

December 2015



Having trouble viewing this email? [View it as a Web page.](#)

- [A Message from the State Executive Director](#)
- [Important Dates and Deadlines:](#)
- [USDA Offers Flood Impacted Oregon Farmers and Ranchers Immediate Disaster Assistance](#)
- [USDA Offers Help to Fire-Affected Farmers and Ranchers](#)
- [Livestock Forage Disaster Program \(LFP\)](#)
- [Tree Assistance Program \(TAP\) Sign-up](#)
- [2016 ACREAGE REPORTING DATES](#)
- [Filing CCC-941 Adjusted Gross Income \(AGI\) Certifications](#)
- [USDA to Provide Agricultural Credit Training, Expand Opportunities for Farmer Veterans and Beginning Farmers](#)
- [Microloans](#)
- [Farmers to receive Documentation of USDA Services](#)

Oregon State FSA Newsletter

Oregon Farm Service Agency

7620 SW Mohawk Street
Tualatin, Oregon 97062-8121

www.fsa.usda.gov/or

State Committee:

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

State Executive Director:

Phil Ward

A Message from the State Executive Director

This December has reminded me of many I experienced as a kid growing up on the farm south of Independence—sloppy wet, with the Willamette River straining hard at its banks. In many years that river made its escape, pushing into the fields behind the house and barns and across the county road that bordered our property.

We always celebrated Christmas Eve with my Grandparents, whose house was a half mile down the road and closer to the river. We often had to drive through water to get there. When the water was too high for the pickup to safely navigate, Grandad would meet us on high ground and load kids, presents and my parents into his boat for a short but exciting ride through the floodwaters to the safety of Granny's front porch. Those were good memories for a kid; I'm not sure the adults were all that enthused.

Division Chiefs:

Bob Perry, Farm Loan Chief

Mitzi Lankford, Farm Program Chief

Dan LoFaro, Chief Administrative Officer

Next State Committee Meeting:

February 24-25, 2016

Please contact your local FSA Office for questions specific to your operation or county.
<http://offices.usda.gov/>

Current Interest Rates:

90 Day Treasury Bill =
0.125%

Farm Operating Loans -
Direct = 2.375%

Farm Ownership Loans -
Direct = 3.750%

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

Emergency Loans = 3.375%

Farm Storage Facility Loans
(7 years) = 2.000%
(10 years) = 2.250%
(12 years) = 2.375%

Commodity Loans 1996 -
Present = 1.375%

After several years of severe drought that reached even into Western Oregon, it's nice to see the rains again. It is especially good to see that precipitation reaching into Central and Eastern Oregon. Since the passage of the 2014 Farm Bill, FSA has paid out over \$80,000,000 in drought related disaster assistance to Oregon farmers and ranchers. In addition, we recently delivered nearly \$18,000,000 in ARC County payments and wrote the second most operating and farm ownership loans this year in the agency's history. We are also currently in the midst of a large Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) signup.

So, 2015 has been a busy year, but that's why FSA is here—to serve farmers and ranchers by providing support when revenues drop, when disaster hits, and to help protect important natural resources. We are also here to help finance those just getting started in agriculture, minorities, and folks who have had a tough year or two. It's a little like Grandad's boat—you don't always need it, but when you do it's nice to have it available.

As 2015 draws to a close, my sincere thanks to all of you who produce the rich agricultural bounty that is the foundation of this nations' economy. Best wishes for a wonderful Holiday Season with family and friends.

Phil Ward

Important Dates and Deadlines:**December 1 - February 26, 2016:** General CRP Signup Period**January 15, 2016:** Acreage reporting dates for *Apples, Apricots, Blueberries, Cherries, Cranberries, Grapes, Nectarines, Peaches, Pears, Plums***January 30, 2016:** LFP deadline to submit a CCC-853 and the required supporting documentation for 2015 losses.**March 15, 2016:** NAP sales closing date for *Beans, Broccoli, Camelina, Cantaloupe, Carrots, Cauliflower, Corn, Cucumber, Lentils, Mustard, Oats, Peas, Potatoes, Pumpkin, Safflower, Sunflower, Squash, Tomato, Watermelon***May 15, 2016:** Acreage reporting dates for *Cabbage (planted 3/12-4/20)***May 15, 2016:** NAP sales closing deadline for *Buckwheat*

USDA Offers Flood Impacted Oregon Farmers and Ranchers Immediate Disaster Assistance

Farm Service Agency Stands Ready to Assist Agricultural Producers Slammed by Recent Heavy Rains

The Oregon Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds farmers and ranchers across the state of federal farm program benefits that may be available to help eligible producers recover from recent heavy rains and flooding.

