

March 2018



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

# NEWSLETTER

*GovDelivery*

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## Missouri FSA Newsletter

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### Missouri Farm Service Agency

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[www.fsa.usda.gov/mo](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mo)

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Julie Hurst - Chair  
Marc Allison  
Cindy Schroeder  
Will Spargo  
Barbara Wilson

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.

### Upcoming Deadlines and Important Dates to Remember

Producers are reminded that the crop sales deadline for 2018 Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage is **March 15**. This deadline applies to forage, pasture and most fruits and vegetables. Eligible producers can file an application, pay the applicable service fees and complete acreage reports at their local county FSA office. For more information, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/nap](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/nap).

The deadline for Marketing Assistance Loans (MAL) and Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP) for 2017 wheat, barley, canola, crambe, flaxseed, honey, oats, rapeseed and sesame is **March 31**. MALs provide producers interim financing after harvest to help them meet cash flow needs without having to sell their commodities when market prices are typically at harvest-time lows. A producer who is eligible to obtain an MAL, but agrees to forgo the loan, may obtain an LDP if such a payment is available.

For a full listing of program deadlines, NAP sales closing dates, observed holidays, and more, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/mo](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mo).

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### There's Still Time to Respond to the Census of Agriculture

If you received a Census questionnaire in the mail, please respond! Even if you don't consider yourself a farmer, the Census is "Your

Voice. Your Future. Your Opportunity.” You should return the form as soon as possible!

The Census of Agriculture is the only chance for all farms, including non-traditional farms, to be represented down to the county level. It’s not just big farms, or row crops! Farms that produce hay, horses, cattle, honey, vegetables, fruits or nuts should all respond to the Census of Agriculture. Land owners who lease their land out, renters, greenhouse growers, urban farmers, and anyone who received a Census form should ALL fill out and return their 2017 Census form.

So if you have received the 2017 Census of Agriculture, please respond. All individual responses are confidential by law, and exempt from the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Your confidentiality is important to us! You can respond online at [www.agcounts.usda.gov](http://www.agcounts.usda.gov).

Through the Census of Agriculture, producers can show the nation the immense value and importance of agriculture, and they can help influence the decisions that will shape the future of American agriculture for years to come.

The Census of Agriculture is the responsibility of every individual regardless of the size or type of operation. For Census of Agriculture purposes, a farm is any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the Census year.

If you need assistance to complete your form, please call toll-free 888-424-7828.

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## Wetland Mitigation Banks

Producers participating in programs administered by the USDA are required to abide by certain conditions on any land owned or farmed that is considered a wetland. To maintain compliance with wetland conservation provisions, producers must agree, by certifying on form AD-1026, they will not plant an agricultural commodity on a converted wetland or convert a wetland to produce an agricultural commodity.

USDA conservation compliance requires any farmer who converts a wetland for commodity production to offset that loss through mitigation to maintain eligibility for USDA benefits.

Wetland mitigation banks allow farmers to remove or alter wetlands in their fields in exchange for purchasing credits in a mitigation bank. The credits correspond to an area of the mitigation bank that at least equals the size of the altered field wetlands. The price of the credits is negotiated between the buyer and seller.

There are 10 wetland mitigation banks in the nation, including one in Missouri. To learn more about purchasing credits in a mitigation bank, contact your local USDA service center or find your local NRCS field office at <https://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>.

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## Reporting Wind Turbines Constructed on Cropland

Producers who have wind turbines constructed on their farms should notify the local Farm Service Agency office. Any area that is no longer considered suitable as cropland (producing annual or perennial crops) should be designated in FSA’s records and aerial photography maps. When base acres on a farm are converted to a non-agricultural commercial or industrial use, the total base acres on the farm must be reduced accordingly. Non-cropland areas used for wind turbines might

impact payments calculated using base acres, such as Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC).

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## CRP Participants Must Maintain Approved Cover on Acreages Enrolled in CRP and Farm Programs

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) participants are responsible for ensuring adequate, approved vegetative and practice cover is maintained to control erosion throughout the life of the contract after the practice has been established. Participants must also control undesirable vegetation, weeds (including noxious weeds), insects and rodents that may pose a threat to existing cover or adversely impact other landowners in the area.

All CRP maintenance activities, such as mowing, burning, disking and spraying, must be conducted outside the primary nesting or brood rearing season for wildlife, which for Missouri is May 1 through July 15. However, spot treatment of the acreage may be allowed during the primary nesting or brood rearing season if, left untreated, the weeds, insects or undesirable species would adversely impact the approved cover. In this instance, spot treatment is limited to the affected areas in the field and requires County Committee approval prior to beginning the spot treatment. The County Committee will consult with NRCS to determine if such activities are needed to maintain the approved cover.

Annual mowing of CRP for generic weed control, or for cosmetic purposes, is prohibited at all times.

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## Using FSA Direct Farm Ownership Loans for Construction

The USDA Farm Service Agency's (FSA) [Direct Farm Ownership loans](#) are a resource to help farmers and ranchers become owner-operators of family farms, improve and expand current operations, increase agricultural productivity, and assist with land tenure to save farmland for future generations.

Depending on the applicant's needs, there are three types of Direct Farm Ownership Loans: regular, down payment and joint financing. FSA also offers a [Direct Farm Ownership Microloan](#) option for smaller financial needs up to \$50,000.

Amongst other purposes, Direct Farm Ownership Loans can be used to construct, purchase or improve farm dwellings, service buildings or other facilities and improvements essential to an operation.

To do this, applicants must provide FSA with an estimate of the total cost of all planned development that completely describe the work, prior to loan approval and must show proof of sufficient funds to pay for the total cost of all planned development at or before loan closing. In some instances, applicants may be asked to provide certified plans, specifications or contract documents. The applicant cannot incur any debts for materials or labor or make any expenditures for development purposes prior to loan closing with the expectation of being reimbursed from FSA funds.

Construction and development work may be performed either by the contract method or the borrower method. Under the contract method, construction and development contractors perform work according to a written contract with the applicant or borrower. An applicant for a direct loan to

finance a construction project must obtain a surety bond that guarantees both payment and performance in the amount of the construction contract from a construction contractor.

A surety bond is required when a contract exceeds \$100,000, an authorized agency official determines that a surety bond appears advisable to protect the borrower against default of the contractor or a contract provides for partial payments in excess of the amount of 60 percent of the value of the work in place.

Under the borrower method, the applicant or borrower will perform the construction and development work. The borrower method may only be used when the authorized agency official determines, based on information from the applicant, that the applicant possesses or arranges to obtain the necessary skill and managerial ability to complete the work satisfactorily and that such work will not interfere with the applicant's farming operation or work schedule.

Potential applicants should visit with FSA early in the initial project planning process to ensure environmental compliance.

For more eligibility requirements and information about FSA Loan programs, contact your local FSA office or visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov). To find your local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

## Interest Rates and Dates to Remember

Selected Interest Rates for March 2018	
90-Day Treasury Bill	1.25%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	3.25%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	3.75%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency Loans	3.75%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (3 years)	2.25%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (5 years)	2.50%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years)	2.75%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (10 years)	2.75%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (12 years)	2.75%
Commodity Loans 1996- Present	2.875%

Dates to Remember	
Mar. 15	NAP application closing date for many NAP crops, including forage and pasture.
Mar. 31	Final availability date for 2017 MALs & LDPs for small grains & honey.
May 1	NAP application closing date for ornamental nursery for subsequent year.
May 1	Beginning of primary nesting season for Missouri. No maintenance (mowing, spraying, burning or disking) on CRP acreage.
May 15	Final date to report spring oats & potatoes.