage Reporting Dates

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.

Acreage reporting dates vary by crop and by county so please contact your local FSA office for a list of county-specific deadlines.

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 15th.

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.

---

## Emergency Disaster Declarations and Designations

Farmers and ranchers know all too well that natural disasters can be a common, and likely a costly, variable to their operation. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) has emergency assistance programs to provide assistance when disasters strike, and for some of those programs, a disaster designation may be the eligibility trigger. When natural disaster occurs, there is a process for requesting a USDA Secretarial disaster designation for a county. Agricultural producers can play a vital role in this process.

If you have experienced a production loss as a result of a natural disaster you may submit a request to your local FSA county office for your county to be evaluated for a Secretarial disaster designation. Once a request is received, the county office will collect disaster data and create a Loss Assessment Report. The County Emergency Board will review the Loss Assessment Report and determine if a recommendation is sent forward to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture for the designation.

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

---

## Unauthorized Disposition of Grain

If loan grain has been disposed of through feeding, selling or any other form of disposal without prior written authorization from the county office staff, it is considered unauthorized disposition. The financial penalties for unauthorized dispositions are severe and a producer's name will be placed on a loan violation list for a two-year period. Always call before you haul any grain under loan.

---

## May 2017 Interest Rates

Farm Operating	3.000%
Farm Ownership	4.000%
Farm Ownership - Joint Financing	2.500%
Farm Ownership - Down Payment	1.500%
Emergency Loan	3.750%
3-year FSFL	1.500%
5-year FSFL	1.875%
7-year FSFL	2.125%
10-year FSFL	2.375%
12-year FSFL	2.375%
Crop Year 2016 Commodity Loan	2.000%

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).