

October 2016



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Montana FSA: October 2016 eNewsletter

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Fall Acreage Reporting Deadline: Nov. 15

Producers with the following 2017 crops must report the crops no later than **Nov. 15, 2016** to avoid late-file fees: **Apiculture, Perennial Forage, Pasture, Rangeland, Forage (PRF) including native grass, fall wheat (Hard Red Winter), and all other fall-seeded small grains.** The aforementioned crops must be reported to FSA by Nov. 15, 2016 to be considered timely filed in order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements. Producers are encouraged to visit their local FSA office to file an accurate, timely crop certification report no later than Nov. 15.

Anita Matt
Patricia Quisno

Montana USDA Office Directories

[Online Directory of FSA
Offices in Montana](#)

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[PDF of Montana USDA
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[FSA Factsheets Website](#)

Reasonable Accommodations:

People with disabilities who require accommodations to participate in FSA programs and/or events should contact the County Executive Director in the FSA Office in your area or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339. Alternatively, you may also contact Montana FSA Civil Rights Coordinator Jennifer Cole at (406) 587-6786 or jennifer.cole@mt.usda.gov.

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting date:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above 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 above 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 "cover only," "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 dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

2016 CRP Annual Rental Payments

Montana producers have approximately 8,161 CRP contracts that cover more than 1.4 million acres of land. The voluntary program helps farmers and ranchers safeguard environmentally sensitive land and provides habitat for game and non-game species of wildlife. In October 2016, Montana CRP participants will receive approximately \$41.5 million in annual rental payments.

2015 ARC and PLC Payments

County offices throughout the Nation are in the process of issuing 2015 Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) payments. During the month of October, Montana producers have received over \$92,700,000 in ARC-County and PLC payments. Payments for producers enrolled in ARC-Individual will begin to be processed in November 2016, if payments trigger.

Late-Filed 2016 Acreage Reports

The deadline for timely filing an acreage report in Montana for the 2016 program year was July 15, 2016. Acreage reports must be filed for all cropland on the farm before any ARC or PLC payments can be issued. For marketing assistance loans and LDP's, all cropland on the farm on which the crop pledged as loan collateral must be reported. Additionally, participants of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and the Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) must report the specific acreage for which benefits are being requested.

Although the reporting deadline has passed for program year 2016, county offices will accept late-filed acreage reports providing certain criteria are met, including the assessment of late-filed fees. Contact your local county office for additional information relative to late-filed acreage reports.

2016 Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) - Nov. 1 Deadline

Montana livestock producers, including Honeybee and Farm-raised Fish producers, are reminded that the 2016 Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) program year began Oct. 1, 2015 and continued through Sept. 30, 2016.

Producers who suffer livestock death losses not covered under LIP, or feed losses (must be in the bale or removed from the eligible acreage) and grazing losses not covered under LFP, or losses resulting from the cost of transporting water to livestock due to an eligible drought; colony-collapse disorder, etc, are reminded to report these losses **within 30 calendar days** of when the loss is apparent. In addition to filing a notice of loss, a timely filed acreage report for the 2016 program year must also be submitted with the administrative FSA County Office. For Honeybee producers who have become aware of colony collapse while in another state, the notice of loss can be filed with the local FSA office in that state.

After producers have timely filed their notice of loss and acreage report, the next step is to make the application for payment. The application for payment and all supporting documentation must be filed with the FSA county office no later than **Nov. 1, 2016**. Since ELAP funds are limited to \$20 million per fiscal year, the National Office must determine if the requested ELAP payments exceed the \$20 million allocation. If the requested 2016 ELAP benefits exceed \$20 million, all payments will be factored.

[ELAP Program Factsheet](#) (pdf)

Livestock producers in 14 Montana counties have until Jan. 30, 2017 to enroll in the 2016 Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP)

Eligible 2016 LFP counties include Big Horn, Carbon, Carter, Fallon, Flathead, Granite, Lewis and Clark, Missoula, Park, Powder River, Powell, Stillwater, Sweet Grass and Teton

LFP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers in qualifying counties for drought on dryland pasture. Eligible livestock producers must own or lease dryland pasture physically located in a qualifying county and eligible livestock must use this ground during the normal grazing period for

the county. The following 14 counties have met the qualifying drought criteria for 2016 in Montana: Big Horn, Carbon, Carter, Fallon, Flathead, Granite, Lewis and Clark, Missoula, Park, Powder River, Powell, Stillwater, Sweet Grass and Teton.

