

March 2017



Farm Service Agency

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NEWSLETTER



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Oregon State FSA Newsletter

Oregon Farm Service Agency

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www.fsa.usda.gov/or

USDA Reminds Individuals and Small Businesses in Oregon, California, and Nevada that USDA Offers Disaster Assistance Programs to Help

This also includes the Hoopa Valley Reservation in California

The [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#) (USDA) reminds farmers and ranchers, families and small businesses that could potentially be affected by the recent storms that USDA has several programs that provide assistance before, during and after disasters. USDA staff

Acting State Executive Director:
Dan LoFaro

Program Chiefs:
Bob Perry, Farm Loan Chief
Wes Jennings, Farm Program Chief
Dan LoFaro, Chief Administrative Officer

State Committee:
Sam Asai, Chairperson
Jason Smith, Member
Vernon Frederickson, Member
Anna Sullivan, Member

Next State Committee Meeting (tentative):
May 17-18, 2017

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

Selected Interest Rates for March

90 Day Treasury Bill = 0.500 %

Farm Operating Loans - Direct = 2.875%

Farm Ownership Loans - Direct = 4.000 %

Farm Ownership Loans - Direct Downpayment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher = 1.500 %

Emergency Loans = 3.875%

Farm Storage Facility Loans
(7 years) = 2.250%
(10 years) = 2.500 %
(12 years) = 2.500 %

in the regional, State and county offices in the states of California, Nevada and Oregon are ready to help.

The Presidential Disaster Declarations in California, Nevada and Oregon are for severe winter storms, flooding and mudslides for incident period Jan. 13–12, 2017. And the Hoopa Valley Reservation Declaration is for severe winter storms only for the incident period Jan. 3-5, 2017. The application deadlines for all of these declarations is Oct. 16, 2017.

USDA encourages residents and small businesses in the potential impact zones to contact the following offices to meet their individual needs:

Property and Shelter

When floods destroy or severely damage residential property, USDA Rural Development can assist with providing priority hardship application processing for single family housing. Under a disaster designation, USDA Rural Development can issue a priority letter for next available multi-family housing units. While these programs do not normally have disaster assistance authority, many of USDA Rural Development programs can help provide financial relief to small businesses hit by natural disasters, including low-interest loans to community facilities, water environmental programs, businesses and cooperatives and to rural utilities. More information can be found on the [Rural Development website](#) or by contacting the [State Offices](#).

Food Safety and Food Assistance

Severe weather forecasts often present the possibility of power outages that could compromise the safety of stored food. The USDA [Food Safety and Inspection Service](#) (FSIS) recommends that consumers take the necessary [steps](#) before, during, and after a power outage to reduce food waste and minimize the risk of foodborne illness. FSIS offers [tips](#) for keeping frozen and refrigerated food safe and a [brochure](#) that can be downloaded and printed for reference at home. If you have questions about the safety of food in your home, call the USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854) on weekdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. ET or visit [AskKaren.gov](#) to chat live with a food safety specialist, available in English and Spanish.

Owners of meat and poultry producing businesses who have questions or concerns may contact the FSIS Small Plant Help Desk by phone at 1-877-FSIS-HELP (1-877-374-7435), by email at infosource@fsis.usda.gov, or 24/7 online at <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/regulatory-compliance/svsp/sphelpdesk>.

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) coordinates with state, local and voluntary organizations to provide food for shelters and other mass feeding sites. Under certain circumstances, states also may request to operate a disaster household distribution

Commodity Loans = 1.875 %

Important Dates and Deadlines

March 31 - Deadline to file an application for payment for 2016 Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) losses to livestock

May 15 - Deadline to purchase NAP coverage for: Buckwheat

May 29 - Memorial Day - Offices Closed

July 4 - Independence Day - Offices Closed

July 31 - CRP Grasslands contract must be signed by producer for Ranking Period 3

August 1, 2017 - Enrollment ends for the 2017 ARC PLC Program.

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.

program to distribute USDA Foods directly to households in need. In addition, FNS may approve a state's request to implement a Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) when the President declares a major disaster for individual assistance under the Stafford Act in areas affected by a disaster. State agencies may also request a number of disaster-related SNAP waivers to help provide temporary assistance to impacted households already receiving SNAP benefits at the time of the disaster. Resources for disaster feeding partners as well as available FNS disaster nutrition assistance can be found on the [FNS Disaster Assistance website](#).