FSA offers disaster assistance and low-interest loan programs to assist agricultural producers in their recovery efforts following floods 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 2015 crops.
- **Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP)** - offers payments to eligible producers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather. Eligible losses may include those determined by FSA to have been caused by hurricanes, floods, blizzards, wildfires, tropical storms, tornados lightening, extreme heat, and extreme cold. Producers will be required to provide verifiable documentation of death losses resulting from an eligible adverse weather event and must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent.
- **Tree Assistance Program (TAP)** – provides assistance to eligible orchardists and nursery tree growers for qualifying tree, shrub and vine losses due to natural disaster.
- **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. ELAP covers physically damaged or destroyed livestock feed that was purchased or mechanically harvested forage or feedstuffs intended for use as feed for the **producer's** eligible livestock. In order to be considered eligible, harvested forage must be baled; forage that is only cut, raked or windrowed is not eligible. Producers must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent.

ELAP also covers up to 150 lost grazing days in instances when a producer has been forced to remove livestock from a grazing pasture due to floodwaters.

For beekeepers, ELAP covers beehive losses (the physical structure) in instances where the hive has been destroyed by a natural disaster including flooding, high winds and tornadoes.

- **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 due to drought, flooding.
- **Emergency Conservation Program (ECP)** - provides emergency funding for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate land severely damaged by natural disasters; includes fence loss.
- **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.

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/ or contact your local FSA Office. To find your local FSA county office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>

USDA Offers Help to Fire-Affected Farmers and Ranchers

The [U.S. Department of Agriculture](http://www.usda.gov) (USDA) reminds farmers and ranchers affected by the recent wildfires in Alaska, California, Idaho, Oregon, Montana and Washington State that USDA has programs to assist with their recovery efforts.

The [Farm Service Agency](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) (FSA) can assist farmers and ranchers who lost livestock, grazing land, fences or eligible trees, bushes and vines as a result of a natural disaster. FSA administers a suite of safety-net programs to help producers recover from eligible losses, including the [Livestock Indemnity Program](#), the [Livestock Forage Disaster Program](#), the [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program](#), and the [Tree Assistance Program](#).

In addition, the FSA [Emergency Conservation Program](#) provides funding and technical assistance for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters and for carrying out emergency water conservation measures in periods of severe drought. Producers located in counties that received a primary or contiguous disaster designation are eligible for low-interest [emergency loans](#) to help them recover from production and physical losses. Compensation is also available to producers who purchased coverage through the [Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program](#), which protects non-insurable crops against natural disasters that result in lower yields, crop losses or prevented planting.

The [Natural Resources Conservation Service](#) (NRCS) can assist producers with damaged grazing land as well as farmers, ranchers and forestland owners who find themselves in emergency situations caused by natural disasters. The NRCS [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) provides financial assistance to producers who agree to defer grazing on damaged land for two years. In the event that presidentially declared natural disasters, such as wildfires, lead to imminent threats to life and property, NRCS can assist local government sponsors with the cost of implementing conservation practices to address natural resource concerns and hazards through the [Emergency Watershed Protection Program](#).

Farmers and ranchers with coverage through the federal crop insurance program administered by the [Risk Management Agency](#) (RMA) should contact their crop insurance agent to discuss losses due to fire or other natural causes of loss. Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers and online at the RMA [Agent Locator](#).

When wildfires destroy or severely damage residential property, [Rural Development](#) (RD) can assist with providing priority hardship application processing for single family housing. Under a disaster designation, RD can issue a priority letter for next available multi-family housing units. RD also provides low-interest loans to community facilities, water environmental programs, businesses and cooperatives and to rural utilities.

For the first time in its 110-year history, the [Forest Service](#), part of USDA, is spending more than 50 percent of its budget to suppress the nation's wildfires.

Today, fire seasons are 78 days longer than in the 1970s. Since 2000, at least 10 states have had their largest fires on record. **This year, there have been more than 46,000 fires.** Increasing development near forest boundaries also drives up costs, as more than 46 million homes and more than 70,000 communities are at risk from wildfire in the United States.

Visit <http://go.usa.gov/3eDeF> to learn more about USDA disaster preparedness and response. For more information on USDA disaster assistance programs, please contact your local USDA Service Center. To find your local USDA Service Center go to <http://offices.usda.gov>

Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP)

Note: Eligible livestock producers must complete a CCC-853 and the required supporting documentation no later than January 30, 2016 for 2015 losses.

Producers in Baker, Benton, Clackamas, Clatsop, Columbia, Coos, Curry, Crook, Deschutes, Douglas, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Hood River, Jackson, Jefferson, Josephine, Klamath, Lake, Lane, Lincoln, Malheur, Marion, Morrow, Multnomah, Sherman, Tillamook, Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Wasco, Washington, Wheeler, and Yamhill Counties are eligible to apply for 2015 Livestock Forage Disaster program (LFP) benefits on one or more eligible forage types, which may include: small grain, native pasture, improved pasture, annual ryegrass, and/or 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.

Eligible livestock producers must complete a CCC-853 and the required supporting documentation no later than January 30, 2016 for 2015 losses.

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

Tree Assistance Program (TAP) Sign-up

Orchardists and nursery tree growers who experience losses from natural disasters during calendar year 2015 must submit a TAP application either 90 calendar days after the disaster event or the date when the loss is apparent. TAP was authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014 as a permanent disaster program. TAP provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters.

