

May 2018



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

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From the State Executive Director

From last year's drought and wildfires, to the long, cold Montana winter, to the recent spring flooding, natural disasters are all too common. We share a heartfelt concern for the people, animals and cropland affected and we are hopeful that Farm Service Agency programs can help you recover. In this newsletter you can read about FSA's current program signups, acreage/crop reporting requirements, the new 2017 Wildfires and Hurricanes Indemnity Program (WHIP) and other disaster and loan programs that we offer to assist agricultural producers in recovery efforts.

If you have filed a notice of loss with FSA, I encourage you to work with your local FSA office and provide supporting documentation as needed to support your loss claims by the applicable deadline. FSA employees across Montana are ready to assist you.

Sincerely,
Mike Foster

July 16th Deadline for 2018 Crop Certification/Acreage Reporting

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

The 2018 Acreage Reporting/Crop Certification Deadline is **Mon., July 16, 2018** for **Spring Seeded Alfalfa Seed, Forage Seeding, Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Fruit (except cherries), Vegetables, Christmas Trees, and all Spring-Seeded Crops and any other crops not required to be reported by previously announced deadlines.**

The following exceptions apply to acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the applicable 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 applicable 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 "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 applicable dates or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

Important reminder: All crops and acreage must be reported no later than the crop's subsequent year's acreage reporting date. If a crop report is not submitted by the subsequent year's reporting date, the acreage report cannot be considered acceptable and producers will not receive planting credit for the crop nor will the crop be eligible for any FSA program benefits for the applicable program year.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact your local FSA office.

Link to [FSA Acreage Reporting Factsheet](#) (pdf)

Reporting Organic Crops

Producers who want to use the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) organic price and selected the "organic" option on their NAP application must report their crops as organic.

When certifying organic acres, the buffer zone acreage must be included in the organic acreage.

Producers must also provide a current organic plan, organic certificate or documentation from a certifying agent indicating an organic plan is in effect. Documentation must include:

- name of certified individuals
- address
- telephone number
- effective date of certification
- certificate number
- list of commodities certified
- name and address of certifying agent

- a map showing the specific location of each field of certified organic, including the buffer zone acreage

Certification exemptions are available for producers whose annual gross agricultural income from organic sales totals \$5,000 or less. Although exempt growers are not required to provide a written certificate, they are still required to provide a map showing the specific location of each field of certified organic, transitional and buffer zone acreage.

For questions about reporting organic crops, contact your local FSA office. To find your local office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Crops Grown Under Contract

Do you grow crops under contract? If so, please discuss the terms of your contract with your local FSA office to ensure that you are enrolled accurately in our programs.

Disaster Assistance Programs and FSA Notice of Loss Requirements

Montana Farm Service Agency reminds farmers and ranchers across the state of federal farm program benefits that may be available to help eligible producers recover from natural disasters.

FSA offers disaster assistance and low-interest loan programs to assist agricultural producers in their recovery efforts following floods and similar qualifying natural disasters. Four disaster programs require that producers submit a timely **Notice of Loss to FSA** (see below for program details) while others can be requested as needed through your county office such as the Emergency Conservation Program, individual Farm Loans and a Disaster Designation for your county. For more information, please contact your local FSA office.

ELAP – Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program provides emergency relief for losses due to feed or water shortages, disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, which are not adequately addressed by other disaster programs. Submit a Notice of Loss the **earlier of 30 calendar days** of when the loss is apparent or Nov. 1st after the end of the program year in which the loss occurred. Examples of ELAP losses include additional feed purchases in excess of normal and loss of damaged or destroyed purchased feed and/or mechanically harvested feed due to an eligible weather event. Producers may also be eligible for costs associated with transporting livestock feed to eligible livestock, including, but not limited to, costs associated with equipment rental fees for hay lifts and snow removal incurred in **combination** with losses due to additional feed purchases above normal or damaged or destroyed purchased or mechanically harvested forage. *(see articles below)*

LIP - Livestock Indemnity Program offers payments to eligible producers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather, disease and attacks. Eligible losses may include those determined by FSA to have been caused by hurricanes, floods, blizzards, wildfires, tropical storms, tornados lightening, extreme heat, and extreme cold. Producers will be required to provide verifiable documentation of death losses resulting from an eligible adverse weather event and must submit a Notice of Loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent. File an Application for payment and supporting documentation no later than 90 days after the calendar year in which the loss occurred. *(see articles below)*

NAP – Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters (includes native grass for grazing). Eligible producers must have purchased NAP coverage for 2018 crops. Submit Notice of Loss **within 15 calendar days** of the **earlier** of a natural disaster occurrence, the final planting date if planting is prevented by a natural disaster, the date that damage to the crop or loss of production becomes apparent; or the normal harvest date.

