

September 2015



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Washington FSA Newsletter

Washington Farm Service Agency

316 W. Boone, Ste. 568
Spokane, WA 99201-2350

www.fsa.usda.gov/wa

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Please contact your [local FSA office](#) for questions specific to your operation

Drought and Wildfire Assistance Available from FSA

Washington's farmers and ranchers affected by this year's devastating drought and wildfires may receive financial relief from the Farm Service Agency. Financial relief may be made in the form of [emergency loans](#), cost-share payments or specific program payments. If you have experienced losses or damage to crops or livestock, you are encouraged to report your losses as soon as they become apparent to your [local FSA office](#).

Documentation when applying for federal farm programs helps ensure integrity of the programs so that FSA can continue to offer them. Pictures are helpful and even third-party verifications. Local FSA staff can help with questions about documentation. Consider the following when documenting losses:

- Documentation of the number and kind of livestock that have died, supplemented if possible by photographs or video records of ownership and losses;
- Dates of death supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts;
- Feed purchases if supplies or grazing pastures are destroyed; and
- Crop records, including seed and fertilizer purchases, planting and production records.
- Notification that you are prohibited from grazing the normal permitted livestock on

or county.

the federally managed rangeland because of the fire (for LFP).

- Pasture/range acres count
- Copies of any and all leases

Livestock Producers

Livestock producers may be eligible to receive financial compensation for livestock death under the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP). Eligible livestock include: adult cattle, buffalo and beefalo, deer, elk, equine, sheep, alpacas, emus, swine, goats, llamas, and poultry. Livestock must be part of a commercial farm operation.

Payment rates are on a per-head basis. FSA makes payments of 75 percent of the fair market value of the livestock to livestock owners.

Honeybee producers may be eligible for payments to help replace hives under the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-raised Fish Program (ELAP).

Additionally, FSA provides financial compensation for forage and pasture losses under the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP) or the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-raised Fish Program (ELAP). The primary difference is whether wildfire losses occurred on federally managed lands or on private land. If on private land, you may qualify for ELAP; if on federally managed lands, you may apply for LFP. Land initially harvested mechanically and later intended for grazing will not be eligible for LFP benefits.

The Livestock Forage Program is also available for drought-related losses on private land in most of the counties in the state. Check with your local Farm Service Agency office or the agency's website at www.fsa.usda.gov/wa. ELAP payments may also help recoup costs of hauling water for livestock suffering from drought.

FSA makes Livestock Forage Program payments based on a portion of feed costs used to make up for lost grazing access. ELAP payments are subject to a national payment factor since there is a set amount of funding nationwide for ELAP applications.

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Emergency Haying and Grazing is already available in all Eastern Washington counties because of the drought. It allows the use of CRP for haying and grazing in these urgent situations. FSA will not reduce annual CRP payments for

emergency haying or grazing.

Crop Producers

Farmers and ranchers who suffered losses on crops covered by FSA's Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) should report losses to your FSA office as soon as the loss becomes apparent.

The Tree Assistance Program (TAP) provides financial assistance to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters. Forests are not eligible.

Livestock and Crop Producers

Other programs which could become available, depending on national approval, are the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) and the Emergency Forest Restoration Program (EFRP). These programs provide cost-share payments for specific practices, such as replacing fence. FSA county committees request FSA implementation of the ECP or EFRP. FSA offices in approved counties will notify producers.

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) provides emergency loans to help producers recover from production and physical losses due to natural disasters, such as the recent drought or wildfires. Emergency Loan funds can be used to restore or replace essential property, pay production expenses for the disaster year, pay family living expenses, reorganize the farming operation, and to refinance certain debts. Producers can borrow up to \$500,000. The term of the loan is based on the repayment ability of the applicant, not to exceed 20 years for production losses or 40 years for losses to real estate.

These loans can be made to farmers or ranchers who own or operate land in a county declared by the President as a disaster area or designated by the Secretary of Agriculture. Most of Washington is eligible by drought already. Contact your [local FSA office](#) to find out if your county has a designation due to drought or wildfire if you are interested in an emergency loan. Applications must be received within 8 months of the county's disaster.

If you have questions about FSA disaster assistance programs, contact your [local FSA office](#) for information on eligibility requirements and application procedures.

