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Missouri FSA Newsletter

Missouri Farm Service Agency

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Click here for the Missouri Department of

Upcoming Deadlines and Important Dates to Remember

Agricultural producers interested in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) 2020 general signup must enroll by February 28, 2020. The deadline to enroll in Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage (ARC and PLC) programs for 2019 is March 16, 2020. Producers are reminded that the crop sales deadline for 2020 Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage is March 16. This deadline applies to forage, pasture, and most fruits and vegetables. More information on all of these programs follows.

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

USDA Reminds Producers of Feb. 28 Deadline for Conservation Reserve Program General Signup

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) reminds agricultural producers interested in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) 2020 general signup to enroll by February 28, 2020. This signup is available to farmers and private landowners who are either enrolling for the first time or re-enrolling for another 10- to 15-year term.

Farmers and ranchers who enroll in CRP receive yearly rental payments for voluntarily establishing long-term, resource-

Conservation Covey Headquarters newsletter.

conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees (known as “covers”), which can control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat on marginally productive agricultural lands.

CRP has 22 million acres enrolled, but the 2018 Farm Bill lifted the cap to 27 million acres.

Signed into law in 1985, CRP is one of the largest private-lands conservation programs in the U.S. It was originally intended to primarily control soil erosion and potentially stabilize commodity prices by taking marginal lands out of production. The program has evolved over the years, providing many conservation and economic benefits. Marking its 35th anniversary in 2020, CRP has had many successes, including:

- Preventing more than 9 billion tons of soil from eroding, enough soil to fill 600 million dump trucks;
- Reducing nitrogen and phosphorous runoff relative to annually tilled cropland by 95 and 85 percent respectively;
- Sequestering an annual average of 49 million tons of greenhouse gases, equal to taking 9 million cars off the road;
- Creating more than 3 million acres of restored wetlands while protecting more than 175,000 stream miles with riparian forest and grass buffers, enough to go around the world 7 times; and
- Benefiting bees and other pollinators and increased populations of ducks, pheasants, turkey, bobwhite quail, prairie chickens, grasshopper sparrows and many other birds.

The CRP continuous signup is ongoing, which enables producers to enroll for certain practices. The 2020 CRP Grasslands signup runs from March 16, 2020 to May 15, 2020.

To enroll in CRP, contact your local FSA county office or visit fsa.usda.gov/crp. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

FSA Encourages Producers to Enroll Soon in Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs

USDA’s Farm Service Agency (FSA) encourages agricultural producers to enroll now in the Agriculture Risk Loss (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs. March 15, 2020 is the enrollment deadline for the 2019 crop year.

Although more than 200,000 producers have enrolled to date, FSA anticipates 1.5 million producers will enroll for ARC and PLC. By enrolling soon, producers can beat the rush as the deadline nears.

FSA offices have multiple programs competing for the time and attention of our staff. Because of the importance and complexities of the ARC and PLC programs; and to ensure FSA meets your program delivery expectations, please do not wait to start the enrollment process. Call your FSA county office and make an appointment soon to ensure your elections are made and contracts signed well ahead of the deadlines.

ARC and PLC provide financial protections to farmers from substantial drops in crop prices or revenues and are vital economic safety nets for most American farms.

The programs cover the following commodities: barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium and short grain rice, safflower seed, seed cotton, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

Until March 15, producers who have not yet enrolled in ARC or PLC for 2019 can potentially enroll for both 2019 and 2020 during the same visit to an FSA county office unless yield updates are requested. Additionally, farm owners have a one-time opportunity to update PLC payment yields that take effect beginning with crop year 2020. If the owner accompanies the producer to the office, the yield update and enrollments may be completed during the same office visit.

More Information

For more information on ARC and PLC, download our program fact sheet or our 2014-2018 farm bills comparison fact sheet. Online ARC and PLC election decision tools are available at fsa.usda.gov/arc/plc. To enroll, contact your FSA county office for an appointment.

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 Announces Details of Risk Management Programs for Hemp Producers

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the availability of two programs that protect hemp producers' crops from natural disasters. A pilot hemp insurance program through Multi-Peril Crop Insurance (MPCI) provides coverage against loss of yield because of insurable causes of loss for hemp grown for fiber, grain or Cannabidiol (CBD) oil and the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage protects against losses associated with lower yields, destroyed crops or prevented planting where no permanent federal crop insurance program is available. Producers may apply now, and the deadline to sign up for both programs is March 16, 2020.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program

NAP provides coverage against loss for hemp grown for fiber, grain, seed or CBD for the 2020 crop year where no permanent federal crop insurance program is available.