TAP - Tree Assistance Program provides assistance to eligible orchardists and nursery tree growers for qualifying tree, shrub and vine losses due to natural disasters including excessive wind and qualifying drought. Final Date to Submit an Application and Supporting Documentation is the **later of 90 calendar days** of the disaster event or the date when the loss is apparent.

Visit FSA's national disaster assistance [website](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/index) at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/index> and [FSA's program factsheets](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/news-room/factsheets/index) page at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/news-room/factsheets/index>.

Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) provides emergency funding for farmers and ranchers to rehabilitate land severely damaged by natural disasters; includes fence loss. (*see article below*)

Disaster Designations - If you have experienced a production or physical loss as a result of a natural disaster you may submit a request to your local FSA county office for your county to be evaluated for a disaster designation. Once a request is received, the county office will collect disaster data and create a Loss Assessment Report. The County Emergency Board will review the Loss Assessment Report and determine if a recommendation is sent forward to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture for a designation. A designation triggers the availability of low-interest Emergency Loans to eligible producers in all primary and contiguous counties.

Farm Loans - FSA offers a wide range of low-interest loans to meet the financial needs of farm operations. For information on loan options with FSA, please contact your local FSA office for assistance and visit the [FSA Farm Loan Programs Website](#).

[FSA Disaster Assistance Programs at a Glance Factsheet](#) (pdf)

For more information, please contact your local FSA office.

How to Document Flood Losses

Producers who suffered excessive livestock death losses and grazing or feed losses due to recent floods may be eligible for disaster assistance programs through the USDA Farm Service Agency.

The Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) offers payments to eligible producers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather and the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) provides emergency relief for losses due to feed or water shortages, disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, which are not adequately addressed by other disaster programs.

To participate in LIP, producers will be required to provide verifiable documentation of death losses resulting from an eligible adverse weather event and must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is apparent. To participate in ELAP, producers must submit a notice of loss to their local FSA office within 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent and should maintain documentation and receipts.

Producers should record all pertinent information regarding livestock losses due to the eligible adverse weather or loss condition, including:

- Documentation of the number, kind, type, and weight range of livestock that have died, supplemented if possible by photographs or video records of ownership and losses;
- Rendering truck receipts by kind, type and weight - important to document prior to disposal;
- Beginning inventory supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts;
- Documentation from Animal Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Natural Resources, or other sources to substantiate eligible death losses due to an eligible loss condition;
- Documentation that livestock were removed from grazing pastures due to an eligible adverse weather or loss condition;
- Costs of transporting livestock feed to eligible livestock, such as receipts for equipment rental fees for hay lifts and snow removal;
- Feed purchase receipts if feed supplies or grazing pastures are destroyed;

For more information on these programs and documentation requirements, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/disaster or contact your local FSA office.

2018 Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybee, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP)

The Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) provides emergency assistance to eligible livestock, honeybee, and farm-raised fish producers who have losses due to disease, adverse weather or other conditions, such as flooding, blizzards and wildfires on private land, not covered by other agricultural disaster assistance programs.

Eligible livestock losses include grazing losses not covered under the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), additional feed purchases in excess of normal and loss of purchased feed and/or mechanically harvested feed due

to an eligible adverse weather event, additional cost of transporting water because of an eligible drought and additional cost associated with gathering livestock to treat for cattle tick fever.

Eligible honeybee losses include loss of purchased feed due to an eligible adverse weather event, cost of additional feed purchased above normal quantities due to an eligible adverse weather condition, colony losses in excess of normal mortality due to an eligible weather event or loss condition, including CCD, and hive losses due to eligible adverse weather.

