

October 2017



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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Michigan FSA Newsletter

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To find contact information for your local office go to www.fsa.usda.gov/mi.

Just Around the Corner

October 31: OCCSP deadline for organic certification costs incurred from Oct. 1, 2016 through Sept. 30, 2017

November 6: County Office Committee election begins, ballots mailed

November 10: Offices closed for Veterans Day

November 15: Acreage report deadline for perennial forages and fall-planted small grains

November 20: NAP perennial fruits application closing date for 2018 crop year

November 23: Offices closed for Thanksgiving Day

December 1: NAP honey, maple sap application closing date for 2018 crop year

December 25: Offices closed for Christmas Day.

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 their local Farm Service Agency county office.

USDA Encourages Producers to Consider Risk Protection Coverage before Crop Sales Deadlines

The Farm Service Agency encourages producers to examine available USDA crop risk protection options, including federal crop insurance and Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage, before the applicable crop sales deadline.

Producers are reminded that crops not covered by insurance may be eligible for NAP. The 2014 Farm Bill expanded NAP to include higher levels of protection. Beginning, underserved and limited resource farmers are now eligible for free catastrophic level coverage, as well as discounted premiums for additional levels of protection."

Federal crop insurance covers crop losses from natural adversities such as drought, hail and excessive moisture. NAP covers losses from natural disasters on crops for which no permanent federal crop insurance program is available, including perennial grass forage and grazing crops, fruits, vegetables, mushrooms, floriculture, ornamental nursery, aquaculture, turf grass, ginseng, honey, syrup, bioenergy, and industrial crops.

Producers can determine if crops are eligible for federal crop insurance or NAP by visiting <https://webapp.rma.usda.gov/apps/actuarialinformationbrowser2017/CropCriteria.aspx>.

NAP basic coverage is available at 55 percent of the average market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of expected production, with higher levels of coverage, up to 65 percent of their expected production at 100 percent of the average market price, including coverage for organics and crops marketed directly to consumers.

Deadlines for coverage vary by state and crop. To learn more about NAP visit www.fsa.usda.gov/nap or contact your local USDA Service Center. To find your local USDA Service Centers go to <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Federal crop insurance coverage is sold and delivered solely through private insurance agents. Agent lists are available at all USDA Service Centers or at USDA's online Agent

Locator: <http://prodwebnlb.rma.usda.gov/apps/AgentLocator/#>. Producers can use the USDA Cost Estimator, <https://ewebapp.rma.usda.gov/apps/costestimator/Default.aspx>, to [predict insurance premium costs](#).

Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybee, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP)

The Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) provides emergency assistance to eligible livestock, honeybee, and farm-raised fish producers who have losses due to disease, adverse weather or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires, not covered by other agricultural disaster assistance programs.

Eligible livestock losses include grazing losses not covered under the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), loss of purchased feed and/or mechanically harvested feed due to an eligible adverse weather event, additional cost of transporting water because of an eligible drought and additional cost associated with gathering livestock to treat for cattle tick fever.

Eligible honeybee losses include loss of purchased feed due to an eligible adverse weather event, cost of additional feed purchased above normal quantities due to an eligible adverse weather condition, colony losses in excess of normal mortality due to an eligible weather event or loss condition, including CCD, and hive losses due to eligible adverse weather.

Eligible farm-raised fish losses include death losses in excess of normal mortality and/or loss of purchased feed due to an eligible adverse weather event.

Producers who suffer eligible livestock, honeybee, or farm-raised fish losses from Oct. 1, 2016 to Sept. 30, 2017 must file:

- A notice of loss the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent or by Nov. 1, 2017
- An application for payment by Nov. 1, 2017

The Farm Bill caps ELAP disaster funding at \$20 million per federal fiscal year.

The following ELAP Fact Sheets (by topic) are available online:

- ELAP for Farm-Raised Fish Fact Sheet
- ELAP for Livestock Fact Sheet
- ELAP for Honeybees Fact Sheet

To view these and other FSA program fact sheets, visit the FSA fact sheet web page at www.fsa.usda.gov/factsheets.

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.

USDA Processing Pending Conservation Reserve Program Continuous Enrollment Offers

Acceptance of Most 2018 Offers Temporarily Suspended

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) will process many pending eligible offers for land enrollment in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and will temporarily suspend accepting most new offers until later in the 2018 fiscal year.

All current, eligible CRP continuous enrollment offers made through Sept. 30, 2017, except for those made under the Pollinator Habitat Initiative (CP42), will be approved. Additionally, FSA is temporarily suspending acceptance of most offers going forward to provide time to review CRP allocation levels, and to avoid exceeding the statutory cap of 24 million acres.

The CRP acreage cap is a provision of the 2014 Farm Bill. Current enrollment is about 23.5 million acres nationwide. USDA is accepting all pending continuous enrollment offers that were made beginning on May 4, 2017, and extending through Sept. 30, 2017, except Pollinator Habitat Initiative offers. Pollinator acreage offers are being declined because the program has met its acreage enrollment goal. Effective immediately, USDA is suspending acceptance of all new CRP continuous offers received or submitted after Sept. 30, 2017. The suspension will continue until later in the 2018 fiscal year.

However, FSA will continue to accept eligible offers for state-specific Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and CRP Grasslands enrollment. Offers received on or after Oct. 1, 2017, are subject to fiscal year 2018 rental rates which have been adjusted to reflect current market conditions and were established after careful review of the latest USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) cash rent data.

In return for enrolling in CRP, USDA, through FSA, provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. Landowners enter into contracts that last between 10 and 15 years. CRP pays farmers and ranchers who remove sensitive lands from production and plant certain grasses, shrubs and trees that improve water quality, prevent soil erosion and increase wildlife habitat. Payment totals for 2017 were announced earlier this week totaling over \$1.6 billion.

For more information about CRP, contact your local FSA office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov/crp. To locate your local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Loan Servicing

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

October 2017 Interest Rates

Farm Ownership and Farm Operating Loans:

- Farm Operating - Direct 2.750%
- Farm Ownership - Direct 3.750%
- Farm Ownership - Direct, Joint Financing 2.500%
- Farm Ownership - Down Payment 1.500%
- Emergency Loan - Amount of Actual Loss 3.750%

Crop Year 2017 Commodity Loans:

- Crop year commodity Loans less than 1 year: 2.250% per annum
- CCC borrowing rate-base interest charges: 1.250% per annum

Farm Storage Facility Loans:

- 3 year loan terms: 1.500% per annum
- 5 year loan terms: 1.750% per annum
- 7 year loan terms: 2.000% per annum
- 10 year loan terms: 2.125% per annum
- 12 year loan terms: 2.250% per annum

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).