

July 2015



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Oregon State FSA Newsletter

Oregon State Farm Service Agency

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www.fsa.usda.gov/or

State Committee:

Sam Asai, Chair
Vernon Frederickson,
Member
Jason Smith, Member
Anna Sullivan, Member

State Executive Director:
Phil Ward

A Message from the State Executive Director

Recently I marked my one year anniversary with the Farm Service Agency and it has been a whirlwind of a year. Implementing the 2014 Farm Bill, connecting with farmers and ranchers around the state, and getting to know Oregon's dedicated FSA staff, have all been highlights.

This last week we enjoyed a visit from Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, Krysta Harden. She was in town to co-host a roundtable on Women In Agriculture with Oregon Department of Agriculture Director, Katy Coba. The roundtable, held at the Oregon Garden in Silverton, was well attended by producers and agri businesswomen representing nearly every part of Oregon. Topics discussed included challenges faced by women in agriculture and key issues facing Oregon's ag industry. Governor Kate Brown attended the reception following.

Farm Loan Chief:
Bob Perry

Chief Administrative Officer:
Dan LoFaro

Next State Committee Meeting:
September 22-23, 2015

Please contact your local FSA Office for questions specific to your operation or county.

<http://offices.usda.gov/>

During a tour the next day, the Deputy Secretary got a first-hand look at Oregon's unique and diverse farming operations. She was able to observe grass seed harvest in full swing, plus vineyards, cane berries, Christmas tree plantations and many other crops as we drove through the Willamette Valley. One of the tour highlights was the stop at Goschie Farms, near Mt. Angel. Operated by siblings Gail, Glen and Gordy Goshie, the farm is a diversified operation with Hops as it's primary crop. Bordering Abiqua Creek, it is a picturesque example of the best of Oregon Agriculture. Gail Goshie led the tour giving the Deputy Secretary a first-hand look as to how a modern Hop farm is operated.

The tour concluded with a stop at the Food Innovation Center (FIC) in Portland, a joint venture between Oregon State University and the Oregon Department of Agriculture with a mission of developing new and innovative food products. Deputy Secretary Harden had the opportunity to sample a number of these products and visit with their developers.

Let me conclude this column with a brief word of appreciation for all who are in the fields this summer bringing in the harvest, and to those who support them. Oregon Agriculture is a vital and dynamic industry because of you.

Phil Ward
State Executive Director

FSA County Committee Nomination Period Now Open in Multiple Oregon Counties

The nomination period for Oregon County Committee's began on June 15, 2015. Nomination forms must be postmarked or received in the FSA County Office that is conducting elections this year by close of business on Aug. 3, 2015.

County Committees are unique to FSA and allow producers to have a voice on federal farm program implementation at the local level.

To be eligible to serve on the FSA county committee, a person must participate or cooperate in an agency administered program, be eligible to vote in a county committee election and reside in the Local Administrative Area (LAA) where they are nominated. All producers, including women, minority and beginning farmers and ranchers are encouraged to participate in the nomination and election process.

Please contact your local FSA Office to determine whether or not the LAA in which you reside in hosting elections in 2015. <http://offices.usda.gov/>

Producers may nominate themselves or others as candidates. Organizations representing minority and women farmers and ranchers may also nominate candidates. To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign form FSA-669A. The form and more information about county committee elections is available online at: www.fsa.usda.gov/elections.

Elected county committee members serve a three-year term and are responsible for making decisions on FSA disaster, conservation, commodity and price support programs, as well as other important federal farm program issues. County committees consist of three to 11 members.

FSA will mail election ballots to eligible voters beginning Nov. 9. Ballots are due back in the County Office in which the election is taking place by mail or in person no later than Dec. 7, 2015. All newly elected county committee members and alternates will take office January 1, 2016.

For more information about county committees, please contact the Name County FSA office at Phone or visit www.fsa.usda.gov/elections.

LIVESTOCK FORAGE DISASTER PROGRAM (LFP)

Producers in Baker, Crook, Deschutes, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Jackson, Jefferson, Klamath, Lake, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wasco and Wheeler Counties are eligible to apply for 2015 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) benefits on small grain, native pasture, improved pasture, annual ryegrass, and forage sorghum.

LFP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who suffer grazing losses for covered livestock due to drought on privately owned or cash leased land or fire on federally managed land.

County committees can only accept LFP applications after notification is received by the National Office of qualifying drought or if a federal agency prohibits producers from grazing normal permitted livestock on federally managed lands due to qualifying fire.

For 2015 and subsequent years, eligible livestock producers must complete a CCC-853 and the required supporting documentation no later than 30 calendar days after the end of the calendar year in which the grazing losses occurred. Losses must occur in the calendar year the application is being filed.

Additional Information about LFP, including eligible livestock and fire criteria, is available at your local FSA office or online at: www.fsa.usda.gov.

Enrollment for 2016 Dairy Margin Protection Program Started July 1

FSA announced as of July 1, 2015, dairy farmers can enroll in [Margin Protection Program for coverage in 2016](#). The voluntary program, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, provides financial assistance to participating dairy operations when the margin – the difference between the price of milk and feed costs – falls below the coverage level selected by the farmer.