Eligible farm-raised fish losses include death losses in excess of normal mortality and/or loss of purchased feed due to an eligible adverse weather event.

Producers who suffer eligible livestock, honeybee, or farm-raised fish losses from Oct. 1, 2017 to Sept. 30, 2018 must file:

- **A notice of loss the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent** or by Nov. 1, 2018
- An application for payment by Nov. 1, 2018

To view ELAP and other FSA program fact sheets, visit the FSA fact sheet web page at www.fsa.usda.gov/factsheets.

Reporting Livestock Losses; 2018 Livestock Indemnity Program

For Farm Service Agency's 2018 LIP Program, producers who suffer livestock deaths due to an eligible loss condition including eligible adverse weather events, eligible disease and eligible attacks from Jan. 1, 2018 through Dec. 31, 2018 must submit a notice of loss within 30 calendar days of when the loss of livestock is first apparent. **Livestock producers suffering livestock losses may submit the notice of loss to FSA by phone, fax, and email or in person.** An application for payment must be filed with the local FSA County Office by the March 31, 2019 deadline.

Eligible adverse weather events include, but are not limited to, earthquake, hail, lightning, tornado, winter storm (lasting 3 consecutive days with high winds, freezing rain/sleet, heavy snowfall and extremely cold temperatures), floods, blizzards, wild fires, extreme heat, extreme cold, anthrax, straight-line winds, and cyanobacteria (blue-green algae poisoning) that directly results in the death of eligible livestock in excess of more than normal mortality.

Livestock producers must provide proof of death and inventory numbers of eligible livestock that died due to an eligible loss condition. The inventory numbers represent the number of eligible livestock before the eligible loss conditions that cause the death of the livestock.

Beginning inventory documents can include, veterinary records, balance sheets, inventory numbers used for tax purposes, loan records, sales and purchase records and other similar documents. Proof of death documentation may be rendering truck receipts, FEMA records, veterinary records, private insurance documents, contemporaneous records that existed at the time of the eligible loss conditions, pictures with a date, and other similar documents.

For questions, contact your local FSA office and visit www.fsa.usda.gov/disaster.

Link to: [Livestock Indemnity Program Factsheet](#)

Requesting Emergency Conservation Program Assistance for Flood Damage

Farmers and ranchers suffering severe damage from flooding can request assistance through FSA's Emergency Conservation Program (ECP). Affected producers can request ECP assistance through their local FSA office.

The types of ECP practices that can be available under this program include:

- removing debris from farmland
- grading, shaping, or releveling severely damaged farmland
- restoring permanent fences
- restoring conservation structures and other similar installations

ECP is administered by FSA to assist producers with the cost of recovery activities required to restore the agricultural land to pre-disaster conditions. Producers who sustained damage from this disaster event are

encouraged to submit their request for assistance prior to beginning reconstructive work. Submitting a request after completing qualified reconstructive work may result in forfeiture of program eligibility.

Producers can submit ECP applications through the FSA county office. FSA county committees will complete an evaluation of submitted requests and will request national funding based on an on-site inspection of the damaged land, taking into consideration the type and extent of the eligible damage. Completion of the on-site inspection does not guarantee that cost-share funding will be allocated. The use of obligated funds is limited to return the land to the relative pre-disaster condition. Conservation concerns that were present on the land prior to the disaster are not eligible for ECP assistance. Approved ECP applicants may receive up to 75 percent of the cost of completing the approved restoration activity.

For more information on ECP, please contact your local FSA office.

Producers are Encouraged to Report Prevented Planting and Failed Acres

Producers are reminded to report prevented planting and failed acres in order to establish or retain FSA program eligibility for some programs. Producers should report crop acreage they intended to plant, but due to natural disaster, were prevented from planting. Prevented planting acreage must be reported on form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, **no later than 15 calendar days** after the final planting date as established by FSA and Risk Management Agency (RMA).

FSA cannot accept a CCC-576 prior to the final planting date. Contact your local FSA office for a list of final planting dates by crop.

If a producer is unable to report the prevented planting acreage within the 15 calendar days following the final planting date, a late-filed report can be submitted. Late-filed reports will only be accepted if FSA conducts a farm visit to assess the eligible disaster condition that prevented the crop from being planted. A measurement service fee will be charged.