Crop and Livestock Loss

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) administers many safety-net programs to help producers recover from eligible losses, including the [Livestock Indemnity Program](#), the [Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program](#), [Emergency Forest Restoration Program](#) (EFRP) and the [Tree Assistance Program](#). The FSA [Emergency Conservation Program](#) provides funding and technical assistance for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters. 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 also is 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. USDA encourages farmers and ranchers to contact their local FSA office to learn what documents can help the local office expedite assistance, such as farm records, receipts and pictures of damages or losses.

Producers should use form FSA-576, Notice of Loss, to report prevented planting and failed acres in order to establish or retain FSA program eligibility. Prevented planting acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date as established by FSA and USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA). Producers must file a Notice of Loss for failed acres on all crops including grasses in a timely fashion, often within 15 days of the occurrence or when the losses become apparent. Producers of hand-harvested crops must notify FSA of damage or loss within 72 hours of when the date of damage or loss first becomes apparent.

Producers with coverage through the RMA administered federal crop insurance program should contact their crop insurance agent. Those who purchased crop insurance will be paid for covered losses. Producers should report crop damage within 72 hours of damage discovery and follow up in writing within 15 days.

Community Recovery Resources

For declared natural disasters that lead to imminent threats to life and property, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

FSA administers four types of disaster designations:

USDA Secretarial Disaster Designation

The designation process can be initiated by individual farmers, local government officials, State governors, State agriculture commissions, tribal councils or the FSA State Executive Director

This designation is triggered by a 30-percent or greater production loss to at least one crop because of a natural disaster, or at least 1 producer who sustained individual losses because of a natural disaster and is unable to obtain commercial financing to cover those losses

In 2012, USDA developed a fast-track process for disaster declarations for severe drought. This provides for a nearly automatic designation when, during the growing season, any portion of a county meets the D2 (Severe Drought) drought intensity value for eight consecutive weeks or a higher drought intensity value for any length of time as reported by the U.S. Drought Monitor (<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>)

Administrator's Physical Loss Notification

This designation is initiated by the FSA State Executive Director.

The designation is triggered by physical damage and losses because of a natural disaster, including but not limited to dead livestock,

(NRCS) can assist local government sponsors with the cost of implementing recovery efforts like debris removal and streambank stabilization to address natural resource concerns and hazards through the [Emergency Watershed Protection Program](#). NRCS staff is coordinating with state partners to complete damage assessments in preparation for sponsor assistance requests. NRCS also can help producers with damaged agricultural lands caused by natural disasters such as floods. The NRCS [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) (EQIP) provides financial assistance to repair and prevent excessive soil erosion that can result from high rainfall events and flooding. Conservation practices supported through EQIP protect the land and aid in recovery, can build the natural resource base, and might help mitigate loss in future events.

USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture provides support for disaster education through the Extension Disaster Education Network ([EDEN](#)). EDEN is a collaborative multi-state effort with land-grant universities and Cooperative Extension Services across the country, using research-based education and resources to improve the delivery of services to citizens affected by disasters. EDEN's goal is to improve the nation's ability to mitigate, prepare for, prevent, respond to and recover from disasters. EDEN equips county-based Extension educators to share research-based resources in local disaster management and recovery efforts. The EDEN website offers a searchable database of Extension professionals, resources, member universities and disaster agency websites, education materials to help people deal with a wide range of hazards, and food and agricultural defense educational resources.

For complete details and eligibility requirements regarding USDA's disaster assistance programs, contact a local [USDA Service Center](#) (<http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>). More information about [USDA disaster assistance](#) (<http://www.usda.gov/documents/fact-sheet-usda-programs-assist-individuals-small-businesses.pdf>) as well as other disaster resources is available on the USDA Disaster Resource Center website. In a continuing effort to better serve the public, USDA has developed a new and improved central resource for disaster related materials. In partnership with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and other disaster-focused organizations, USDA created a [Disaster Resource Center](#) (<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?navid=disaster-help>) website, utilizing a new online searchable knowledgebase. This knowledgebase is a collection of disaster-related resources that are powered by agents with subject-matter expertise. The Disaster Resource Center website and web tool now provide an easy access point to find USDA disaster information and assistance.

collapsed buildings, and destroyed farm structures.

