

September 2017



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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North Dakota FSA e-News

North Dakota Farm Service Agency

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Marcy Svenningsen, Chairperson
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Feeling Overwhelmed? FirstLink Offers Resources to Help

Help is available if you, or someone you know, is in need of emotional support as a result of the drought. You are not alone and help is as easy as dialing 2-1-1. The FirstLink Helpline provides confidential listening and support on a variety of topics, including financial assistance and mental health support. For help, or to connect to available resources, dial the 24-hour helpline at 2-1-1 or 701-235-7335 (SEEK). The 24-Hour Suicide Lifeline is 800-273-8255 (TALK). Find FirstLink online at <http://myfirstlink.org/services/2-1-1-helpline/>.

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Lucy Matejcek, Member

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Find Your Local Office:

<http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>

Livestock Forage Losses

Producers with land physically located in the following counties are eligible to apply for 2017 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) benefits on small grain for grazing, native pasture, improved pasture, forage sorghum for grazing:

Adams, Billings, Bowman, Burke, Burleigh, Dickey, Divide, Dunn, Emmons, Golden Valley, Grant, Hettinger, Kidder, LaMoure, Logan, McHenry, McIntosh, McKenzie, McLean, Mercer, Morton, Mountrail, Oliver, Pierce, Renville, Sheridan, Sioux, Slope, Stark, Ward and Williams.

LFP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers who suffer grazing losses for covered livestock due to drought on privately owned or cash leased land or fire on federally managed land.

Eligible livestock producers must complete a CCC-853 and the required supporting documentation no later than January 30, 2018 for 2017 losses. In addition to the LFP application, the livestock producer must also have a timely filed 2017 acreage report for all interests in grazing lands. The deadline to file a 2017 acreage report for grazing lands is November 15, 2017.

Additional Information about LFP, including eligible livestock and fire criteria, is available at your local FSA office or online at: www.fsa.usda.gov.

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Dairy Producers Can Enroll for 2018 Coverage

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) today announced that starting Sept. 1, 2017, dairy producers can enroll for 2018 coverage in the Margin Protection Program (MPP-Dairy). Secretary Sonny Perdue has utilized additional flexibility this year by providing dairy producers the option of opting out of the program for 2018.

To opt out, a producer should not sign up during the annual registration period. By opting out, a producer would not receive any MPP-Dairy benefits if payments are triggered for 2018. Full details will be included in a subsequent Federal Register Notice. The decision would be for 2018 only and is not retroactive.

The voluntary 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.

MPP-Dairy gives participating dairy producers the flexibility to select coverage levels best suited for their operation. Enrollment ends on Dec. 15, 2017, for coverage in calendar year 2018. Participating farmers will remain in the program through Dec. 31, 2018, and pay a minimum \$100 administrative fee for 2018 coverage. Producers have the option of selecting a different coverage level from the previous coverage year during open enrollment.

Dairy operations enrolling in the program must meet conservation compliance provisions and cannot participate in the Livestock Gross Margin Dairy Insurance Program. Producers can mail the appropriate form to the producer's administrative county FSA office, along with applicable fees, without necessitating a trip to the local FSA office. If electing higher coverage for 2018, dairy producers can either pay the premium in full at the time of enrollment or pay 100 percent of the premium by Sept. 1, 2018. Premium fees may be paid directly to FSA or producers can work with their milk handlers to remit premiums on their behalf.

USDA has a web tool to help producers determine the level of coverage under the MPP-Dairy that will provide them with the strongest safety net under a variety of conditions. The online resource, available at www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool, allows dairy farmers to quickly and easily combine unique operation data and other key variables to calculate their coverage needs based on price projections. Producers can also review historical data or estimate future coverage based on data projections. The secure site can be accessed via computer, Smartphone, tablet or any other platform, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

For more information, visit FSA online at www.fsa.usda.gov/dairy or stop by a local FSA office to learn more about the MPP-Dairy.

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Report CRP Acres Hayed or Grazed Authorized for Emergency or Managed Hay/Graze

The deadline to hay CRP under emergency provisions was August 31, 2017. Producers are to report the actual acres hayed within 10 calendar days to the local FSA Office.

The deadline to hay CRP under managed provisions was September 1, 2017. Producers are to report the actual acres hayed within 10 calendar days to the local FSA Office.

If the CRP acres were authorized for emergency or managed grazing, the deadline to remove the livestock is the earlier of September 30, 2017 or the day identified on the grazing plan. These acres must also be reported to the local FSA office within days after removing the livestock.