NAP basic 50/55 coverage is available at 55 percent of the average market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of expected production. Buy-up coverage is available in some cases. The 2018 Farm Bill allows for buy-up levels of NAP coverage from 50 to 65 percent of expected production in 5 percent increments, at 100 percent of the average market price. Premiums apply for buy-up coverage.

For all coverage levels, the NAP service fee is $325 per crop or $825 per producer per county, not to exceed $1,950 for a producer with farming interests in multiple counties.

Multi-Peril Crop Insurance Pilot Insurance Program

The MPCI pilot insurance is a new crop insurance option for hemp producers in select counties of 21 states for the 2020 crop year. The program is available for eligible producers in certain counties in Alabama, California, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia and Wisconsin. Information on eligible counties is accessible through the USDA Risk Management Agency's Actuarial Information Browser.

Among other requirements, to be eligible for the pilot program, a hemp producer must have at least one year of history producing the crop and have a contract for the sale of the insured hemp. In addition, the minimum acreage requirement is 5 acres for CBD and 20 acres for grain and fiber. Hemp will not qualify for replant payments or prevented plant payments under MPCI.

This pilot insurance coverage is available to hemp growers in addition to revenue protection for hemp offered under the Whole-Farm Revenue Protection plan of insurance. Also, beginning with the 2021 crop year, hemp will be insurable under the Nursery crop insurance program and the Nursery Value Select pilot crop insurance program. Under both nursery programs, hemp will be insurable if grown in containers and in accordance with federal regulations, any applicable state or tribal laws and terms of the crop insurance policy.

Eligibility Requirements

Under a regulation authorized by the 2018 Farm Bill and issued in October 2019, all growers must have a license to grow hemp and must comply with applicable state, tribal or federal regulations or operate under a state or university research pilot, as authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill.

Producers must report hemp acreage to FSA after planting to comply with federal and state law enforcement. The Farm Bill defines hemp as containing 0.3 percent or less tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) on a dry-weight basis. Hemp having THC above the federal statutory compliance level of 0.3 percent is an uninsurable or ineligible cause of loss and will result in the hemp production being ineligible for production history purposes.

For more information on USDA risk management programs for hemp producers, visit farmers.gov/hemp to read our frequently asked questions. For more information on the U.S. Domestic Hemp Production Program, visit USDA's Agricultural Marketing Services' website to read their frequently asked questions.

USDA, Missouri FSA to Provide Job Opportunities in 2020

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is looking for bright individuals with a passion for helping others to apply for a variety of open positions. On April 8, USDA will host a job fair in Kansas City, MO to fill vacancies in its agencies that deliver farm programs. These agencies have nearly three thousand offices nationwide that are offering job opportunities across the country.

One of USDA's goals is to be a welcoming and diverse workplace, where employees take pride in their positions. As a USDA employee, you'll have a full career supporting agriculture and America's farmers. USDA staff works one-on-one with farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners to help them recover from natural disasters, manage risk, conserve natural resources, and get access to many resources. At the same time, you'll enjoy the benefits of federal employment, including numerous health and life insurance options, retirement savings, and generous annual and sick leave.

A few of the job openings include Accountants, Economists, Engineers, Farm Loan Assistants, Farm Loan Program Technicians, Management Analysts, Rangeland Management Specialists, Risk Management Specialists, Soil Conservationist Technicians, Soil Conservationists, Soil Scientists, and Statisticians.

In addition, the Missouri Farm Service Agency (FSA) is actively recruiting highly-motivated individuals to fill vacancies in our Farm Program and Farm Loan Program areas. FSA works to serve Missouri farmers and ranchers. Our employees work to deliver farm programs that assist producers in Missouri. The office environment is high energy and challenging. Computer skills are required. Selected applicants will be working with the public daily, therefore, communication and people skills are a must. All applications must be completed and submitted online at www.usajobs.gov. Position compensation will be based on education, work experience, and background. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Submit Loan Requests for Financing Early

The Farm Loan team in Missouri is already working on operating loans for spring 2020 so it is important that potential borrowers submit their requests early so they can be timely processed. The farm loan team can help determine which loan programs are best for applicants.