Additionally, producers with failed acres should also use form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, to report failed acres. For example, winter wheat planted/failed and the acreage is re-seeded to barley in the spring.

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.

For losses on crops covered by the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), producers must file a Notice of Loss within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent. Producers must timely file a Notice of Loss for failed acres on all crops including grasses.

Still Time to be Counted in the 2017 Census of Agriculture

NASS to follow-up with producers who have not yet responded

Farmers and ranchers still have time to be counted in the 2017 Census of Agriculture, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). Although the first deadline has just passed, NASS will continue to accept Census information through the spring to get a complete and accurate picture of American agriculture that represents all farmers and ranchers.

Federal law mandates that everyone who received the 2017 Census of Agriculture questionnaire complete it and return it even if not currently farming. NASS will continue to follow-up with producers through the spring with mailings, phone calls, and personal visits. To avoid these additional contacts, farmers and ranchers are encouraged to complete their Census either online at www.agcounts.usda.gov or by mail as soon as possible. Responding online saves time by skipping sections that do not apply and automatically calculating totals. The online questionnaire is accessible on desktops, laptops, and mobile devices.

For more information about the 2017 Census of Agriculture, visit www.agcensus.usda.gov. For questions or assistance filling out the Census, call toll-free (888) 424-7828.

USDA Reopens Enrollment for Improved Dairy Safety Net Tool: June 1, 2018 Enrollment Deadline

USDA's Farm Service Agency encourages dairy producers to consider enrolling in the new and improved [Margin Protection Program for Dairy](#) (MPP-Dairy), which will provide better protections for dairy producers from shifting milk and feed prices. With changes authorized under the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018, USDA Farm Service Agency has set the enrollment period to run from **April 9, 2018 to June 1, 2018**.

About the Program: The program protects dairy producers by paying them when the difference between the national all-milk price and the national average feed cost (the margin) falls below a certain dollar amount elected by the producer.

Changes include:

- Calculations of the margin period is monthly rather than bi-monthly.
- Covered production is increased to 5 million pounds on the Tier 1 premium schedule, and premium rates for Tier 1 are substantially lowered.
- An exemption from paying an administrative fee for limited resource, beginning, veteran, and disadvantaged producers. Dairy operators enrolled in the previous 2018 enrollment period that qualify for this exemption under the new provisions may request a refund.

Dairy operations must make a new coverage election for 2018, even if you enrolled during the previous 2018 signup period. Coverage elections made for 2018 will be retroactive to January 1, 2018. All dairy operations desiring coverage must sign up during the enrollment period and submit an appropriate form (CCC-782) and dairy operations may still "opt out" by not submitting a form. All outstanding balances for 2017 and prior years must be paid in full before 2018 coverage is approved.

Dairy producers can participate in FSA's MPP-Dairy or the Risk Management Agency's Livestock Gross Margin Insurance Plan for Dairy Cattle (LGM-Dairy), but not both. During the 2018 enrollment period, only producers with an active LGM-Dairy policy who have targeted marketings insured in 2018 months will be allowed to enroll in MPP-Dairy by June 1, 2018; however, their coverage will start only after active target marketings conclude under LGM-Dairy.

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, which will be updated and available by April 9 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.

USDA is mailing postcards advising dairy producers of the changes. For more information, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/dairy or contact your [local USDA service center](#).

Link to [FSA's MPP-Dairy Factsheet](#)

Enrollment Period Continues for 2018 ARC-PLC Safety Net Coverage; Aug. 1, 2018 Deadline

Montana farmers and ranchers with base acres in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) safety net program may enroll for the 2018 crop year. The enrollment period, which began on Nov. 1, will end on **Aug. 1, 2018**.

Since shares and ownership of a farm can change year-to-year, producers must enroll by signing a contract each program year.

The producers on a farm that are not enrolled for the 2018 enrollment period will not be eligible for financial assistance from the ARC or PLC programs for the 2018 crop should crop prices, county revenues, or farm revenues fall below the historical price or revenue benchmarks established by the program. Producers who made their elections in previous years must still enroll during the 2018. For more information, contact your local FSA office and visit https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/arcplc_program/index.

