

January 2016



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Oregon State Farm Service Agency

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www.fsa.usda.gov/or

State Committee:

Sam Asai, Chairman
Vernon Frederickson,
Member

Jason Smith, Member
Anna Sullivan, Member

State Executive Director:

Phil Ward

Division Chiefs:

Bob Perry, Farm Loan Chief
Mitzi Lankford, Farm Program
Chief

Important Dates and Deadlines:

February 1, 2016: LFP deadline to submit a CCC-853 and the required supporting documentation for 2015 losses.

February 26, 2016: General CRP Signup Period Ends

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

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/>

Interest Rates:

90 Day Treasury Bill = 0.125%

Farm Operating Loans - Direct = 2.625%

Farm Ownership Loans - Direct = 3.875%

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

Emergency Loans = 3.625%

Farm Storage Facility Loans:

(7 years) = 2.000%

(10 years) = 2.250%

(12 years) = 2.375%

Commodity Loans = 1.625%

Enrollment Period for 2016 USDA Safety Net Coverage Began Dec. 7

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) has announced that producers who chose coverage from the safety net programs established by the 2014 Farm Bill, known as the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs, can begin visiting FSA county offices starting Dec. 7, 2015, to sign contracts to enroll in coverage for 2016. The enrollment period will continue until Aug. 1, 2016.

Although the choice between ARC and PLC is completed and remains in effect through 2018, producers must still enroll their farm by signing a contract each year to receive coverage.

Producers are encouraged to contact their local FSA office to schedule an appointment to enroll. If a farm is not enrolled during the 2016 enrollment period, producers on that farm will not be eligible for financial assistance from the ARC or PLC programs should crop prices or farm revenues fall below the historical price or revenue benchmarks established by the program.

The two programs were authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill and offer a safety net to agricultural producers when there is a substantial drop in prices or revenues for covered commodities. Covered commodities 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. For more details regarding these programs, go to www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc.

For more information, producers are encouraged to visit their local FSA office. To find a local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

USDA Improves Access to Capital for Tribal Farmlands with Multiple Owners

New Program Allows More Farm Loans for “Highly Fractionated” Tribal Land

USDA announced that it is expanding the availability of farm loans for Indian tribes and members to purchase tribal farmland that has multiple owners. The improved lending opportunities are possible due to new authority granted by the 2014 Farm Bill, which allows USDA to provide revolving loan funds to qualified intermediary lenders that can relend the funds to qualified tribes and individuals. The program becomes available today, Dec. 1, 2015.

As a direct result of more than a dozen tribal meetings across the country, USDA is able to implement a solution to a longstanding barrier to financing, which will increase the availability of farm loans to Native Americans who want to start or expand a farming or ranching operation on Indian lands.

Under the [1887 Dawes Act](#), Indian reservation land was divided and allotted to individual tribal members such that with the passing of each generation, title ownership was divided and parceled among heirs, while the land was not. As a result, land once owned by a single person could today be owned by hundreds or thousands of individuals, resulting in what is known as “highly fractionated Indian land.” In many instances, landowners are unknown or cannot be located, which complicates the coordination of ownership or prevents the use of the property altogether. There are more than 245,000 owners of three million fractionated land interests, spanning approximately 150 Indian reservations.

Under the rules published today, USDA will now allow tribes and tribal members to submit a farm loan application to an intermediary lender. To participate, intermediary lenders first must be approved by USDA. The lenders may be private and tribal nonprofit corporations, public agencies, Indian tribes, or lenders subject to federal or state regulation (such as a credit union or other financial institution). FSA will lend to the intermediary, which will relend to the applicant. The intermediary lender also will administer the loan for the applicant.

Additional information on guidelines and criteria for intermediate lenders and how to file a loan application under Highly Fractionated Indian Land loan program will be shared Dec. 7, 2015 at the Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC) meeting and Tribal consultation in Las Vegas, Nev. For more information, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/farmloans or contact the local FSA county office. To find the local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

USDA also has opened a 90-day period for the public to submit comments on this program. Written comments must be submitted by Feb. 29, 2016, at www.regulations.gov, using Regulation Identifier Number 0560-AI32.

USDA Begins 49th Enrollment Period for the Conservation Reserve Program

December 2015 Marks 30th Anniversary for the Nation’s Most Successful Voluntary Conservation Program

Farmers and ranchers are reminded that the next general enrollment period for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) started Dec. 1, 2015, and ends on Feb. 26, 2016. December 2015 also marks the 30th anniversary of CRP, a federally funded program that assists agricultural producers

with the cost of restoring, enhancing and protecting certain grasses, shrubs and trees to improve water quality, prevent soil erosion and reduce loss of wildlife habitat.

As of September 2015, 24.2 million acres were enrolled in CRP. CRP also is protecting more than 170,000 stream miles with riparian forest and grass buffers, enough to go around the world 7 times. For an interactive tour of CRP success stories from across the U.S., visit www.fsa.usda.gov/CRPis30, or follow on Twitter at #CRPis30.

