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October 2018



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

# NEWSLETTER

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## Wisconsin FSA Newsletter

### Wisconsin Farm Service Agency **Dates to Remember**

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Sandy Chalmers

**Farm Loan Chief:**  
Tom Brandt

**Farm Program Chiefs:**  
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John Palmer

**State Committee:**  
Lisa Condon, Chair  
Thomas Gillis  
David Heideman  
Tom McClellan  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/wi](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wi)

**November 15, 2018:** [Acreage reporting](#) deadline for 2019 crops including fall-seeded crops, perennial forage, fall mint, pasture, rangeland, and forage

**November 5, 2018:** Ballots are mailed to voters for the [County Committee \(COC\) Election](#)

**November 20, 2018:** [Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program \(NAP\)](#) application deadline for 2019 crops including apples, asparagus, blueberries, caneberries, cherries, cranberries, currants, grapes, honey, hops, maple sap, pears, and strawberries

**December 3, 2018:** Final date to return [COC election](#) ballots to the USDA Service Center

**January 15, 2019:** [Acreage reporting](#) deadline for 2019 crops including apples, caneberries, cherries, cranberries, currants, grapes, honey, hops, maple sap, pears, and strawberries

**January 15, 2019:** Final date to sign and submit part D of the CCC-910 application for the [Market Facilitation Program \(MFP\)](#)

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## USDA Adds Shelled Almonds and Fresh Sweet Cherry to Market Facilitation Program

USDA announced the addition of commodities to the trade mitigation package aimed at assisting farmers suffering from damage due to unjustified trade retaliation by foreign nations. Starting Monday, Sept. 24, producers of shelled almonds and fresh sweet cherries may apply for Market Facilitation Program (MFP) payments at their local Farm Service Agency (FSA) office. In addition, the timeline for hog producers has been extended.

The sign-up period for MFP for other eligible commodities is now open and runs through Jan. 15, 2019, with information and instructions provided at [www.farmers.gov/mfp](http://www.farmers.gov/mfp). The MFP is established under the statutory authority of the Commodity Credit Corporation CCC Charter Act and is under the administration of USDA's FSA. Eligible producers should apply after harvest is complete, as payments will only be issued once production is reported.

A payment will be issued on 50 percent of the producer's total production, multiplied by the MFP rate for a specific commodity. A second payment period, if warranted, will be determined by the USDA.

The initial MFP payment rates starting Sept. 24:

- Shelled Almonds - \$0.03 per pound
- Fresh Sweet Cherries - \$0.16 per pound

MFP payments are capped per person or legal entity at a combined \$125,000 for shelled almonds and fresh sweet cherries.

Eligible applicants must have an ownership interest in the commodity, be actively engaged in farming, and have an average adjusted gross income (AGI) for tax years 2014, 2015, and 2016 of less than \$900,000. Applicants must also comply with the provisions of the "Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation" regulations.

### Expanded Hog Timeline

USDA has expanded the timeline for producers with whom the Aug. 1, 2018, date does not accurately represent the number of head of live hogs they own. Producers may now choose any date between July 15 to Aug. 15, 2018 that correctly reflects their actual operation.

MFP applications are available online at [www.farmers.gov/mfp](http://www.farmers.gov/mfp). Applications can be completed at a local FSA office or submitted electronically either by scanning, emailing, or faxing. To locate or contact your local FSA office, visit [www.farmers.gov](http://www.farmers.gov).

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## Did You Change Your Bank This Year?

If you changed banks and did not notify FSA, your payment could be delayed. Payments are electronically transferred into your bank account. If we are not aware of changes to your account and routing numbers, there could be problems. In order to make timely payments, you need to notify the office if you close your account or if another financial institution purchases your bank. It is important that any changes in a producer's account (such as type account, bank mergers, routing number or account numbers) be provided to the county office promptly to avoid possible payment delay.

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## Commodity Loans Available to Wisconsin Producers

The Wisconsin Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds producers that Marketing Assistance Loans (MALs) and Loan Deficiency Payments (LDPs) are available to help producers through periods of low market prices. The 2014 Farm Bill authorized MALs and LDPs for the 2014 to 2018 crop years.

MALs provide interim financing and allow producers to delay the sale of the commodity at harvest-time lows and wait until more favorable market conditions emerge. A producer who is eligible to obtain a loan, but agrees to forgo the loan, may obtain an LDP if such a payment is available.

