

June 2017



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

# NEWSLETTER

*GovDelivery*

## Missouri FSA Newsletter

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### Missouri Farm Service Agency

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

[Click here](#) for the Missouri Department of Conservation Covey Headquarters newsletter.

### Now's the Time to Report your Acreage & Sign ARC/PLC Contracts

Done planting? Don't forget to stop by your local FSA office to report your crops. July 15, 2017, is the deadline to report CRP, burley tobacco, corn, cotton, grain sorghum, hybrid corn seed, popcorn, rice, soybeans.

Please note: **Since July 15 falls on a weekend, reports will be accepted through Monday, July 17.** November 15, 2016, was the final reporting date for 2017 pasture, rangeland, forage & apiculture.

If the crop hasn't been planted by the reporting date listed above, it must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.

Aug. 1 is the deadline to sign 2017 Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) contracts. If a farm is not enrolled (contract not signed) during the 2017 sign up, 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.

Some county offices may request that producers

schedule an appointment for acreage reporting. Please check with your local county office to see if an appointment is requested, or for any questions regarding crop reporting and ARC/PLC enrollment.

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## **Emergency Conservation Program Assistance Available in 42 Missouri 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 eligible for ECP assistance: Bollinger, Butler, Camden, Cape Girardeau, Carter, Christian, Crawford, Dent, Douglas, Franklin, Gasconade, Howell, Iron, Jefferson, Laclede, Madison, Maries, McDonald, Montgomery, Newton, Oregon, Osage, Ozark, Perry, Phelps, Pike, Pulaski, Reynolds, Ripley, Shannon, St. Charles, St. Francois, St. Louis, Ste. Genevieve, Stoddard, Stone, Taney, Texas, Warren, Washington, Wayne, and Wright.

For land to be eligible, the natural disaster must create new conservation problems that, if untreated, would:

- be so costly to rehabilitate that Federal assistance is or will be needed to return the land to productive agricultural use
- is unusual and is not the type that would recur frequently in the same area
- affect the productive capacity of the farmland
- impair or endanger the land

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 measures may be eligible:

- removing debris from farmland
- grading, shaping, or releveling severely damaged farmland
- restoring permanent fences
- restoring conservation structures and other similar installations

Producers who suffered a loss from a natural disaster should contact their local FSA Office for ECP deadlines.

To be eligible for assistance, practices must not be started until all of the following are met:

- an application for cost-share assistance has been filed
- the local FSA County Committee (COC) or its representative has conducted an onsite inspection of the damaged area
- the Agency responsible for technical assistance, such as the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), has made a needs determination, which may include cubic yards of earthmoving, etc., required for rehabilitation

- minimum cost of restoration is \$1000.

For more information about ECP, please visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

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## Nominations Open June 15 for the 2017 County Committee Elections

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) encourages all farmers, ranchers, and FSA program participants to take part in the County Committee election nomination process which opens June 15.

FSA's county committees are a critical component of the day-to-day operations of FSA and allow grassroots input and local administration of federal farm programs.

Committee are comprised of locally elected agricultural producers responsible for the fair and equitable administration of FSA farm programs in their counties. Committee members are accountable to the Secretary of Agriculture. If elected, members become part of a local decision making and farm program delivery process.

A county committee is composed of three to 11 elected members from local administrative areas (LAA). Each member serves a three-year term. One-third of the seats on these committees are open for election each year. County committees may have one or more appointed advisors to further represent the local interests of underserved farmers and ranchers. Underserved producers are beginning, women and other minority farmers and ranchers and land owners and/or operators who have limited resources. Other minority groups including Native American and Alaska Natives; persons under the poverty level, and persons that have disabilities are also considered underserved.

All nomination forms for the 2017 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA service center by Aug. 1, 2017. For more information on FSA county committee elections and appointments, refer to the FSA fact sheet: *Eligibility to Vote and Hold Office as a COC Member* available online at: [www.fsa.usda.gov/elections](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections).

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## USDA Approves Modifications to Margin Protection Plan of Insurance

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Risk Management Agency (RMA) announced greater crop insurance options for farmers against unexpected decreases in their operating margin. Offered through the federal crop insurance program, margin protection insurance for corn, wheat, rice and soybeans will be available in more states and have updates designed to better clarify the real input costs covered beginning in 2018.

The RMA is expanding margin protection for corn and soybeans to Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. The RMA also reevaluated how the liabilities and deductibles were identified and has increased the maximum coverage level available to 95 percent. In addition, the program was updated to add a harvest price option for all margin protection crops, which will allow farmers to get the greater of the projected price or the harvest price to further result in a more effective safety net for farmers.

Margin protection insurance is a privately-developed product and first became available in 2016 to provide coverage based on an expected margin, which is the expected area revenue minus the expected area operating costs, for each applicable crop, type and practice. Margin protection is area-based coverage and may not necessarily reflect individual experience. The margin protection plan can be purchased by itself, or in conjunction with a Yield Protection or Revenue Protection policy.

A producer may choose coverage from 70 percent to 95 percent of their expected margin. A higher level of coverage will have a higher premium rate. The last day to purchase a margin protection policy for corn, soybeans, and spring wheat is Sept. 30, 2017. The last day to purchase margin protection for rice is the same as the sales closing date for the underlying rice insurance policy, which varies by county. Maps of eligible counties and other resources can be found on the [margin protection webpage](#).

Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance agents. A list of crop insurance agents is available at all USDA Service Centers and online at the [RMA Agent Locator](#).

Learn more about crop insurance and the modern farm safety net at [www.rma.usda.gov](http://www.rma.usda.gov).

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## Seeking Nominations for Seven USDA Advisory Committees

*Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers and the Advisory Committee on Minority Farmers*

The USDA Secretary of Agriculture is soliciting nominations for membership for the Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers and the Advisory Committee on Minority Farmers.

The **Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers** advises the Secretary of Agriculture on matters broadly affecting new farmers and ranchers including strategies, policies, and programs that will enhance opportunities and create new farming and ranching operations. The **deadline for applications is June 15, 2017**.

For additional information about the Advisory Committee on Beginning Farmers and Ranchers, please visit <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/05/31/2017-11214/advisory-committee-on-beginning-farmers-and-ranchers-acbfr-request-for-nominations>.

The **Advisory Committee on Minority Farmers** works in the interest of the public to ensure socially disadvantaged farmers have equal access to USDA programs. The **deadline to apply is June 16, 2017**.

For additional information about the Advisory Committee on Minority Farmers, please visit <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/06/01/2017-11216/advisory-committee-on-minority-farmers-request-for-nominations>.

Prior applicants under the previous solicitations are not required to reapply. An organization may nominate individuals from within or outside its membership. Alternatively, an individual may nominate herself or himself. Nomination packages should include a nomination form along with a cover letter or resume that documents the nominee's background and experience. Nomination forms are available on the Internet at <https://www.ocio.usda.gov/document/ad-755>.

Deadlines for other agency advisory boards:

- [Nomination Deadline: June 30, 2017 – USDA Seeks Nominations for National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee](#)
- [Nomination Deadline: June 30, 2017 – USDA Seeks Nominees for the National Watermelon Promotion Board](#)
- [Nomination Deadline: July 1, 2017 – USDA Seeks Nominees for the U.S. Potato Board](#)
- [Nomination Deadline: July 14, 2017 – USDA Seeks Nominees for American Egg Board](#)
- [Nomination Deadline: August 7, 2017 – USDA Seeks Nominees for National Organic Standards Board \(NOSB\)](#)

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## **USDA Offers Targeted Farm Loan Funding for Underserved Groups and Beginning Farmers**

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds producers that FSA offers targeted farm ownership and farm operating loans to assist underserved applicants as well as beginning farmers and ranchers.

USDA defines underserved applicants as a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic, or gender prejudice because of their identity as members of the group without regard to their individual qualities. For farm loan program purposes, targeted underserved groups are women, African Americans, American Indians and Alaskan Natives, Hispanics and Asians and Pacific Islanders.

Underserved or beginning farmers and ranchers who cannot obtain commercial credit from a bank can apply for either FSA direct loans or guaranteed loans. Direct loans are made to applicants by FSA. Guaranteed loans are made by lending institutions who arrange for FSA to guarantee the loan. FSA can guarantee up to 95 percent of the loss of principal and interest on a loan. The FSA guarantee allows lenders to make agricultural credit available to producers who do not meet the lender's normal underwriting criteria.

The direct and guaranteed loan program provides for two types of loans: farm ownership loans and farm operating loans. In addition to customary farm operating and ownership loans, FSA now offers Microloans through the direct loan program. The focus of Microloans is on the financing needs of small, beginning farmer, niche and non-traditional farm operations. Microloans are available for both ownership and operating finance needs. To learn more about microloans, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/microloans](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/microloans).

To qualify as a beginning producer, the individual or entity must meet the eligibility requirements outlined for direct or guaranteed loans. Additionally, individuals and all entity members must have operated a farm for less than 10 years. Applicants must materially or substantially participate in the operation.

For more information on FSA's farm loan programs and targeted underserved and beginning farmer guidelines, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/farmloans](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/farmloans).

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## Interest Rates and Dates to Remember

Selected Interest Rates for June 2017	
90-Day Treasury Bill	0.750
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	2.875
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	3.875
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.500
Emergency Loans	3.750
Farm Storage Facility Loans (3 years)	1.500
Farm Storage Facility Loans (5 years)	1.875
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years)	2.125
Farm Storage Facility Loans (10 years)	2.375
Farm Storage Facility Loans (12 years)	2.375
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	2.125

Dates to Remember	
May 1 – July 15	Primary Nesting Season for Missouri. No maintenance (mowing, spraying, burning or disking) on CRP acreage.
June 15	Nomination period begins for 2017 County Committee elections.
July 3	Sign up begins for 2018 coverage under the Margin Protection Program for Dairy (MPP-Dairy).
July 17	Final date to report CRP, burley tobacco, corn, cotton, grain sorghum, hybrid corn seed, popcorn, rice, soybeans & all other crops. NAP crops must be reported by the final reporting date or 15 days before harvest.
Aug. 1	Final date to request a reconstitution —combining or dividing farms or tracts of land based on the farm operation.
Aug. 1	Enrollment for 2017 ARC and PLC programs end.
Aug. 1	Last day to file County Committee nomination forms at the local FSA office.

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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).