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Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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Missouri FSA Newsletter

Missouri Farm Service Agency

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

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

Report 2018 Pasture & Forage by Nov. 15

Don't forget! November 15, 2017, is the final reporting date for 2018 pasture, forage and rangeland, as well as apiculture.

USDA Issues Farm Safety Net and Conservation Payments

USDA Farm Service Agency announced that over \$9.6 billion in payments will be made to producers through the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC), Price Loss Coverage (PLC) and Conservation Reserve (CRP) programs. The USDA is issuing approximately \$8 billion in payments under the ARC and PLC programs for the 2016 crop year, and \$1.6 billion under CRP for 2017.

The ARC and PLC programs were authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill and offer a safety net to agricultural producers when there is a substantial drop in revenue or prices for covered commodities. Over half a million producers will receive ARC payments and over a quarter million producers will receive PLC payments for 2016 crops, starting the first week of October and continuing over the next several months.

Payments are being made to producers who enrolled base acres of barley, corn, grain sorghum, lentils, oats, peanuts, dry peas, soybeans, wheat and canola. In the upcoming months, payments will be announced after marketing year average prices are published by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service for the remaining covered commodities. Those include long and medium grain rice (except for temperate Japonica rice), which will be announced in November; remaining oilseeds and chickpeas, which will be announced in December; and temperate Japonica rice,

which will be announced in early February 2018. The estimated payments are before application of sequestration and other reductions and limits, including adjusted gross income limits and payment limitations.

Also, as part of an ongoing effort to protect sensitive lands and improve water quality and wildlife habitat, USDA will begin issuing 2017 CRP payments in October to over 375,000 Americans.

Signed into law by President Reagan in 1985, CRP is one of the largest private-lands conservation program in the United States. Thanks to voluntary participation by farmers and landowners, CRP has improved water quality, reduced soil erosion and increased habitat for endangered and threatened species. In return for enrolling in CRP, USDA, through the Farm Service Agency (FSA) on behalf of the Commodity Credit Corporation, provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. Participants enter into contracts that last between 10 and 15 years. CRP payments are made to participants who remove sensitive lands from production and plant certain grasses, shrubs and trees that improve water quality, prevent soil erosion and increase wildlife habitat.

For more details regarding ARC and PLC programs, go to www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc. For more information about CRP, contact your local FSA office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov/crp.

USDA Processing Pending Conservation Reserve Program Continuous Enrollment Offers

Acceptance of Most 2018 Offers Temporarily Suspended

FSA will process many pending eligible offers for land enrollment in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and will temporarily suspend accepting most new offers until later in the 2018 fiscal year.

All current, eligible CRP continuous enrollment offers made through Sept. 30, 2017, except for those made under the Pollinator Habitat Initiative (CP42), will be approved. Additionally, FSA is temporarily suspending acceptance of most offers going forward to provide time to review CRP allocation levels, and to avoid exceeding the statutory cap of 24 million acres nationwide.

The CRP acreage cap is a provision of the 2014 Farm Bill. Current enrollment is about 23.5 million acres nationwide. USDA is accepting all pending continuous enrollment offers that were made beginning on May 4, 2017, and extending through Sept. 30, 2017, except Pollinator Habitat Initiative offers. Pollinator acreage offers are being declined because the program has met its acreage enrollment goal. Effective immediately, USDA is suspending acceptance of all new CRP continuous offers received or submitted after Sept. 30, 2017. The suspension will continue until later in the 2018 fiscal year.

However, FSA will continue to accept eligible offers for CRP Grasslands enrollment. Offers received on or after Oct. 1, 2017, are subject to fiscal year 2018 rental rates which have been adjusted to reflect current market conditions and were established after careful review of the latest USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) cash rent data.

For more information about CRP, contact your local FSA office or visit www.fsa.usda.gov/crp. To locate your local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Eligibility for Elections for the 2017 County Committee

Elections for FSA's County Committees are underway. County committee election ballots will be mailed to eligible voters on Nov. 6, 2017. The last day to return completed ballots to the USDA service center is Dec. 4, 2017.

It is important that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the USDA. Committees help with making local decisions in regard to farm programs, disaster programs and producer appeals. Check with your local county office to find out which Local Administrative Area (LAA) is up for election and who is nominated.

To be eligible to vote in the elections, a person must:

*Meet requirement one (see explanation below) **or** meet requirement two, **and** requirement three (see explanation below).*

Requirement One: Be of legal voting age and have an interest in a farm or ranch as either: an individual who meets one or more of the following; (a) is eligible to vote in one's own right, (b) is a partner of a general partnership, (c) is a member of a joint venture. **OR** an authorized representative of a legal entity, such as: (a) a corporation, estate, trust, limited partnership or other business enterprise, excluding general partnership and joint ventures (b) a state, political subdivision of a state or any state agency (only the designated representative may cast a vote for the entity).

Requirement Two: Not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm.

Requirement Three: Participates or cooperates in an FSA program that is provided by law.

For more information on eligibility to serve on FSA county committees, visit:
www.fsa.usda.gov/elections.

USDA Seeks Applications for Grants to Help Agricultural Producers and Small Rural Businesses Develop New Products

The USDA Rural Development (RD) is accepting applications for grants to help farmers, ranchers and producer-based businesses nationwide develop new product lines.

The funding is being provided through the Value-Added Producer Grant (VAPG) program. VAPG grants can be used to develop new products from raw agricultural products or promote new markets for established products. Veterans, socially-disadvantaged groups, beginning farmers and ranchers, operators of small and medium-sized family farms and ranches and farmer and rancher cooperatives are given special priority.

The deadline to submit paper applications is Jan. 31, 2018. Electronic applications submitted through grants.gov are due Jan. 24, 2018. For more information on this grant program, visit [USDA Rural Development](http://USDA.RuralDevelopment). For assistance in Missouri, call 573-876-0976.

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

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.

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.

Interest Rates and Dates to Remember

Selected Interest Rates for October 2017	
90-Day Treasury Bill	1.125
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	2.750
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	3.750
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)	1.750
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years)	2.000
Farm Storage Facility Loans (10 years)	2.125
Farm Storage Facility Loans (12 years)	2.250
Commodity Loans 1996- Present	2.250

Dates to Remember	
Oct. 31	Final date to submit applications for the Organic Certification Cost Share Program for certification costs paid Oct. 1, 2016, through Sept. 30, 2017.
Nov. 1	Final date to submit an application for payment for 2017 losses under Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-raised Fish Program (ELAP).
Nov. 6	COC election ballots mailed to eligible voters.
Nov. 10	Veterans Day Holiday (Observed). FSA offices are closed.
Nov. 15	Final date to report 2018 apiculture & pasture, rangeland & forage.
Nov. 20	NAP application closing date for apples, apricots, grapes, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums & blueberries.

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).