Presidential Designation

A Presidential major disaster designation and emergency declaration is initiated by the Governor of the impacted state through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

This designation is triggered by damage and losses caused by a disaster of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capability of the State and local governments.

Quarantine Designation

This designation is requested of the Secretary of Agriculture by the FSA State Executive Director.

A quarantine designation is triggered by damage and losses caused by the effects of a plant or animal quarantine approved by the Secretary under the Plant Protection Act or animal quarantine laws.

All four types of designations immediately trigger the availability of low-interest Emergency loans to eligible producers in all primary and contiguous counties. FSA borrowers in these counties who are unable to make their scheduled payments on any debt may be authorized to have certain set asides. Additional disaster assistance requiring a designation may also be provided by new programs in the future.

For more information on FSA disaster programs and

Report Livestock Losses

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 2016, eligible losses must occur on or after Jan. 1, 2016, and no later than 60 calendar days from the ending date of the applicable adverse weather event or attack. 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 90 calendar days after the end of the calendar year in which the eligible loss condition occurred.

- 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 = 2.0% and Non-Adult Beef Cattle (less than 400 pounds) = 5%. These established percentages reflect losses that are considered expected or typical under "normal" conditions. Producers who suffer livestock losses in 2016 must file both of the following:

- A notice of loss the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss was apparent
- An application for payment by March 31, 2017.

Additional Information about LIP is available at your local FSA office or online at: www.fsa.usda.gov.

disaster designations, visit
www.fsa.usda.gov/disaster.

ELAP - Livestock Feed Assistance Due to Winter Storms

Producers who purchased additional feed or had winter grazing losses due to recent winter storms in Oregon are encouraged to contact their local FSA office to learn about the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP). ELAP provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish who suffered losses because of disease, adverse weather or other conditions.

One category of ELAP assistance includes livestock feed and grazing losses that are not due to drought or wildfires. ELAP also assists producers with eligible feed losses that resulted from the additional costs of purchasing additional feed, above normal quantities, required to maintain eligible livestock during an eligible adverse weather or loss condition, until additional livestock feed becomes available.

Eligible livestock owners must own eligible livestock that are being maintained for commercial use as part of a farming operation and:

- During the 60 calendar days before the beginning date of the eligible adverse weather or loss condition, owned, cash-leased, purchased, entered into a contract to purchase or been a contract grower of eligible livestock;
- Suffered a loss on land that is either:
 - Native or improved pastureland with a permanent vegetative cover; or
 - Planted to a crop specifically for the purpose of providing grazing for covered livestock.

Eligible Grazing Losses:

Eligible grazing losses must be incurred on eligible grazing lands physically located in the county where the eligible adverse weather or loss condition occurred and because of an eligible adverse weather or loss condition.

Additional Livestock Feed Payment Calculations:

Payment calculations for feed losses will be based on a minimum of 60 percent of the producer's actual of purchasing additional livestock feed above normal to maintain the eligible livestock during an eligible adverse weather or loss condition until additional livestock feed becomes available.

FSA will calculate ELAP payments for an eligible producer for livestock feed and grazing losses for no more than 150 calendar days.

Producers must file a Notice of Loss within 30 days of when the loss is apparent to the participant, and submit an application for payment by Nov. 1, 2017.

To file a Notice of Loss, please contact your local county FSA office.

Payment Limitations by Program

The 2014 Farm Bill established a maximum dollar amount for each program that can be received annually, directly or indirectly, by each person or legal entity. Payment limitations vary by program for 2014 through 2018.

Below is an overview of payment limitations by program.

Commodity and Price Support Programs

The annual limitation for the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs, Loan Deficiency Payments (LDPs) and Market Loan Gains is \$125,000 each.

Conservation Programs

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) annual rental payment and incentive payment is limited to \$50,000. CRP contracts approved before Oct. 1, 2008, may exceed the limitation, subject to payment limitation rules in effect on the date of contract approval.

The Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) has an annual limit of \$200,000 per disaster event. The Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP) has an annual limit of \$500,000 per disaster event.