The Margin Protection Program gives participating dairy producers the flexibility to select coverage levels best suited for their operation. Enrollment begins July 1 and ends on Sept. 30, 2015, for coverage in 2016. Participating farmers will remain in the program through 2018 and pay a \$100 administrative fee each year. Producers also have the option of selecting a different coverage level during open enrollment each year. Margin Protection Program payments are based on an operation's historical production. An operation's historical production will increase by 2.61 percent in 2016 if the operation participated in 2015, providing a stronger safety net.

USDA also has an online resource available to help dairy producers decide which level of coverage will provide them with the strongest safety net under a variety of conditions. The enhanced Web tool, available at www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool, allows dairy farmers to quickly and easily combine their 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, mobile phone, or tablet, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Dairy operations enrolling in the program must meet conservation compliance provisions. Producers participating in the Livestock Gross Margin insurance program may register for the Margin Protection Program, but this new margin program will only begin once their livestock dairy insurance coverage has ended. Producers must also submit form CCC-782 for 2016, confirming their Margin Protection Program coverage level selection, to the local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office. If electing higher coverage for 2016, dairy producers can either pay the premium in full at the time of enrollment or pay a minimum of 25 percent of the premium by Feb. 1, 2016.

For more information, visit FSA online at www.fsa.usda.gov/dairy for more information, or stop by a local FSA office to learn more about the Margin Protection Program. To find a local FSA office in your area, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

USDA Opens Enrollment Period for Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Safety-Net Programs

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that eligible producers may now formally enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for 2014 and 2015. The enrollment period began June 17, 2015, and will end Sept. 30, 2015.

The new programs, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, trigger financial protections for agricultural producers when market forces cause substantial drops in crop prices or revenues. More than 1.76 million farmers have elected ARC or PLC. Previously, 1.7 million producers had enrolled to receive direct payments (the program replaced with ARC and PLC by the 2014 Farm Bill). This means more farms have elected ARC or PLC than previously enrolled under previously administered programs.

Nationwide, 96 percent of soybean farms, 91 percent of corn farms, and 66 percent of wheat farms elected ARC. 99 percent of long grain rice farms, 99 percent of peanut farms, and 94 percent of medium grain rice farms elected PLC. For data about other crops and state-by-state program election results go to www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc.

Covered commodities under ARC and PLC include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium grain rice (which includes short grain and sweet rice), safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat. Upland cotton is no longer a covered commodity.

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For more information please contact your local FSA office <https://offices.usda.gov>

Nineteen Oregon Counties Eligible for Emergency Loans Following Secretarial Disaster Declaration

Baker, Crook, Deschutes, Douglas, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Jackson, Jefferson, Klamath, Lake, Malheur, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wasco and Wheeler Counties were declared a primary disaster due to drought and heat using the streamlined Secretarial Disaster Designation process. Under this designation, producers with operations in any primary or contiguous county are eligible to apply for low interest emergency loans.

The streamlined disaster designation process issues a drought disaster declaration when a county has experienced a drought intensity value of at least a D2 (severe drought) level for eight consecutive weeks based on the U.S. Drought Monitor during the crop year.

Emergency loans help producers recover from production and physical losses due to drought, flooding and other natural disasters or quarantine.

Producers have eight months from the date of the declaration to apply for emergency loan assistance. FSA will consider each loan application on its own merits, taking into account the extent of losses, security available and repayment ability. Producers can borrow up to 100 percent of actual production or physical losses, to a maximum amount of \$500,000.

For more information about emergency loans, please contact your local FSA office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

Direct Loans

FSA offers direct farm ownership and direct farm operating Loans to producers who want to establish, maintain or strengthen their farm or ranch. FSA loan officers process, approve and service direct loans.

Direct farm operating loans can be used to purchase livestock and feed, farm equipment, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance and other costs including family living expenses. Operating loans can also be used to finance minor improvements or repairs to buildings and to refinance some farm-related debts, excluding real estate.

Direct farm ownership loans can be used to purchase farmland, enlarge an existing farm, construct and repair buildings, and to make farm improvements.

The maximum loan amount for both direct farm ownership and operating loans is \$300,000 and a down payment is not required. Repayment terms vary depending on the type of loan, collateral and the producer's ability to repay the loan. Operating loans are normally repaid within seven years and farm ownership loans are not to exceed 40 years.

Please contact your local FSA office for more information or to apply for a direct farm ownership or operating loan.

Current Interest Rates

90 Day Treasury Bill - 0.125%

Farm Operating Loans - Direct - 2.50%

Farm Ownership Loans - Direct - 3.75%

Farm Ownership Loans - Direct Downpayment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher - 1.50%

Emergency Loans - 3.50%

Farm Storage Facility Loans

(7 years) - 2.00%

(10 years) - 2.25%

(12 years) - 2.375%

Commodity Loans - 1.25%

Important Dates and Deadlines

June 17 - September 30, 2015 - Enroll ARC / PLC contracts for 2014 and 2015

August 3 - Deadline to Submit Nominations for County Committee Elections

September 30 - Deadline to Enroll in MPP-Dairy.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. 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).