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New York State FSA Newsletter

New York State Farm Service Agency

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SED Comments

The weather in 2016 has definitely provided challenges to New York farmers, and we at USDA Farm Service Agency are here to help as best as we can. In this newsletter you can read articles on several disaster programs currently available to many New York producers. If you currently have NAP coverage and have experienced a loss, make sure you report that to your local county office. Furthermore, if you don't have NAP coverage for crops you're unable to get crop insurance on, look into it for next year. Several 2017 crop year NAP deadlines are approaching, including NAP for Forage Quality, which has a September 30th deadline.

With current drought conditions here are some suggestions to document losses. In the event of a disaster declaration; the better proof a farm has of crop and animal losses, the easier it should be to receive disaster relief.

Suggested documentation producers may want to gather could include:

- **Photographs-** take pictures of your crops and any animal losses that may occur. Document where and when the photo was taken, the photo should demonstrate the severity of loss.
- **Crop yields** – when appropriate, begin recording crop losses and yields in preparation to report to USDA

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

- **Milk Production Losses-** document reduced milk output from your herd.
- **Water Hauling Costs-** If your wells have gone dry, document the amount of water you are purchasing, transportation costs, mileage and labor cost to haul the water.
- **Excess Feed Cost-** Document extra feed cost if you normally graze but your pastures are not suitable for grazing. (for example keep all of your receipts)
- **File a Notice of Loss** in the county FSA office that you report your crops in.

Feel free to call or stop by your local office to learn more about what programs might be available to you. Also, don't forget New York has a great program to help you in tough times, NYFarmNet is available to support farm families in these high stress times, their number is 800-547-FARM (9816).

Take care,
Jim Barber

Emergency Conservation Program Assistance Available in 23 New York Counties

The Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) provides emergency funding and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate farmland damaged by natural disasters and to implement emergency water conservation measures in periods of severe drought.

The following counties are in a D2 drought, and are therefore eligible for ECP assistance: Allegany, Broome, Cattaraugus, Cayuga, Chautauqua, Chemung, Cortland, Erie, Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Niagara, Onondaga, Ontario, Orleans, Schuyler, Seneca, Steuben, Suffolk, Tioga, Tompkins, Wyoming and Yates Counties

A producer qualifying for ECP assistance may receive cost-share levels not to exceed 75 percent of the eligible cost of restoration measures. No producer is eligible for more than \$200,000 cost sharing per natural disaster occurrence. The following types of drought emergency measures may be eligible:

- drilling and deepening wells
- developing spring developments and troughs if needed for livestock water or vineyard/orchard irrigation water supplies

Producers who suffered a loss from a natural disaster should contact their local FSA Office for ECP deadlines. Please contact your local FSA office for more information on what assistance you may be eligible for. You can find your local office at <http://offices.usda.gov>

Tree Assistance Program (TAP) Sign-up

Orchardists and nursery tree growers who experience losses from natural disasters during calendar year 2016 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.

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.

Producers Urged to Consider Risk Protection Coverage before Crop Sales Deadlines

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds producers to review available USDA crop risk protection options, including federal crop insurance and Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage, before the upcoming deadlines.

New York NAP Deadlines:

September 1, 2016:

Aquaculture
Christmas Trees
Finfish
Floriculture
Garlic
Ginseng Root
Ginseng Seed (Yield Based)
Mollusk
Mushrooms
Turfgrass Sod

September 30, 2016:

All Grasses, Mixed Forage, Clover and Alfalfa
All Fall & Spring Small Grains

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.

Reduced forage quality is now considered a production loss for weather disaster assistance coverage under the new buy-up provisions of the Farm Service Agency (FSA) Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP).

This safety net is important for cattlemen who produce non-insurable forages for feeding livestock. Previously, FSA only considered a decrease in overall forage tonnage produced when determining if the producer suffered a compensable loss after a qualifying weather event. Under FSA's new NAP buy-up provisions, a decrease in forage quality – such as protein content – is also considered.

USDA has partnered with Michigan State University and the University of Illinois to create an online tool at www.fsa.usda.gov/nap that allows producers to determine whether their crops are eligible for federal crop insurance or NAP and to explore the best level of protection for their operation. 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 available, including coverage for organics and crops marketed directly to consumers. Crops intended for grazing are not eligible for additional NAP coverage.

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.

For more information on NAP, service fees, premiums and sales deadlines, contact your local FSA office or visit the web at www.fsa.usda.gov/nap.

Filing a Notice of Loss

The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. Timely filing a Notice of Loss is required for all crops including grasses. For losses on crops covered by the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), you must file a CCC-576, Notice of Loss, in the FSA County Office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent or 15 calendar days after the normal harvest date.

Producers of hand-harvested crops must notify FSA of damage or loss through the administrative County Office within 72 hours of the date of damage or loss first becomes apparent. This notification can be provided by filing a CCC-576, email, fax or phone. Producers who notify the County Office by any method other than by filing the CCC-576 are still required to file a CCC-576, Notice of Loss, within the required 15 calendar days.

If filing for prevented planting, an acreage report and CCC-576 must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) Online Hay and Grazing Acres Locator Tool

FSA's **Hay Net** website www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet is the an online resource for agricultural producers to list information concerning the need for hay and grazing acres or the availability of hay and grazing acres.