Disaster Assistance Programs

The annual limitation of \$125,000 applies to the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP), Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and Tree Assistance Program (TAP). The total payments received under ELAP, LFP and LIP may not exceed \$125,000. A separate limitation applies to TAP payments.

Payment limitations also apply to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs. Contact your local NRCS office more information.

For more information on FSA payment limitations by program, visit

https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdfiles/FactSheets/2015/payment_eligibility_payment_limitations.pdf.

New Actively Engaged Provisions for Non-Family Joint Operations or Entities

Many Farm Service Agency programs require all program participants, either individuals or legal entities, to be “actively engaged in farming”. This means participants provide a significant contribution to the farming operation, whether it is capital, land, equipment, active personal labor and/or management. For entities, each partner, stockholder or member with an ownership interest, must contribute active personal labor and/or management to the operation on a regular basis.

The 2014 Farm Bill established additional payment eligibility provisions relating to the farm management component of meeting “actively engaged in farming”. These new provisions apply to joint operations comprised of non-family members or partners, stockholders or persons with an ownership in the farming operation. Effective for 2016 and subsequent crop years, non-family joint operations are afforded to one member that may use a significant contribution of active personal management exclusively to meet the requirements to be determined “actively engaged in farming”.

The person or member will be defined as the Farm Manager for the purposes of administering these new management provisions.

In some instances, additional persons or members of a non-family member joint operation who meet the definition of Farm Manager may also be allowed to use such a contribution of active personal management to meet the eligibility requirements. However, under no circumstances may the number of Farm Managers in a non-family joint operation exceed a total of three in any given crop and program year.

USDA Expands Grasslands Conservation Program to Small-Scale Livestock Producers

Helping Dairy, Beef and Other Producers Protect Working Grasslands in 43 States

USDA will accept over 300,000 acres in 43 states that were offered by producers during the recent ranking period for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Grasslands enrollment with emphasis placed on small-scale livestock operations. Through the voluntary CRP Grasslands program, grasslands threatened by development or conversion to row crops are maintained as livestock grazing areas, while providing important conservation benefits. Approximately 200,000 of the accepted acres were offered by small-scale livestock operations.

The most recent ranking period closed on Dec. 16, 2016, and included for the first time a CRP Grasslands practice specifically tailored for small-scale livestock grazing operations to encourage broader participation. Under this ranking period and for future periods, small-scale livestock operations with 100 or fewer head of grazing cows (or the equivalent) can submit applications to enroll up to 200 acres of grasslands per farm. Larger operations may still make offers through the normal process. USDA met its goal of 200,000 acres under this small-scale initiative. The new practice for small-scale livestock grazing operations encourages greater diversity geographically and in all types of livestock operations. Visit <http://go.usa.gov/x9PFS> to view the complete list of acres accepted by state.

Participants in CRP Grasslands establish or maintain long-term, resource-conserving grasses and other plant species to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat on marginally productive agricultural lands. CRP Grasslands participants can use the land for livestock production (e.g. grazing or producing hay), while following their conservation and grazing plans in order to maintain the cover.

Small livestock operations or other farming and ranching operations interested in participating in CRP Grasslands should contact their local FSA office. To learn more about FSA's conservation programs, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/conservation.

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.

Farm Storage Facility Loans

FSA's Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program provides low-interest financing to producers to build or upgrade storage facilities and to purchase portable (new or used) structures, equipment and storage and handling trucks.

The low-interest funds can be used to build or upgrade permanent facilities to store commodities. Eligible commodities include corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley, minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain, pulse crops (lentils, chickpeas and dry peas), hay, honey, renewable biomass, fruits, nuts and vegetables for cold storage facilities, floriculture, hops, maple sap, rye, milk, cheese, butter, yogurt, meat and poultry (unprocessed), eggs, and aquaculture (excluding systems that maintain live animals through uptake and discharge of water). Qualified facilities include grain bins, hay barns and cold storage facilities for eligible commodities.

Loans up to \$50,000 can be secured by a promissory note/security agreement and some loans between \$50,000 and \$100,000 will no longer require additional security.