FSA offers a wide range of low-interest loans that can meet the financial needs of any farm operation for just about any purpose. The traditional **farm operating and farm ownership loans** can help large and small farm operations take advantage of early purchasing discounts for spring inputs as well expenses throughout the year.

Microloans are a simplified loan program that will provide up to $50,000 to eligible applicants. These loans, targeted for smaller operations and non-traditional operations, can be used for operating expenses, starting a new agricultural enterprise, purchasing equipment, and other needs associated with a farming operation. The staff at your local FSA office can provide more details on farm operating and microloans and provide loan applications. Loans to beginning farmers and members of underserved groups are a priority.

Other types of loans available include:

Marketing Assistance Loans allow producers to use eligible commodities as loan collateral and obtain a 9-month loan while the crop is in storage. These loans provide cash flow to the producer and allow them to market the crop when prices may be more advantageous.

Farm Storage Facility Loans can be used to build permanent structures used to store eligible commodities, or for storage and handling trucks, or portable or permanent handling equipment. A variety of structures are eligible under this loan, including bunker silos, grain bins, hay storage structures and refrigerated structures for vegetables and fruit. A producer may borrow up to $500,000 per loan**.**

Please call your local FSA office if you have questions about any of the loans available through FSA.

USDA Swine Study for Small and Large Enterprises

Starting in June 2020, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS), in collaboration with the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), will conduct national studies of U.S. small and large enterprise swine operations.

Missouri producers are included in these studies, which take an in-depth look at small (fewer than 1,000 pigs) and large (1,000 or more pigs) U.S. swine operations and provide information regarding health and management practices to the U.S. swine industry. Information collected will be used to inform disease management and preparedness strategies to safeguard the swine industry.

Large Enterprise Study (1,000 or more pigs)

Representatives from NASS will visit participating operations from July through August 2020 to complete a questionnaire. If you choose to continue in the study, USDA or state veterinary health professionals will visit you from September 2020 through January 2021 to complete a second questionnaire and discuss free biologic testing (oral fluids and feces).

Approximately 2,700 operations will be selected from 13 of the Nation’s top swine-producing states representing about 90 percent of the U.S. swine operations with 1,000 or more pigs.

Small Enterprise Study (Fewer than 1,000 pigs)

In June 2020, selected producers will be mailed a letter describing the study and be provided with a questionnaire to complete and return. Producers who don’t respond to the questionnaire will be called by a NASS representative to arrange a convenient time to complete the questionnaire via a telephone interview.

Approximately 5,000 swine operations from 38 states will be asked to participate in the study. These states account for about 95 percent of U.S. swine operations with fewer than 1,000 pigs.

Participation in any NAHMS study is voluntary. The privacy of every questionnaire participant is protected. Data will only be presented in an aggregate or summary manner.

For more information, please contact Charles Haley at 970-494-7216 or charles.a.haley@aphis.usda.gov.

The Importance of Responding to NASS Surveys

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) conducts hundreds of surveys every year and prepares reports covering virtually every aspect of U.S. agriculture.

Producers who receive survey questionnaires should respond quickly and online if possible.

The results of the surveys help determine the structure of USDA farm programs, such as soil rental rates for the Conservation Reserve Program and prices and yields used for the Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage programs. This county-level data is critical for USDA farm payment determinations. Survey responses also help associations, businesses and policymakers advocate for their industry and help educate others on the importance of agriculture.

NASS safeguards the privacy of all respondents and publishes only aggregate data, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified.

NASS data is available online at www.nass.usda.gov/Publications and through the searchable Quick Stats database. Watch a video on how NASS data is used at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m-4zjnh26io&feature=youtu.be.

Interest Rates and Dates to Remember

Selected Interest Rates for February 2020

90-Day Treasury Bill	1.625%
Farm Operating Loans - Direct	2.625%
Farm Ownership Loans - Direct	3.250%
Farm Ownership Loans - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.500%
Emergency Loans	3.625%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (3 years)	1.625%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (5 years)	1.625%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years)	1.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (10 years)	1.875%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (12 years)	1.875%
Commodity Loans (1996-Present)	2.500%

Dates to Remember

February 28, 2020	54th General CRP enrollment period ends.
February 28, 2020	NAP application closing date for rice.
March 15, 2020	NAP application closing date for many NAP crops, including forage and pasture.
March 15, 2020	Deadline to complete election & enrollment for 2019 Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) & Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs.
March 31, 2020	Final availability date for 2019 Marketing Assistance Loans & LDPs for small grains & honey.