If, due to extenuating circumstances, producers are in need of hay and/or grazing acres to support livestock, please use **Hay Net** to post an advertisement seeking these resources. Likewise,

landowners who have hay and/or grazing acres available for livestock producers should post a Hay Net advertisement as well.

A few things to remember when using the **Hay Net** website:

- There is a one-time registration process that should be completed by all users who want to post an ad online.
- Users who just want to browse ads DO NOT NEED to have an eAuthentication user id.
- Hay and grazing acre ads will be automatically removed after a period of 13 months.
- Please help your fellow farmer and rancher by keeping ads current and up to date and remove ads you no longer need or want advertised on **Hay Net**. Please, no corporate advertisements on this site.

Hay Net is brought to you by FSA as a public service. The sole purpose of this online resource is to provide a site for the exchange of information. FSA does not endorse, guarantee, or otherwise make representations of any kind regarding any user of this site and FSA is not responsible for defining the terms of grazing agreements or lease contracts.

For more information about **Hay Net** and other FSA services and programs, please contact your local FSA office. For local FSA Service Center contact information, please visit: [offices.usda.gov](https://www.fsa.usda.gov/offices).

Farm Storage Facility Loans

Now Includes Loans for Portable Farm Storage and Handling Equipment

FSA's Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program provides low-interest financing to producers to build or upgrade storage facilities, including new options to help farmers purchase portable storage and handling equipment. The loans, which now include a smaller microloan option with lower down payments, are designed to help producers, including new, small and mid-sized producers, grow their businesses and markets.

The program also offers a new "microloan" option, which allows applicants seeking less than \$50,000 to qualify for a reduced down payment of five percent and no requirement to provide three years of production history. Farms and ranches of all sizes are eligible. The microloan option is expected to be of particular benefit to smaller farms and ranches, and specialty crop producers who may not have access to commercial storage or on-farm storage after harvest. These producers can invest in washing and handling equipment or refrigeration units and trucks that can store commodities before delivering them to markets. Qualified permanent facilities include grain bins, hay barns, forage bunks, milk houses, and cold storage facilities for eligible commodities. Producers do not need to demonstrate the lack of commercial credit availability to apply.

Earlier this year, FSA significantly expanded the list of commodities eligible for Farm Storage Facility Loan. Eligible commodities now include:

- Fruits & Vegetables
- Grains
- Hay & Forage
- Meat, Poultry & Eggs
- Milk, Cheese, Butter & Yogurt
- Honey
- Hops
- Maple Sap
- Renewable Biomass
- Aquaculture
- Floriculture

To learn more about Farm Storage Facility Loans, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport or contact a

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

Beginning Farmer Loans

FSA assists beginning farmers to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's average size farm.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

Farmers to Receive Documentation of USDA Services

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

The 2014 Farm Bill requires a customer 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. Electronic receipts for acreage reports will begin on August 1, 2016.

A service is any information, program or loan assistance provided whether through a visit, email, fax or letter.

New USDA Commitments to Help Build Up Next Generation of Farmers and Ranchers

USDA prioritized \$5.6 billion over the next two years within USDA programs and services that serve new and beginning farmers and ranchers. A new, tailored web tool was designed to connect burgeoning farm entrepreneurs with programs and resources available to help them get started.

The new web tool is available at www.usda.gov/newfarmers. The site was designed based on feedback from new and beginning farmers and ranchers around the country, who cited unfamiliarity with programs and resources as a challenge to starting and expanding their operations. The site features advice and guidance on everything a new farm business owner needs to know, from writing a business plan, to obtaining a loan to grow their business, to filing taxes as a new small business owner. By answering a series of questions about their operation, farmers can use the site's Discovery Tool to build a personalized set of recommendations of USDA programs and services that may meet their needs.

Using the new web tool and other outreach activities, and operating within its existing resources, USDA has set a new goal of increasing beginning farmer and rancher participation by an additional 6.6 percent across key USDA programs, which were established or strengthened by the 2014 Farm Bill, for a total investment value of approximately \$5.6 billion. Programs were targeted for expanded outreach and commitment based on their impact on expanding opportunity for new and beginning farmers and ranchers, including starting or expanding an operation, developing new markets, supporting more effective farming and conservation practices, and having access to relevant

training and education opportunities. USDA will provide quarterly updates on its progress towards meeting its goal. A full explanation of the investment targets, benchmarks and outcomes is available at: [BFR-Commitment-Factsheet](#).

As the average age of the American farmer now exceeds 58 years, and data shows that almost 10 percent of farmland in the continental United States will change hands in the next five years, we have no time to lose in getting more new farmers and ranchers established. Equally important is encouraging young people to pursue careers in industries that support American agriculture. According to [an employment outlook report](#) released by USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and Purdue University, one of the best fields for new college graduates is agriculture. Nearly 60,000 high-skilled agriculture job openings are expected annually in the United States for the next five years, yet only 35,000 graduates with a bachelor's degree or higher in agriculture related fields are expected to be available to fill them. The report also shows that women make up more than half of the food, agriculture, renewable natural resources, and environment higher education graduates in the United States. USDA recently released a [series of fact sheets](#) showcasing the impact of women in agriculture nationwide.

The announcement builds on USDA's ongoing work to engage its resources to inspire a strong next generation of farmers and ranchers by improving access to land and capital; building market opportunities; extending conservation opportunities; offering appropriate risk management tools; and increasing outreach and technical support. To learn more about USDA's efforts, visit the [Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Results Page](#).

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).