

August 2016



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## Wisconsin FSA Newsletter

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### Wisconsin Farm Service Agency

8030 Excelsior Dr.  
Suite 100  
Madison, WI 53717

Phone: 608-662-4422  
Fax: 855-758-0755

### State Executive Director: Patty Edelburg

### State Committee:

Bill Averbeck  
George Huber  
Linda Ceylor  
Jamie Derr  
Mike Gallagher

### Farm Loan Chief: Tom Brandt

### Farm Program Chief/Executive Officer: Russ Raeder

To find contact information for  
your local office go to  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/wi](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wi)

### A Message from the State Director

This month we experienced a devastating loss on a family farm in central Wisconsin due to gas fumes from a manure pit. Many of you may have seen the story on the news; it was highlighted on many regional, national and international news outlets. I called Mike Biadasz a neighbor, fellow farmer, and friend. While the loss has shaken the entire community, it has also pulled us together.

Many of you have asked what exactly happened. In short, the gas cloud that killed Mike and 16 steers was a very rare occurrence; a perfect storm if you will. Mike went out early Monday morning to agitate the large lagoon. When he started the agitator it broke the hard manure crust on the lagoon and released the methane and sulfur oxide fumes into the air. The heavy fog and stagnant air that morning trapped the gases low to the ground and killed him very quickly. A very rare, almost unheard of, circumstance with open air lagoons.

I bring this up, not only because a friend and fellow farmer has been killed, but also to bring awareness to the hazards our producers are faced with on a daily basis. Earlier this week there was another tractor related accident in central Wisconsin as well. The agriculture industry statistically has the largest number of work related injuries and deaths in Wisconsin each year. We as FSA employees care about our customers and their families, and want to remind you all to be safe.

As we move into the harvest season, please keep in mind the everyday dangers you face all around your farms and as you move equipment down the country roads.

Please slow down and be safe, Patty

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## Dates to Remember

### **September 1, 2016**

Deadline to purchase Noninsured Assistance Program (NAP) coverage for 2017 Value Loss Crops including ginseng, turf grass sod, aquaculture, floriculture and Christmas Trees

### **September 5, 2016**

All USDA Service Centers closed in observance of Labor Day

### **September 30, 2016**

Deadline to purchase NAP coverage for 2017 crops including alfalfa, birdsfoot trefoil, clover, grasses, mixed forages, rhubarb, rye, triticale, vetch, and wheat

### **October 10, 2016**

All USDA Service Centers closed in observance of Columbus Day

### **November 11, 2016**

All USDA Service Centers closed in observance of Veteran's Day

### **November 15, 2016**

Deadline to complete acreage report (FSA-578) for fall-seeded crops, perennial forage, fall mint, pasture, rangeland, forage, and cover crops

### **November 21, 2016**

Deadline to purchase NAP for 2017 crops including apples, asparagus, blueberries, caneberries, cherries, cranberries, currants, grapes, honey, hops, maple sap, pears, and strawberries

### **\*Revised\* December 16, 2016**

Deadline to sign up for 2017 Dairy Margin Protection Program

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## Dairy Margin Protection Program Deadline Extended to December 16, 2016

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced last week that dairy producers now have until December 16, 2016 to enroll for 2017 coverage in the Margin Protection Program for Dairy (MPP-Dairy). The voluntary program, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, provides financial assistance to participating dairy producers when the margin – the difference between the price of milk and feed costs – falls below the coverage level selected by the producer.

The Margin Protection Program gives participating dairy producers the flexibility to select coverage levels best suited for their operation. Enrollment began July 1 and has been extended to December 16, 2016, for coverage in calendar year 2017. Participating farmers will remain in the program through 2018 and pay a minimum \$100 administrative fee each year. Producers have the option of selecting a different coverage level during open enrollment each year.