Perdue Announces Additional Hurricane and Wildfire Recovery Details

Under the direction of President Donald J. Trump, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue today announced new details on eligibility for a new U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) disaster program, [2017 Wildfires and Hurricanes Indemnity Program](#) (2017 WHIP). In total, USDA's [Farm Service Agency](#) (FSA) will deploy the up to \$2.36 billion that Congress appropriated through the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 to help producers with recovery of their agricultural operations in at least nine states with hurricane damage and states impacted by wildfire. Following the announcement, Secretary Perdue issued this statement:

"Last year our nation experienced some of the most significant disasters we have seen in decades, some back-to-back, at the most critical time in their production year. While USDA has a suite of disaster programs as well as crop insurance available to help producers manage their risk, Congress felt it was important to provide extra assistance to our nation's farms and ranches that were the hardest hit last year," Secretary Perdue said. "At President Trump's direction, our team is working as quickly as possible to make this new program available to farmers in need. Our aim is to provide excellent customer service, building on efforts which began the day the storm hit."

Key Updates Include:

- **Hurricane Recovery:** To be eligible a crop, tree, bush or vine must be located in a primary disaster county with either a Presidential declaration or a Secretarial designation due to a 2017 hurricane. Crops, trees, bushes or vines located in other counties may also be eligible if the producer provides documentation the loss was caused by a 2017 hurricane.
- **Wildfire Recovery:** Any crop, tree, bush or vine, damaged by a 2017 wildfire is eligible.
- **Eligible Producers:** Eligibility will be determined on an individual basis, using the level of insurance coverage purchased for 2017 for the total crop acres on the area for which the WHIP application is made. Eligible producers who certify to an average adjusted gross income (AGI) of at least 75 percent derived from farming or ranching, including other agriculture and forestry-based businesses during the tax years 2013, 2014 and 2015, will be eligible for a \$900,000 payment limitation with verification. All other eligible producers requesting 2017 WHIP benefits will be subject to a \$125,000 payment limitation.
- **Crop Insurance Requirement:** Both insured and uninsured producers are eligible to apply for WHIP. However, all producers opting to receive 2017 WHIP payments will be required to purchase crop insurance at the 60% coverage level, or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) at the 60% buy up coverage level if crop insurance is not available. Coverage must be in place for the next two applicable crop years to meet program requirements.
- **Acreage Reporting Requirements:** In addition, for the applicable crop years, all producers are required to file an acreage report and report production (if applicable).
- **Payment Formula:** FSA will calculate WHIP payments with this formula:

$$\text{Payment} = \text{Expected Value of the Crop} \times \text{WHIP Factor} - \text{Value of Crop Harvested} - \text{Insurance Indemnity}$$

The WHIP factor ranges from 65 percent to 95 percent. Producers who did not insure their crops in 2017 will receive a 65 percent WHIP Factor. Insured producers, or producers who had NAP, will receive between 70 percent and 95 percent WHIP Factors; those purchasing higher levels of coverage will receive higher WHIP Factors.

Other USDA Disaster Assistance

Drought, wildfires and other disasters continue to impact farmers and ranchers, and 2017 WHIP is just one of many programs available through USDA to help with recovery. From crop insurance to on-the-ground rehabilitation programs like the [Emergency Conservation Program](#) (ECP) and [Environmental Quality Incentives Program](#) (EQIP), USDA is here to help. The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 provided funding for ECP and the [Emergency Watershed Protection Program](#). The [Act also provided amendments](#) to make programs like the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-raised Fish Program, Tree Assistance Program and Livestock Indemnity Program even more responsive.

More Information:

FSA will hold a sign-up for 2017 WHIP no later than July 16. Additional information on WHIP is available on [FSA's](#)

[2017 WHIP webpage](#). For immediate assistance under any of our other disaster programs, please contact a [local USDA service center](#) or learn more at www.fsa.usda.gov/disaster.

Document the Drought: USDA U.S. Drought Monitor Offers Producers a Voice to Report Drought Impacts

The U.S. Drought Monitor's reporting feature offers producers an opportunity to submit drought impact and condition reports. The USDA, in partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, produced the U.S. Drought Monitor to include a reporting feature that allows producers to report local drought impacts and conditions.