How to Help Livestock Producers: WSU

Extension in Spokane County is asking for feed for livestock to assist producers impacted by wildfires. Click [here](#) for more information on how to help.

The Okanogan Conservation District can also direct you to local organizations assisting livestock producers. Contact: District Director Craig Nelson, craig@okanogancd.org.

Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Reduces Risks

Producers are encouraged to examine the available U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) crop risk protection options, including federal crop insurance and Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage, before the sales deadline for fall crops. Like crop insurance, you can't wait until a weather-related disaster causes losses. These programs require early decision-making and program participation.

Deadlines are quickly approaching to purchase coverage for fall-seeded crops. Producers of crops not covered by insurance may be eligible for the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program. The 2014 Farm Bill expanded NAP to include higher levels of protection. Beginning, underserved and limited resource farmers are now eligible for free catastrophic level coverage, as well as discounted premiums for additional levels of protection.

Learn more about NAP [online](#) or contact your [local FSA office](#).

Conservation Reserve Program Reminder

If you have a Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contract that has any changes, submit all required signatures and supporting documents by **September 15**. Missing the deadline risks payment delay.

The next CRP General Signup will be December 1, 2015, through February 26, 2016.

Low-Interest Farm Storage and Handling Facilities Expand to Cover Multiple Crops

A recent change to the Farm Storage Facility Loan Program (FSFL) expands eligibility of the program to producers of crops like hops, honey, flower, milk and meat. Through the program, FSA provides low-interest financing for producers to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities.

The new commodities eligible for facility loans include 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). Commodities already eligible for the loans include corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley, minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain, pulse crops (lentils, chickpeas and dry peas), hay, honey, renewable biomass, and fruits, nuts and vegetables for cold storage facilities.

The maximum loan amount is \$500,000 per loan request. Loan terms are 7, 10 or 12 years depending on the amount of the loan. Check with your [local FSA office](#) for current interest rates. Each applicant will be charged a nonrefundable \$100 application fee. To learn more about the program, view the [fact sheet](#) or contact your [local FSA office](#).

Enrollment Deadline Nears for Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) Programs

Deadlines associated with the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) enrollments are rapidly approaching. Enrollment must be completed by September 30 for both 2014 and 2015 crop years. Enrollment is an additional step after completing ARC/PLC selection and base and yield updates. ARC-IC farms must have actual and benchmark production submitted no later than September 30. All requests for farm transfers and reconstitutions must be submitted and completed no later than September 25. If you have not already set up an appointment with your [local FSA office](#), you are encouraged to do so.

Biomass Crop Retrieval Program Incentivizes Clean Energy

Owners of Forestry and Farm Residues Can Apply for Biomass Crop Assistance Program

FSA is accepting applications from foresters and farmers seeking financial assistance to harvest and deliver biomass to generate clean energy. The support comes through the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP), which was re-authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill.

For 2015, USDA has reserved up to \$11.5 million to assist with the cost of removing woody or herbaceous residues from farm fields or national forests and woodlands for delivery to energy generation facilities. Orchard wastes, and agriculture residues such as corn cobs and stalks, also qualify as energy-producing feedstock.

To be eligible for the retrieval incentives, the biomass must be delivered to FSA-approved biomass conversion facilities. For a list of approved facilities, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/bcap.

Department Seeks New BCAP Project Proposals

The Biomass Crop Assistance Program also provides financial assistance to farmers and ranchers who produce new sources of energy biomass by growing eligible crops on contract acres within approved BCAP project areas. USDA is accepting project area proposals for new BCAP project areas. Biomass energy facilities or groups of producers may submit proposals for new project areas at www.grants.gov through **November 6, 2015**.

Important Dates and Deadlines

Sept. 1, 2015 – Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Grasslands initiative signup begins.

Sept. 15, 2015 - Complete and submit all outstanding CRP paperwork and contract signatures.

Sept. 30, 2015 - Margin Protection Program for Dairy (MPP-Dairy) enrollment deadline.

Sept. 30, 2015 - Deadline to enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) (ARC/PLC) programs.

Sept. 30, 2015 – Non-insured Crop Disaster Program (NAP) application closing date for garlic; mint; perennial grazing, forage, mixed forage and forage seed crops; wheat.

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