Producers do not need to demonstrate the lack of commercial credit availability to apply. The loans are designed to assist a diverse range of farming operations, including small and mid-sized businesses, new farmers, operations supplying local food and farmers markets, non-traditional farm products, and underserved producers.

To learn more about the FSA Farm Storage Facility Loan, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport or contact your local FSA county office. To find your local FSA county office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Preauthorized Debit Available for Farm Loan Borrowers

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) has implemented pre-authorized debit (PAD) for Farm Loan Program (FLP) borrowers. PAD is a voluntary and alternative method for making weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annual or annual payments on loans.

PAD payments are pre authorized transactions that allow the National Financial and Accounting Operations Center (NFAOC) to electronically collect loan payments from a customer's account at a financial institution.

PAD may be useful for borrowers who use nonfarm income from regular wages or salary to make payments on loans or adjustment offers or for payments from seasonal produce stands. PAD can only be established for future payments.

To request PAD, customers, along with their financial institution, must fill out form RD 3550-28. This form has no expiration date, but a separate form RD 3550-28 must be completed for each loan to which payments are to be applied. A fillable form can be accessed on the USDA Rural Development (RD) website at <http://www.rd.usda.gov/publications/regulations-guidelines>. Click forms and search for "Form 3550-28."

If you have a "filter" on the account at your financial institution, you will need to provide the financial institution with the following information: Origination ID: 1220040804, Agency Name: USDA RD DCFO.

PAD is offered by FSA at no cost. Check with your financial institution to discuss any potential cost. Preauthorized debit has no expiration date, but you can cancel at any time by submitting a written request to your local FSA office. If a preauthorized debit agreement receives three payment rejections within a three month period, the preauthorized debt agreement will be cancelled by FSA. The payment amount and due date of your loan is not affected by a cancellation of preauthorized debit. You are responsible to ensure your full payment is made by the due date.

For more information about PAD, contact your local FSA office. To find a local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>

Maintaining Good Credit History

Farm Service Agency (FSA) Farm Loan programs require that applicants have a satisfactory credit history. A credit report is requested for all FSA direct farm loan applicants. These reports are reviewed to verify outstanding debts, if bills are paid timely and to determine the impact on cash flow.

Information found on a customer's credit report is strictly confidential and is used only as an aid in conducting FSA business.

Our farm loan staff will discuss options with you if you have an unfavorable credit report and will provide a copy of your report. If you dispute the accuracy of the information on the credit report, it is up to you to contact the issuing credit report company to resolve any errors or inaccuracies.

There are multiple ways to remedy an unfavorable credit score.

- Make sure to pay bills on time. Setting up automatic payments or automated reminders can be an effective way to remember payment due dates.
- Pay down existing debt.
- Keep your credit card balances low.
- Avoid suddenly opening or closing existing credit accounts.

FSA's farm loan staff will guide you through the process, which may require you to reapply for a loan after improving or correcting your credit report.

For more information on FSA farm loan programs, visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

USDA assistance is just a click away

New online tools available to help Oregon farmers, ranchers do business with USDA

Farmers, ranchers and forest owners can do business with USDA from the comfort and convenience of their home, 24/7, with the launch of two new websites operated by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).

NRCS offers a new website called [Conservation Client Gateway](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/clientgateway) that allows both individual producers and businesses or entities to request conservation assistance, track payments, manage their conservation plans, digitally sign documents and more. With Conservation Client Gateway, producers can complete a number of tasks that would normally require a drive to their local USDA field office. For more information or to sign up, visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/clientgateway.

In a similar effort, the Farm Service Agency launched a new website called FSAfarm+ which offers producers web access to view, export and print their farm records data, including maps, through a public web portal. FSAfarm+ also allows producers to electronically share their farm data with other agencies or individuals, for example with a crop insurance agent. This site is currently available only to sole proprietors and individuals; though registration for businesses and entities is coming soon. For more information or to sign up, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/FarmPlus.

Both FSAFarm+ and Conservation Client Gateway require users to obtain a USDA Level 2 E-authentication, which ensures a higher level of security and protects their information. The same

Level 2 eAuth account can be used to access both the FSA and NRCS applications. Instructions for obtaining this authentication are available on the Client Gateway and FarmPlus portals.

For more information about these sites and other USDA services, contact your [local USDA Service Center](#).

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).