The report allows producers to:

- Provide a written description of drought impacts on livelihood, activities, etc.;
- Select categories to show losses and gains as a result of the drought;
- Report on the duration of drought event;
- Select Affected Places – geographic areas ranging from an entire state to a small area within a state;
- Submit images that document the drought and its impact;
- Provide contact information (includes an option to keep information confidential).

The reporting tool for producers to record the effects of the drought can be accessed at the following link: <http://droughtreporter.unl.edu/submitreport/>

More information including state specific drought impact maps can be found on the U. S. Drought Monitor homepage: <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/Home.aspx>

Submitting Loan Requests for Financing

Early submission of complete loan application information is key to timely processing of loan requests. 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 FSA loan staff can provide more details on farm operating and microloans and provide loan applications.

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.

Farm Service Agency Loan Rates for May 2018

Price Support Loans

- [Farm Storage Facility Loan](#) (FSFL) Program
- 3 year loan – 2.500%
- 5 year loan – 2.625%

- 7 year loan – 2.750%
- 10 year loan – 2.875%
- 12 year loan – 2.875 %

FSFL Microloans are also available for the 3, 5, and 7 year terms at the 3, 5, and 7 year term rates for a maximum aggregated loan amount of \$50,000 and at a reduced down payment of 5% (regular FSFL loans require 15% down and have a maximum loan amount of \$500,000).

- [Commodity Loan](#) – 3.125%

Farm Loans

- [Operating Loan](#) – 3.625%
- [Operating Microloan](#) – 3.625%
- [Farm Ownership Loan](#) – 4.125%
- [Farm Ownership Microloan](#) – 4.125%
- [Emergency Loan](#) (Actual Loss) – 3.750%

Download a [Microloan Application](#) and [instructions](#)

Call your [local county office](#) for additional information

Upcoming FSA Program Dates and Deadlines

- [2018 Montana FSA Customer Calendar](#) (pdf)
- [2018 Upcoming FSA Deadlines Poster](#) (pdf)
- **Now through June 1, 2018:** 2018 Margin Protection Program for Dairy (MPP-Dairy) Signup Period
- **Now through August 1, 2018:** 2018 Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) & Price Loss Coverage (PLC) annual signup period
- **Now through Oct. 1, 2018:** 2019 Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program Application Closing Date for Annual Fall-Seeded Crops, Perennial Forage and Grazing, Mixed Forage Crops (including spring seeded annual types of missed forage), Rye, Speltz, Triticale, Wheat and Garlic
- **May 14:** 2018 CRP Spring Managed Grazing Period Ends (livestock must be removed when the calculated AUMs have been utilized but no later than May 14)
- **May 15 to July 15:** Montana Primary Nesting Season
- **May 31:** Final availability date for Loans and LDPs for 2017 Corn, Dry Peas, Grain Sorghum, Lentils, Mustard Seed, Rice, Safflower Seed, Chickpeas, Soybeans and Sunflower Seed
- **June 1:** Last day of signup for the 2018 Margin Protection Program for Dairy (MPP-Dairy)
- **June 15:** 2018 FSA County Committee Election Nomination Period Begins
- **July 16:** 2018 Acreage Reporting Deadline for Spring Seeded Alfalfa Seed, Forage Seeding, Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Fruit (except cherries), Vegetables, Christmas Trees, all Spring-Seeded Crops and all other crops not required to be reported by previously announced deadlines. **Please note that this is the final date that FSA can accept late-filed 2017 reports for these crops.**
- **July 16:** 2018 CRP Summer/Fall Grazing Period Begins (with prior written approval)
- **July 16:** 2018 CRP Managed Harvesting Period Begins (with prior written approval)
- **Aug. 1:** Deadline for 2018 Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) & Price Loss Coverage (PLC) Enrollment
- **Aug. 1:** 2018 FSA County Committee Election Nomination Period Deadline
- **Aug. 1:** Last day to request FY 2018 farm reconstitutions on ARC & PLC farms
- **Aug. 1:** Last day to request farm transfers for FY 2018

For more information, contact your local FSA office and/or visit Montana FSA online at www.fsa.usda.gov/mt.

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