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Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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West Virginia FSA Newsletter

**West Virginia
Farm Service Agency
1550 Earl Core Road
Morgantown, WV 26505**

www.fsa.usda.gov/wv

State Executive

**Director: Roger
D. Dahmer**

State Committee: Andrea
Lambert, Chair Lois Alt
Russell Linger III Rocky Peck
Sarah Wayne

Please contact your local FSA
Office for questions specific to
your operation or county

USDA Issues Safety-Net and Conservation Payments to West Virginia Farmers

USDA West Virginia Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced that approximately \$422,972 will be paid to West Virginia farms that enrolled in Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) for 2017 market downturns. Additionally, West Virginia FSA will distribute \$474,728 in Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) rental payments to landowners for their commitment to conservation stewardship.

PLC payments have triggered for 2017 barley, canola, corn, grain sorghum, wheat and other crops. In the next few months payments will be triggered for rice, chickpeas, sunflower seeds, flaxseed, mustard seed, rapeseed, safflower, crambe, and sesame seed. Producers with bases enrolled in ARC for 2017 crops can visit www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc for updated crop yields, prices, revenue and payment rates. In West Virginia, 35 counties have experienced a drop in price and/or revenues below the benchmark price established by the ARC or PLC programs and will receive payments.

ARC and PLC payments by county can vary because average county yields will differ.

Also, this week, USDA will begin issuing 2018 CRP payments to support voluntary conservation efforts on private lands. In West Virginia, 526 landowners will receive compensation for their efforts to improve water quality, reduce soil erosion and improve wildlife habitat.

For more information about USDA programs or to locate the nearest USDA Service Center, visit www.farmers.gov.

USDA Offers Secure, Convenient Online Business Options

Farmers, Ranchers and Foresters Encouraged to Sign-In/Sign-Up

Farmers, ranchers and agricultural producers in West Virginia have new online options to access U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs. Through USDA's new streamlined process producers can now register, track and manage their applications for the Market Facilitation Program (MFP) and 2017 Wildfires Hurricanes Indemnity Program (2017 WHIP) on the secure and convenient <https://www.farmers.gov/sign-in>.

MFP and 2017 WHIP are administered by FSA and are currently available on the <https://www.farmers.gov/sign-in>. To apply and manage their applications online, producers first need to sign up for the *Level 2 eAuthentication* access. Enrolling is a two-step process. For producers who do not already have an account can register for an account at www.eauth.usda.gov. After creating the account, customers receive a confirmation email with instructions for identity verification. Identity verification can be completed online or by presenting a government issued photo ID in person at a USDA service center.

In addition to the programs available through the farmers.gov portal, other programs offered by FSA can be managed at the [Online Services page](#) with the same eAuthentication credentials.

Individual producers have many options available for conducting business online with USDA agencies including FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Risk Management Agency (RMA). Online tools such as the NRCS [Conservation Client Gateway](#) offer customers added flexibility and a secure web portal to track payments, report completed practices, request assistance, and sign documents. Level 2 eAuthentication access is not yet available for entities, but it is available for individuals.

To learn more about conducting business with USDA online and to locate the nearest USDA service center, visit www.farmers.gov.

2019 Acreage Reporting Dates

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

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for West Virginia:

November 15, 2018	Perennial Forage
December 15, 2018	Fall-Seeded Small Grains
January 2, 2019	Honey
January 15, 2019	Apples, Peaches
July 15, 2019	All Other Crops
September 30, 2019	Value-Loss and Controlled Environment Crops

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 the local County FSA office.

Beginning Farmer Loans

FSA assists beginning farmers to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county’s average size farm.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at your local USDA Service Center. You may also visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

USDA Market Facilitation Program

USDA launched the trade mitigation package aimed at assisting farmers suffering from damage due to unjustified trade retaliation by foreign nations. Producers of certain commodities can now sign up for the Market Facilitation Program (MFP).

USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) will administer MFP to provide payments to corn, cotton, dairy, hog, sorghum, soybean, wheat, shelled almond, and fresh sweet cherry producers. An announcement about further payments will be made in the coming months, if warranted.

The sign-up period for MFP runs through Jan. 15, 2019, with information and instructions provided at www.farmers.gov/mfp. MFP provides payments to producers of eligible commodities who have been

significantly impacted by actions of foreign governments resulting in the loss of traditional exports. 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.

For a list of initial MFP payments rates, view the [MFP Fact Sheet](#).

MFP payments are limited to a combined \$125,000 for corn, cotton, sorghum, soybeans, wheat, shelled almonds, and fresh sweet cherries capped per person or legal entity. MFP payments are also limited to a combined \$125,000 for dairy and hog producers. Applicants must also have an average adjusted gross income 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.

USDA Encourages Producers to Consider NAP Risk Protection Coverage before Crop Sales Deadlines

The Farm Service Agency encourages producers to examine available USDA crop risk protection options, including federal crop insurance and Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage, before the applicable crop sales deadline.

Producers are reminded that crops not covered by insurance may be eligible for NAP. Beginning, underserved and limited resource farmers are now eligible for free catastrophic level coverage.

Federal crop insurance covers crop losses from natural adversities such as drought, hail and excessive moisture. NAP covers losses from natural disasters on crops for which no permanent federal crop insurance program is available, including perennial grass forage and grazing crops, fruits, vegetables, mushrooms, floriculture, ornamental nursery, aquaculture, turf grass, ginseng, honey, syrup, bioenergy, and industrial crops.

Producers can determine if crops are eligible for federal crop insurance or NAP by visiting <https://webapp.rma.usda.gov/apps/ActuarialInformationBrowser2018/CropCriteria.aspx>.

NAP basic coverage is available at 55 percent of the average market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of expected production.

Deadlines for coverage vary by state and crop. To learn more about NAP visit www.fsa.usda.gov/nap or contact your local USDA Service Center. To find your local USDA Service Centers go to <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Federal crop insurance coverage is sold and delivered solely through private insurance agents. Agent lists are available at all USDA Service Centers or at USDA's online Agent Locator:

<http://prodwebnlb.rma.usda.gov/apps/AgentLocator/#>. Producers can use the USDA Cost Estimator, <https://ewebapp.rma.usda.gov/apps/costestimator/Default.aspx>, to predict insurance premium costs.

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).