For more information contact your local FSA County Office.

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Early Land Prep for CRP Contracts Expiring September 30, 2017

CRP participants may receive authorization to begin seedbed preparation for a fall or spring-seeded crops during the final year of the CRP contract. This provision applies to acreage enrolled in certain CRP practices. Participants should contact the County FSA Office to determine eligibility. Participants will also have to revise their Conservation Plan of Operations at the NRCS office and receive approval from FSA prior to destruction of the cover.

Participants who are preparing for a fall or spring seeded crop may physically destroy cover beginning August 2 of the final year. The annual rental payment will assessed a payment reduction from the date the authorization is approved. Furthermore, if the cover is grazed or mechanically harvested prior to destruction, an additional payment reduction will be applied.

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Emergency Livestock Assistance Program

Producers with land physically located in the following counties are eligible to apply for 2017 Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP) benefits for costs incurred for hauling water to eligible livestock:

Adams, Billings, Bowman, Burke, Burleigh, Dickey, Divide, Dunn, Emmons, Golden Valley, Grant, Hettinger, Kidder, LaMoure, Logan, McHenry, McIntosh, McKenzie, McLean, Mercer, Morton, Mountrail, Oliver, Renville, Sheridan, Sioux, Slope, Stark, Ward and Williams.

Livestock producers who are hauling water to livestock may be eligible for assistance under the Emergency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP). Producers must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA Office within 30 days of starting to haul water. Producers should also keep good records of the method used to transport the water, the number of gallons of water hauled, and the number and kind of livestock watered as well as the number of days water was hauled. Please note that water being hauled to CRP acres grazed under Emergency Grazing provisions is not eligible for this program.

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Call Before You Dig

No, FSA is not part of the Utility Notification calling tree. However, if there should be any earthwork, demolition or clearing of land that could potentially become part of a FSA funded project, eligibility could be impacted if someone doesn't "call before they dig".

All federally funded projects fall under NEPA (National Environmental Protection Act) policy, and if any part of a proposed project involves ground disturbance or building alteration/construction, such as building a grain handling facility, etc, FSA must complete an environmental review before the project is initiated to ensure eligibility. The environmental review will determine if the proposed project will have an impact to any cultural resources, historical buildings/sites, wetlands, etc. Far too often there has been earthwork, building demolition, tree clearing, etc, conducted before the applicant visits the FSA office to inquire about program eligibility. If this should happen, the project will not be funded, so call before there is any digging, destruction or clearing of land.

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Marketing Assistance Loans

USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation makes available nonrecourse marketing assistance loans on certain crop year 2017 commodities. These loans can be requested via mail, fax, or in person by properly completing the loan application (CCC-666). Loan applications are available at all county FSA offices and online at: <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/eForms/>

A commodity loan application must be filed at the county office that maintains the farm records for the farm that produced the commodity for the loan. The 2017 crop commodity loan rates are available at any county FSA office, or online at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov> and clicking on the "Price Support" link.

Lien searches are required for all applicants and spouses in order to identify prior lien holders. County Offices update CCC-10's by verifying an individual's name according to their driver's license. Lien waivers are required from all lien holders before the commodity loan can be disbursed.

To be eligible for loan the commodity must meet the applicable commodity definition in the Official United States Standards and specific commodity eligibility requirements for a nonrecourse loan. Test weight and moisture levels can impact the eligibility for nonrecourse loans. If there are known

quality problems producers should contact their local county FSA office to discuss available loan options.

Farm-stored loans are available in approved storage structures that provide safe storage for the commodity through the maturity date of the loan.

Warehouse-stored loans are also available at CCC-approved storage warehouses or State licensed warehouses which have been assigned a CCC warehouse code. Proof of storage paid through the loan maturity date and proof of payment of in-charges must be provided with the warehouse receipt for the warehouse stored loan. CCC will not adjust the loan rate using premiums and discounts at the time of loan making. However, loan rates will be adjusted if the loan is forfeited to CCC at maturity.

Loans mature on demand, but no later than the last day of the ninth calendar month after the month in which the loan was disbursed.

Producers requesting commodity loans are required to maintain beneficial interest in the commodity tendered for loan. Beneficial interest includes having control and title in the commodity. Loss of any one element causes loss of beneficial interest. Sales agreements, including options to purchase, priced later and contracts for future delivery can impact beneficial interest. Once beneficial interest is lost, the commodity remains ineligible for loan or LDP, even if the producer regains control or title at a later date.