USDA has a web tool to help producers determine the level of coverage under the Margin Protection Program that will provide them with the strongest safety net under a variety of conditions. The online resource, available at [www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool), allows dairy farmers to quickly and easily combine 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 needs, based on data projections. The secure site can be accessed via computer, Smartphone or tablet 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

## Dairy Margin Protection Program Deadline Extended (Continued)

To complete enrollment, producers must make coverage elections during the enrollment period and pay the annual \$100 administrative fee that provides basic catastrophic protection that covers 90 percent of milk production at a \$4 margin coverage level. For additional premiums, operations can protect 25 to 90 percent of production history with margin coverage levels from \$4.50 to \$8.00, in 50 cent increments. Once enrolled, dairy operations are required to participate through 2018 by making coverage elections each year. If electing higher coverage for 2017, dairy producers can either pay the premium in full at the time of enrollment or pay 100 percent of the premium by September 1, 2017. Premium fees may be paid directly to FSA or producers can work with their milk handlers to remit premiums on their behalf. Contact your local office to learn more about premium calculations and obtain application forms.

FSA is now accepting applications for intergenerational transfers, allowing program participants who added an adult child, grandchild or spouse to the operation during calendar year 2014 or 2015, or between January 1 and June 30, 2016, to increase production history by the new cows brought into the operation by the new family members. For intergenerational transfers occurring on or after July 1, 2016, notification to FSA must be made within 60 days of purchasing the additional cows.

Dairy operations enrolling in the new program must meet conservation compliance provisions and cannot participate in the Livestock Gross Margin Dairy Insurance Program (LGM).

For more information, visit FSA online at [www.fsa.usda.gov/dairy](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dairy) 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>.

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## Do You have Land Changes This Year? Notify FSA to Maintain ARCPLC Eligibility

Have you enrolled in the 2016 Agriculture Risk Coverage Price Loss Coverage (ARCPLC) Program? Have you made any changes to your farming operation since then? Changes in land you are running may affect the shares of your 2016 ARCPLC contracts. If you bought, sold, rented new, or dropped rented land from your operation, make sure you report the changes to the office as soon as possible. These changes could result in a revision to your 2016 ARCPLC contract. The deadline to complete these changes to maintain 2016 contract eligibility is September 30, 2016. If it is determined shares are incorrect after September 30, 2016 the contract may not be approved.

You must provide a copy of your deed or recorded land contract for purchased property. You will also need to provide a lease or cash rental agreement for newly rented land. Failure to maintain accurate records with FSA on all land you have an interest in can lead to possible program ineligibility and penalties.

Please [contact your local office](#) if you need to make revisions or have any questions.

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## USDA Joins Forces with UW-Extension and WI DATCP to Host Grant Workshops for Farmers

This fall farm financing workshops will be hosted around Wisconsin to provide farmers with information on available grants and financing tools. Workshop topics include how to design a project, the basics of writing a grant application and financial alternatives. Panelists will be available to answer questions on grants and other loan options. USDA representatives will provide information on Farm Service Agency (FSA) programs and loans and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) programs. Available grants include the USDA Value Added Producer Grant, USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Grant, USDA Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG) and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin (BLBW) Grant.

## Grant Workshops for Farmers (Continued)

All Workshops will be held from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. The Workshop Dates, Locations and Contacts are:

- Wednesday, September 14: Northwestern Wisconsin- Barron Electric Coop, 1434 State Hwy 25 N. in Barron. Contact Tim Jergenson at 715-537-6250 or [tim.jergenson@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:tim.jergenson@ces.uwex.edu).
- Wednesday, October 5: Western Wisconsin- Pippin Center, Melville Hall, UW-Richland Center, 1200 US-14, in Richland Center. Contact Adam Hady at 608-647-6148 or [adam.hady@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:adam.hady@ces.uwex.edu)
- Thursday, October 6: Southeastern Wisconsin- Michael Fields Agricultural Institute, W2493 County Road ES, in East Troy. Contact Leigh Presley at 262-857-1948 or [leigh.presley@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:leigh.presley@ces.uwex.edu).
- Tuesday, October 11: Eastern Wisconsin- Crystal Falls Banquet hall, 1500 Handschke Dr, in New London. Contact Greg Blonde at 715-258-6231 or [greg.blonde@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:greg.blonde@ces.uwex.edu)

A \$15 registration fee covers the cost of lunch and materials. There will be time for questions and networking at the end of each workshop.

