

April 2017



Farm Service Agency

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## Delaware FSA Newsletter

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### Delaware Farm Service Agency

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#### State Executive Director:

Robin Talley, acting

#### DE State Executive Committee:

Dale Scuse

### USDA Farm Service Agency Offers Text Alerts to Delaware Producers

*Subscribers Can Receive Important Program Reminders and Updates*

Delaware USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced that farmers in Delaware now can receive notifications from their county office through text messages on their cell phone.

Whether producers are in the field, on a tractor or even on horseback, this service enables FSA customers and stakeholders to receive notifications while on the go. Producers will receive text messages regarding important program deadlines, reporting requirements, outreach events and updates.

Robert Baker

(Open)

Please contact your local [FSA Office](#) for questions specific to your operation or county.

#### **Selected Interest Rates for April 2017**

- Farm Operating Loans — Direct - 2.875%
- Farm Ownership Loans — Direct - 4.00%
- Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment - 1.50%
- Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 yr. term) - 2.250%
- Commodity Loans – 2.000%

Producers can text:

New Castle County = **DENEWCASTLE**

Kent County = **DEKENT**

Sussex County = **DESUSSEX**

to **FSANOW (372-669)** to subscribe to text message alerts. Standard text messaging rates apply. Contact your wireless carrier for details associated with your particular data plan. Participants may unsubscribe at any time.

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## **2017 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.

November 15 - perennial forage/grasses, alfalfa

December 15 - wheat, barley and other fall-planted small grains

### **May 15 - green peas, potatoes**

May 31 - nursery crops

July 15 - soybeans, corn, sweet corn, lima beans, watermelons, cucumbers planted 4/10 - 6/25, CRP, cover crops, all other crops

August 15 - green beans, cucumbers planted 6/26 - 8/10 in Kent and Sussex

September 30 - spinach

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## **CRP Participants Must Maintain Approved Cover on Acreages Enrolled in CRP and the 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 Delaware is April 15

through August 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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## Breaking New Ground

Agricultural producers are reminded to consult with FSA and NRCS before breaking out new ground for production purposes as doing so without prior authorization may put a producer's federal farm program benefits in jeopardy. This is especially true for land that must meet Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions.

Producers with HEL determined soils are required to apply tillage, crop residue and rotational requirements as specified in their conservation plan.

Producers should notify FSA as a first point of contact prior to conducting land clearing or drainage type projects to ensure the proposed actions meet compliance criteria such as clearing any trees to create new cropland, then these areas will need to be reviewed to ensure such work will not risk your eligibility for benefits.

Landowners and operators complete the form AD-1026 - Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification to identify the proposed action and allow FSA to determine whether a referral to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for further review is necessary.

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## Farm Storage Facility Loans

FSA's Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program provides 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 low-interest funds can be used to build or upgrade permanent facilities to store commodities. Eligible commodities include corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, oats, wheat, barley, harvested as whole grain, hay, honey, fruits, nuts and vegetables for cold storage facilities, floriculture, hops, rye, milk, cheese, butter, yogurt, meat and poultry (unprocessed), eggs, and aquaculture (excluding systems that maintain live animals through uptake and discharge of water). Qualified facilities include grain bins, hay barns and cold storage facilities for eligible commodities.

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](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport)

## Communication is Key in Lending

Farm Service Agency (FSA) is committed to providing our farm loan borrowers the tools necessary to be a success. A part of ensuring this success is providing guidance and counsel from the loan application process through the borrower's graduation to commercial lending institutions. While it is FSA's commitment to advise borrowers as they identify goals and evaluate progress, it is crucial for borrowers to communicate with their farm loan staff when changes occur. It is the borrower's responsibility to alert FSA to any of the following:

Any proposed or significant changes in the farming operation;

Any significant changes to family income or expenses;

The development of problem situations;

Any losses or proposed significant changes in security

In addition, if a farm loan borrower cannot make payments to suppliers, other creditors, or FSA on time, contact your farm loan staff immediately to discuss loan servicing options.

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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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