MALs and LDPs provide financing and marketing assistance for wheat, feed grains, soybeans and other oilseeds, pulse crops, rice, peanuts, cotton, wool and honey.

All Farm Service Agency offices in Wisconsin are now accepting requests for 2018 MALs and LDPs for all eligible commodities after harvest.

Before MAL repayments and LDP disbursements can be made, producers must meet the requirements of actively engaged in farming, cash-rent tenant, and member contribution.

In order to meet eligibility requirements, producers must retain beneficial interest in the commodity, meaning they have control of the commodity or a title to the commodity, until the MAL is repaid or the Commodity Credit Corporation takes title to the commodity.

The 2014 Farm Bill also establishes payment limitations per individual or entity not to exceed \$125,000 annually on certain commodities for the following program benefits: Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage payments, Marketing Loan Gains and LDPs. These payment limitations do not apply to MAL disbursements.

Producers or legal entities whose total applicable three-year average adjusted gross income exceeds \$900,000 are not eligible for Marketing Loan Gains and LDPs, but are eligible for MALs repaid at principal plus interest.

For more information, please visit your local FSA office or [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov). To find your local USDA service center, visit [www.farmers.gov](http://www.farmers.gov).

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## The Importance of Record Keeping and Financial Management Throughout the Year

We are in the the second half of the year, and many producers are beginning harvest. Keep in mind it is important to make sure that your financial records, as well as production records, are accurate and up-to-date. Accurate records are essential in making sound financial decisions for your farming operation, and it is a best practice to continue to update them throughout the year. Your lender will utilize these records to help you review and analyze your business plan and make any necessary changes. The lender will also assist you in comparing planned versus actual performance, and to plan for the following year's operation, including determining if additional loan assistance is needed.

Having a good understanding of where your operation is financially will help you to account for how the year is progressing and prepare you for the year ahead. Once the review is complete, it is important to keep your lender updated on your performance, including any changes in your operation.

If you are an existing Farm Service Agency (FSA) loan borrower, you are expected to annually provide a year-end balance sheet, actual financial and production records for the completed year, and a projected farm operating plan for the current year. If you need assistance in completing this information, please contact your FSA loan official. Contact information for all FSA Loan offices is available at <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Remember, no job is finished until the paperwork is done!

## **NRCS Announces EQIP Signup for 2019 Funding, Apply by November 16, 2018**

Farmers and forest landowners will want to plan ahead and sign up for USDA conservation funding under the [Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#) by November 16, 2018. Applications are being taken in all [USDA Service Centers](#) in Wisconsin.

EQIP is the primary program available to farmers for farm and woodland conservation work, offering payments for over 110 basic conservation practices including manure storage, nutrient management, seasonal high tunnels, and pollinator habitats.

All eligible applications received by November 16, 2018 will be evaluated, prioritized, and ranked for funding in 2019. Farmers may contact their local USDA Service Center to get started on producer eligibility and planning. Farmers who are interested in practices that may require permits, such as manure storage or streambank restoration, are encouraged to begin planning and seeking permits as soon as possible. Applicants with shovel-ready projects (designs completed and permit applications submitted) will receive higher priority.

Special signup opportunities are also now open for Farmstead, Local Work Group, On-Farm Energy, Organic Seasonal High Tunnel conservation practices and Soil Health, as well as a number of landscape-based initiatives. All offer technical and financial assistance through EQIP.

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## **Current Interest Rates**

### **Loan Interest Rates**

\*Interest rates are announced at the beginning of each month.

### **Farm Loans- OCTOBER 2018**

Farm Operating- Direct: 3.750%  
Farm Operating- Microloan: 3.750%  
Farm Ownership- Direct: 4.125%  
Farm Ownership- Microloan: 4.125%  
Farm Ownership- Direct, Joint Financing: 2.500%  
Farm Ownership- Down Payment: 1.50%  
Emergency Loan- Amount of Actual Loss: 3.750%

### **Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL)-OCTOBER 2018**

3-year FSFL: 2.750%  
5-year FSFL: 2.750%  
7-year FSFL: 2.875%  
10-year FSFL: 2.875%  
12-year FSFL: 3.000%

### **9-Month Commodity Loans OCTOBER 2018**

Marketing Assistance Loan: 3.500%

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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).