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in these meetings should contact Kim Iczkowski at 608-662-4422 x 133, or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339, at least three business days prior to the meeting.

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## USDA Expands Microloans to Help Farmers Purchase Farmland and Improve Property

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is offering farm ownership microloans, creating a new financing avenue for farmers to buy and improve property. These microloans are especially helpful to beginning or underserved farmers, U.S. veterans looking for a career in farming, and those who have small and mid-sized farming operations.

The microloan program, which celebrates its third anniversary this year, has been hugely successful, providing more than 16,800 low-interest loans, totaling over \$373 million to producers across the country. Microloans have helped farmers and ranchers with operating costs, such as feed, fertilizer, tools, fencing, equipment, and living expenses since 2013. Seventy percent of loans have gone to new farmers.

Now, microloans will be available to also help with farm land and building purchases, and soil and water conservation improvements.

FSA designed the expanded program to simplify the application process, expand eligibility requirements and expedite smaller real estate loans to help farmers strengthen their operations. Microloans provide up to \$50,000 to qualified producers, and can be issued to the applicant directly from the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).

This microloan announcement is another USDA resource for America's farmers and ranchers to utilize, especially as new and beginning farmers and ranchers look for the assistance they need to get started. To learn more about the FSA microloan program visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/microloans](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/microloans), or contact your local FSA office. To find your nearest office location, please visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

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## 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 the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (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.

USDA has partnered with Michigan State University and the University of Illinois to create an online tool at [www.fsa.usda.gov/nap](http://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, 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](http://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.

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## NRCS Customers: SAMS and DUNS Registration and Renewal is FREE

**SPECIAL NOTE:** *The information referenced in this article is specific to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) program payments only. SAMS and DUNS registration is NOT required to participate in Farm Service Agency programs.*

Entities with an EIN other than a personal social security number who are current and potential Federal Government grant and contract recipients **MUST** obtain a DUNS (D&B) number and register in the System for Award Management (SAM). SAM is the official U.S. Government registration system for grants and contract recipients. [NRCS programs such as the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) are considered government grants or contracts.]

Obtaining a DUNS number and registering in SAM is absolutely **FREE**. There is no cost associated with registering on SAM or obtaining a DUNS number. Recently, grant recipients and contractors around the state of Wisconsin have been approached and in some cases paid significant fees for assistance in registering their business or organization in SAM.

There are private, third party businesses that pay search engines to have their businesses listed at the top of the search list and appear to be representing the Federal Government. These organizations appear in the list before the actual [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov) website. While it is ultimately a businesses' choice to pay a third party to do this for you, please note the federal government does not charge for registering in this system. In our state, the Wisconsin Procurement Institute (WPI) has been designated by the Federal Government as a point of assistance in the registration process.

## NRCS Customers: SAMS and DUNS Registration and Renewal is FREE (Continued)

Please keep in mind these helpful hints when registering with SAM:

- Does the website end in '.gov' or 'mil'? Official government websites will end in '.gov' or 'mil' rather than '.com' or '.org'.
- Generally speaking, there is no fee to do business with the federal government (there are a few exceptions to this rule). If you are unsure if someone is actually representing a government agency or function, contact WPI.
- **Registration and obtaining a DUNS number or SAM is FREE.**

**About the Wisconsin Procurement Institute:** The WPI is a non-profit organization established in 1987 to assist Wisconsin businesses in creating, developing and growing their Federal, State and Local Government sales, revenues, profits and jobs. Additional information is available by going to [www.wispro.org](http://www.wispro.org) or contacting WPI at 414-270-3600.

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