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Commodity Loan Repayments

Outstanding commodity loans from crop year 2016 can be repaid at any time at principal plus interest. If the sales proceeds are needed to repay the loan, a marketing authorization (CCC-681-1) can be requested. The request can either be made in person or by telephone. The marketing authorization allow for the selection of a delivery period to the buyer of either 15 or 30 calendar days. Marketing Authorizations which are requested after loan maturity date are limited to a delivery period of 15 days. All parties who signed the note are responsible for repaying the loan. If the buyer does not repay the loan as required by the marketing authorization, CCC will make demand for repayment on the producers who signed the note. Repayment of quantities delivered to the buyer are required within 15 days of the expiration date of the marketing authorization.

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Late-Filed Acreage Reports

The deadline for timely filing an acreage report in North Dakota for spring-seeded crops for the 2017 program year was July 17, 2017. Acreage reports must be filed for all cropland on the farm before any 2017 ARC/PLC payments can be made or before eligibility can be established for marketing assistance loans and LDP's. Additionally, participants of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) must report the specific acreage for which benefits are being requested.

Producers seeking eligibility for the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) in eligible Counties, must have a 2017 acreage report on file for all grazing land. Producers who failed to timely report their grazing acres by the November 15, 2016 deadline for 2017 program year **must** complete a late-filed acreage report within one year of the missed deadline or prior to November 15, 2017. No extensions to the one year reporting deadline for late-filed acreage reports for grazing acreage shall be authorized. Contact your local county office for additional information relative to late-filed acreage reports.

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Highly Erodible Land and Wetland Conservation Compliance

Landowners and operators are reminded that in order to receive payments, compliance with Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions are required. Farmers with HEL soils need to be aware of tillage, crop residue, and rotation requirements as specified in your conservation plan. Contact NRCS if you have any questions about your conservation plan. Don't wait until after you plowed the ground to find out you are out of compliance. Also, it is very important that you contact our office before modifying (tiling, draining, dredging, filling or leveling) any wetland or drainage ditch. Failure to obtain advance approval for any of these situations can result in a loss of all Federal payments.

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2017 Crop – NAP Notice of Loss

The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. Timely filing a Notice of Loss is required for all crops including grasses. For losses on crops covered by the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), you must file a CCC-576, Notice of Loss, in the FSA County Office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent or 15 calendar days after the normal harvest date. In addition, if a producer is going to abandon a crop with NAP coverage, the crop must be appraised prior to destruction of the acreage to ensure coverage. Producers with NAP coverage on grazing land should also file a notice of loss if they have suffered a loss in grazing capacity on pastures.

Producers of hand-harvested crops must notify FSA of damage or loss through the administrative County Office within 72 hours of the date of damage or loss first becomes apparent. This notification can be provided by filing a CCC-576, email, fax or phone. Producers who notify the County Office by any method other than by filing the CCC-576 are still required to file a CCC-576, Notice of Loss, within the required 15 calendar days.

If filing for prevented planting, an acreage report and CCC-576 must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

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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.

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.

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Calendar Deadlines

Important Upcoming Dates and Deadlines

July 1 through September 30, 2017 - MPP-Dairy registration and cover election period

September 30, 2017 - 2018 Rye, Rhubarb, and Asparagus NAP Coverage deadline

November 15, 2017 - 2018 Perennial and Other Forage NAP Coverage deadline

November 15, 2017 - Acreage Reporting Deadline for Fall-Seeded Small Grains, Apiculture, and PRF/Perennial Forage for program year 2018.

November 15, 2017 - Final date to late-file an acreage report for the 2017 program year for Fall-Seeded Small Grains, Apiculture, and PRF/Perennial Forage.

December 1, 2017 - 2018 Honey NAP Coverage deadline

September 2017 Loan and Interest Rates

Commodity Loans – **2.250%**

Operating Loans – **2.750%**

Farm Ownership and Conservation Loans – **3.750%**

Farm Ownership-Joint Financing – **2.500%**

Emergency - Amount of Actual Loss - **3.750%**

Farm Ownership-Down Payment Loans – **1.500%**

Farm Storage Facility Loan, 3-Year – **1.500%**

Farm Storage Facility Loan, 5-Year – **1.750%**

Farm Storage Facility Loan, 7-Year – **2.125%**

Farm Storage Facility Loan, 10-Year – **2.250%**

Farm Storage Facility Loan, 12-Year – **2.375%**

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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).

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