Participants in CRP establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees (known as “covers”) to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat on marginally productive agricultural lands. In return, FSA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. At times when commodity prices are low, enrolling sensitive lands in CRP can be especially attractive to farmers and ranchers, as it softens the economic hardship for landowners at the same time that it provides ecological benefits. Contract duration is between 10 and 15 years. The long-term goal of the program is to re-establish native plant species on marginal agricultural lands for the primary purpose of preventing soil erosion and improving water quality and related benefits of reducing loss of wildlife habitat.

Contracts on 1.64 million acres of CRP are set to expire on Sept. 30, 2016. Producers with expiring contracts or producers with environmentally sensitive land are encouraged to evaluate their options under CRP.

Since it was established on Dec. 23, 1985, CRP has:

- Prevented more than 9 billion tons of soil from eroding, enough soil to fill 600 million dump trucks;
- Reduced nitrogen and phosphorous runoff relative to annually tilled cropland by 95 and 85 percent respectively;
- Sequestered an annual average of 49 million tons of greenhouse gases, equal to taking 9 million cars off the road.

Since 1996, CRP has created nearly 2.7 million acres of restored wetlands.

For more information FSA conservation programs, visit a local FSA office or www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation. To find your local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

USDA Issues Safety-Net Payments to State Farmers Facing Market Downturn

The USDA Farm Service Agency has begun issuing financial assistance for the 2014 crop year to those agricultural producers who are participating in the new safety-net programs established by the 2014 Farm Bill. The new programs, known as Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC), are designed to protect against unexpected drops in crop prices or revenues due to market downturns.

Unlike the old direct payments program, which provided funds in good years and bad years, these new programs only provide financial assistance when prices or revenues drop below normal. For example, nationwide, farms participating in ARC-County that are receiving payments experienced a \$20 billion drop in revenues relative to the historical benchmark. Similarly, lower prices in commodities such as peanuts and rice have triggered PLC assistance.

Also, please note that funds provided by the ARC-County program can vary from county to county. The 2014 Farm Bill requires ARC-County payments to be calculated using the national average

market year price (which does not vary by county), and the average county yield (which varies by county). This creates county-by-county differences in payment rates. The yield data comes from surveys conducted by the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), the national standard that uses the highest-precision statistical procedures available. Where that data does not exist, the next strongest data is used: county-level crop insurance data from the Risk Management Agency. If that data does not exist, the next strongest data is used: NASS district data. Where NASS district data doesn't exist, the FSA State Committees provide data.

Because the new programs are designed as financial assistance for prices and revenues lower than normal, not all producers will receive a payment, (as occurred with the old direct payments program). ARC/PLC payments are designed to help with unexpected changes in the marketplace, and to supplement other assistance programs, such as crop insurance. To learn more about the data used in calculating payments, how payments are calculated, crop-specific and state-specific information, please visit our website at www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc.

Firearms and Dangerous Weapons Forbidden In Federal Facilities

USDA Service Centers and Farm Service Agency Offices are Off Limits for Firearms

This is an important reminder to all customers and patrons of USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices and USDA Service Centers statewide that **firearms are forbidden (even with a permit/license) in Federal Buildings**. A Federal Building by definition is any building owned, leased or rented by the Federal Government, where Federal employees are regularly present for the purpose of performing their official duties.

The items that are prohibited in Federal facilities include any item prohibited by any applicable Federal, State, local, and tribal law and/or ordinance, as well as firearms, dangerous weapons, explosives, or other destructive devices (including their individual parts or components) designed, redesigned, used, intended for use, or readily converted to cause injury, death, or property damage. Possession of firearms and dangerous weapons in Federal facilities as outline above is a crime punishable by fines and imprisonment.

For a complete list of items prohibited in Federal facilities, please view and/or download the document titled, **Items Prohibited from Federal Facilities: An Interagency Security Committee Standard:** <http://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/isc-items-prohibited-federal-facilities-feb-2013-508.pdf>. **The lists of prohibited items outlined in this document apply to all facility occupants, contractors, and the visiting public.**

If you have questions or concerns regarding this notification, please contact your local Farm Service Agency Office—<http://offices.usda.gov>.

Report Livestock Losses by Jan. 30, 2016

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) provides assistance to eligible producers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law. LIP compensates livestock owners and contract growers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather, including losses due to hurricanes, floods, blizzards, wildfires, extreme heat or extreme cold.

For 2015, eligible losses must occur on or after Jan. 1, 2015, and before December 31, 2015. A notice of loss must be filed with FSA within 30 days of when the loss of livestock is apparent. Participants must provide the following supporting documentation to their local FSA office no later than 30 calendar days after the end of the calendar year for which benefits are requested:

- Proof of death documentation
- Copy of growers contracts
- Proof of normal mortality documentation

USDA has established normal mortality rates for each type and weight range of eligible livestock, i.e. Adult Beef Cow = 1.5% and Non-Adult Beef Cattle (less than 400 pounds) = 3%. These established percentages reflect losses that are considered expected or typical under "normal" conditions. Producers who suffer livestock losses in 2015 must file both of the following:

- A notice of loss the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss was apparent or by January 30, 2016
- An application for payment by January 30, 2016.

Additional Information about LIP is available at your local FSA office or online at: 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.

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 office at 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).