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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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www.fsa.usda.gov/mo.

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

Richard Fordyce to Serve as State Executive Director for USDA's Farm Service Agency in Missouri

The Trump Administration recently appointed Richard Fordyce as the new State Executive Director (SED) for the USDA Missouri Farm Service Agency (FSA). Fordyce joined the Missouri FSA team on Monday, Nov. 13.

Fordyce was the Missouri Director of Agriculture from 2013 to 2017. He recently finished an 11-year term on the United Soybean Board and has served as chair of Missouri's Soil & Water Districts Commission from 2005 to 2013. In 1995, Fordyce served as Young Farmers Chairman for the American Farm Bureau. He and his wife, Renee, operate a row crop and commercial cattle operation in Bethany, Missouri.

As SED, Fordyce will use his leadership experience to oversee FSA programs in a customer-focused manner to ensure a safe, affordable, abundant and nutritious food supply for consumers.

2018 Acreage Reporting Dates

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit their local FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline.

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable in Missouri:

November 15, 2017
December 15, 2017
January 2, 2018

Grass certification deadline for 2018
Wheat and other fall-seeded grains
Honey

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.
- If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of “cover only,” “green manure,” “left standing,” or “seed,” then the acreage must be reported by July 15th.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact your local FSA office.

FSA Encourages Farmers and Ranchers to Vote in County Committee Elections

The 2017 Farm Service Agency County Committee Elections began on Nov. 6, when ballots were mailed to eligible voters. The deadline to return the ballots to local FSA offices is Dec. 4, 2017.

County committee members are an important component of the operations of FSA and provide a link between the agricultural community and USDA. Farmers and ranchers elected to county committees help deliver FSA programs at the local level, applying their knowledge and judgment to make decisions on commodity price support programs; conservation programs; incentive indemnity and disaster programs for some commodities; emergency programs and eligibility. FSA committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws.

To be an eligible voter, farmers and ranchers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm may also be eligible to vote.

Eligible voters in local administrative areas holding elections who do not receive a ballot can obtain one from their local USDA Service Center. Dec. 4, 2017, is the last day for voters to submit ballots in person to local USDA Service Centers. Ballots returned by mail must also be postmarked no later than Dec. 4. Newly elected committee members will take office Jan. 1, 2018.

More information on county committees, such as the new 2017 fact sheet, can be found on the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov/elections or at a local USDA Service Center.

USDA Announces Enrollment Period for Safety Net Coverage in 2018

FSA announced that starting Nov. 1, 2017, farmers and ranchers with base acres in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) safety net program may enroll for the 2018 crop year. The enrollment period will end on Aug. 1, 2018.

Since shares and ownership of a farm can change year-to-year, producers must enroll by signing a contract each program year.

The producers on a farm that are not enrolled for the 2018 enrollment period will not be eligible for financial assistance from the ARC or PLC programs for the 2018 crop should crop prices or farm revenues fall below the historical price or revenue benchmarks established by the program. Producers who made their elections in previous years must still enroll during the 2018 enrollment period.

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 prices or revenues for covered commodities. Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium grain rice (which includes short grain and sweet rice), safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat. Upland cotton is no longer a covered commodity. For more details regarding these programs, go to www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc.

For more information, producers are encouraged to visit their local FSA office. To find a local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Margin Protection Program for Dairy Enrollment Deadline is Dec. 15

The deadline for dairy producers to enroll in the Margin Protection Program (MPP) for Dairy is Dec. 15, 2017. This voluntary dairy safety net 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. A USDA web tool, available at www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool, allows dairy producers to calculate levels of coverage available from MPP based on price projections. Visit your local FSA office for more information about changes for the 2018 program year.

USDA Can Help You Make Your Farm, Ranch or Small Business More Profitable

USDA is offering grants and loan guarantees to help rural businesses and agricultural producers reduce their energy costs and consumption.

The funding is being provided through USDA Rural Development's Rural Energy for America Program (REAP). Loans and grants are available to farmers and rural businesses for installing renewable energy systems or energy efficiency improvements.

Renewable energy systems include solar, wind, geothermal, anaerobic digesters, and renewable biomass.

Energy efficiency improvements include grain drying and handling, lighting, refrigeration, facility improvements (such as adding insulation or replacing windows), heating and cooling upgrades, motor replacements and automated control upgrades.

Grants of up to 25 percent of a project's total costs are available. The maximum grants are \$250,000 for energy efficiency improvements and \$500,000 for renewable energy systems.