Eligible tree types include trees, bushes or vines that produce an annual crop for commercial purposes. Nursery trees include ornamental, fruit, nut and Christmas trees that are produced for commercial sale. Trees used for pulp or timber are ineligible.

To qualify for TAP, orchardists must suffer a qualifying tree, bush or vine loss in excess of 15 percent mortality from an eligible natural disaster. The eligible trees, bushes or vines must have

been owned when the natural disaster occurred; however, eligible growers are not required to own the land on which the eligible trees, bushes and vines were planted.

If the TAP application is approved, the eligible trees, bushes and vines must be replaced within 12 months from the date the application is approved. The cumulative total quantity of acres planted to trees, bushes or vines, for which a producer can receive TAP payments, cannot exceed 500 acres annually.

2016 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.

Filing CCC-941 Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) Certifications

Many producers have experienced delays in receiving Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) payments, Loan Deficiency Payments (LDPs) and Market Gains on Marketing Assistance Loans (MALs) because they have not filed form CCC-941, Adjusted Gross Income Certification. LDPs will not be paid until all eligible producers, including landowners who share in the crop, have filed a valid CCC-941.

Producers without a valid CCC-941 certifying their compliance with the average adjusted gross income provisions will not receive payments that have been processed. All farm operator/tenants/owners who have not filed a CCC-941 and have pending payments should IMMEDIATELY file the form with their recording county FSA office. Farm operators and tenants are encouraged to ensure that their landowners have filed the form. FSA has been issuing 2014 ARC/PLC payments, 2015 LDPs and Market Gains.

FSA can accept the CCC-941 for 2014, 2015 and 2016. Unlike the past, producers must have the CCC-941 certifying their AGI compliance before any payments can be issued.

USDA to Provide Agricultural Credit Training, Expand Opportunities for Farmer Veterans and Beginning Farmers

USDA announced a partnership with the Farmer Veteran Coalition (FVC) to conduct agricultural credit training sessions in the Midwest for military veterans and beginning farmers and ranchers. States under consideration to host the workshops include Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, and Nebraska.

These workshops will provide individuals interested in farming as a career, including military veterans, with methods to improve business planning and financial skills, and improve understanding of the risk management tools that can help small farm operations.

Other partners include Niman Ranch a community network of more than 700 independent family farmers and ranchers, and the Farm Credit Council and the Farm Credit System, which provides loans, leases and financial services to farmers, ranchers and rural businesses across the United States. The workshops will also include assistance with credit applications and introductions to local or regional food markets.

To learn more about veterans in agriculture, visit www.usda.gov/veterans. Visit www.fsa.usda.gov/farmloans or your local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office to learn more about FSA's farm loan programs. To find your local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>. More information also is available from the Farmer Veteran Coalition at www.farmvetco.org.

Microloans

Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds farmers and ranchers that the FSA borrowing limit for microloans increased from \$35,000 to \$50,000, on Nov. 7, 2014. Microloans offer borrowers simplified lending with less paperwork.

The microloan change allows beginning, small and mid-sized farmers to access an additional \$15,000 in loans using a simplified application process with up to seven years to repay. Microloans are part of USDA's continued commitment to [small and midsized farming operations](#).

To complement the microloan program additional changes to FSA eligibility requirements will enhance beginning farmers and ranchers access to land, a key barrier to entry level producers. FSA policies related to farm experience have changed so that other types of skills may be considered to meet the direct farming experience required for farm ownership loan eligibility. Operation or management of non-farm businesses, leadership positions while serving in the military or advanced education in an agricultural field will now count towards the experience applicants need to show when applying for farm ownership loans. **Important Note:** Microloans cannot be used to purchase real estate.

Since 2010, more than 50 percent of USDA's farm loans now go to beginning farmers and FSA has increased its lending to targeted underserved producers by nearly 50 percent.

Please review the FSA [Microloan Program Fact Sheet](#) for program application, eligibility and related information.

Farmers to receive Documentation of USDA Services

Local Offices Issue Receipts for Services Provided

Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds agricultural producers that FSA provides a receipt to customers who request or receive assistance or information on FSA programs.

As part of FSA's mission to provide enhanced customer service, producers who visit FSA will receive documentation of services requested and provided. From December through June, FSA issued more than 327,000 electronic receipts.

The 2014 Farm Bill requires a receipt to be issued for any agricultural program assistance requested from FSA, the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Rural Development (RD). Receipts include the date, summary of the visit and any agricultural information, program and/or loan assistance provided to an individual or entity.

In some cases, a form or document – such as a completed and signed program enrollment form – serve as the customer receipt instead of a printed or electronic receipt. A service is any information, program or loan assistance provided whether through a visit, email, fax or letter.

To learn more about FSA, visit www.fsa.usda.gov or contact your local FSA office www.fsa.usda.gov/or

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).