Loan guarantees of up to 75 percent of a project's total costs are available. The minimum loan is \$5,000. The maximum loan is \$25 million.

In 2017, Missouri received more than \$962,000 in REAP grant funds for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects on farms and small businesses.

The next grant application deadline is **April 2, 2018**. Guaranteed loan applications will be reviewed on a monthly basis.

More information on REAP is available at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/mo> or contact the Rural Development state office at (573) 876-9321 or email nathan.tutt@mo.usda.gov.

Malted Grains and Maple Syrup Eligible for Farm Storage Facility Loans

Malted small grains and maple syrup are now eligible for Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL) through the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).

FSFLs provide low-interest financing to producers to build or upgrade storage facilities and to purchase portable (new or used) structures, equipment and storage and handling trucks.

The eligible commodities have been expanded to include malted small grains and maple syrup. Eligible malted small grains include barley, oats, rice, rye and wheat. Maple sap is used to produce maple syrup.

The low-interest funds can be used for:

- bottler or filling systems for maple syrup, excluding containers
- equipment to improve, maintain, or monitor the quality of stored FSFL commodities, such as cleaners, moisture testers, heat detectors, along with a proposed storage facility
- handling and drying equipment determined by the County Committee to be needed and essential to the proper functioning of a storage system
- electrical equipment, such as pumps, lighting, motors, and wiring, integral to the proper operation of the storage and handling equipment, excluding installing electric service to the electrical meter.

FSFLs are not available for the actual processing of the small grain into the malted commodity or maple sap into maple syrup. Additionally, purchased commodities are not eligible for FSFLs.

The following storage and handling equipment is ineligible for FSFLs:

- boiling equipment
- feed handling and processing equipment
- production and feed facilities
- structures of a temporary nature not having a useful life of the term of the loan
- maple sap tubing and pumping systems.

Loans up to \$50,000 can be secured by a promissory note/security agreement. Loans exceeding \$100,000 require additional security.

Producers do not need to demonstrate the lack of commercial credit availability to apply. The loans are designed to assist a diverse range of farming operations, including small and mid-sized businesses, new farmers, operations supplying local food and farmers markets, non-traditional farm products, and underserved producers.

To learn more about the FSA Farm Storage Facility Loan, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport or contact your local FSA office.

USDA Announces Streamlined Guaranteed Loans and Additional Lender Category for Small-Scale Operators

Options Help More Beginning, Small and Urban Producers Gain Access to Credit

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced the availability of a streamlined version of USDA guaranteed loans, which are tailored for smaller scale farms and urban producers. The program, called EZ Guarantee Loans, uses a simplified application process to help beginning, small, underserved and family farmers and ranchers apply for loans of up to \$100,000 from USDA-approved lenders to purchase farmland or finance agricultural operations.

A new category of lenders will join traditional lenders, such as banks and credit unions, in offering USDA EZ Guarantee Loans. Microlenders, which include Community Development Financial Institutions and Rural Rehabilitation Corporations, will be able to offer their customers up to \$50,000 of EZ Guaranteed Loans, helping to reach urban areas and underserved producers. Banks, credit unions and other traditional USDA-approved lenders, can offer customers up to \$100,000 to help with agricultural operation costs.

EZ Guarantee Loans offer low interest rates and terms up to seven years for financing operating expenses and 40 years for financing the purchase of farm real estate. USDA-approved lenders can issue these loans with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) guaranteeing the loan up to 95 percent.

More information about the available types of FSA farm loans can be found at www.fsa.usda.gov/farmloans or by contacting your local FSA office.

Interest Rates and Dates to Remember

Selected Interest Rates for November 2017	
90-Day Treasury Bill	.125%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	2.750%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	3.625%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency Loans	3.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (3 years)	1.625%
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	2.375%

Dates to Remember	
Nov. 20	NAP application closing date for apples, apricots, grapes, nectarines, peaches, pears, plums and blueberries.
Nov. 23	Thanksgiving Day Holiday. USDA offices are closed.
Nov. 20	NAP application closing date for honey.
Dec. 4	Last day to postmark or return voted ballots for the County Committee election to the FSA county office.
Dec. 15	Final date to report fall barley, fall wheat & all other fall-seeded small grains.
Dec. 15	Deadline for enrollment for 2018 coverage in the Margin Protection Program (MPP-Dairy).

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).