Livestock eligible for LFP include alpacas, beef cattle over 500 lbs, buffalo, beefalo, dairy cattle, deer, elk, emus, equine, goats, llamas, poultry, reindeer, sheep or swine that have been or would have been grazing the eligible grazing land or pastureland during the county's grazing period.

Eligible land includes dryland native pasture, improved pasture, and small grains, annual ryegrass and forage sorghum planted specifically for grazing. Irrigated acres used for grazing or aftermath grazing are not eligible under this program.

If all eligibility requirements are met, livestock producers in Carter County will receive for four monthly payments; livestock producers in the following 13 counties will receive one monthly payment: Big Horn, Carbon, Fallon, Flathead, Granite, Lewis and Clark, Missoula, Park, Powder River, Powell, Stillwater, Sweet Grass and Teton.

Livestock producers are encouraged to contact their local FSA office with any questions regarding eligibility.

Producers must complete an application and provide supporting documentation for 2016 losses by Jan. 30, 2017. Please contact the local FSA office ASAP to schedule an appointment to begin the application process and for questions on FSA programs. For more information, visit Montana FSA online at www.fsa.usda.gov/mt and www.usda.gov/disaster.

[LFP Factsheet](#) (pdf)

2016 Livestock Indemnity Program - Jan. 30, 2017 Application Deadline

The deadline to file an application for the 2016 Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) is Jan. 30, 2017. The purpose of the LIP program is to provide benefits to livestock producers for livestock deaths that were in excess of normal mortality losses caused by adverse weather.

Producers who suffered death losses due to adverse weather from Jan. 1, 2016 through Dec. 31, 2016 must complete a CCC-852 and provide the required supporting documentation with their local FSA office by the Jan. 30, 2017 deadline. There are NO late filed provisions for the Livestock Indemnity Program.

For 2016 livestock deaths, the notice of loss must have been filed within 30 calendar days from when the loss was apparent. Livestock producers suffering livestock losses may submit a notice of loss to FSA by phone, fax, email and/or in person in the office. For more info, contact you local FSA office.

[LIP Factsheet](#) (pdf)

USDA Announces Streamlined Guaranteed Loans and Additional Lender Category for Small-Scale Operators

Options Help More Beginning, Small and Urban Producers Gain Access to Credit

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the availability of a streamlined version of USDA guaranteed loans, which are tailored for smaller scale farms and urban producers. The program, called EZ Guarantee Loans, uses a simplified application process to help beginning, small, underserved and family farmers and ranchers apply for loans of up to \$100,000 from USDA-approved lenders to purchase farmland or finance agricultural operations.

USDA today also unveiled a new category of lenders that will join traditional lenders, such as banks and credit unions, in offering USDA EZ Guarantee Loans. Microlenders, which include Community Development Financial Institutions and Rural Rehabilitation Corporations, will be able to offer their customers up to \$50,000 of EZ Guaranteed Loans, helping to reach urban areas and underserved producers. Banks, credit unions and other traditional USDA-approved lenders, can offer customers up to \$100,000 to help with agricultural operation costs.

EZ Guarantee Loans offer low interest rates and terms up to seven years for financing operating expenses and 40 years for financing the purchase of farm real estate. USDA-approved lenders can issue these loans with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) guaranteeing the loan up to 95 percent.

USDA is providing a 90-day period for the public to review and comment on program improvements. To review program details, visit www.regulations.gov, reference RIN 0560-AI34 and follow the instructions to submit comments.

More than half of all FSA loans go to new farmers and more than a quarter to underserved borrowers. FSA also offers loans of up to \$5,000 to young farmers and ranchers through the Youth Loan Program. Loans are made to eligible youth to finance agricultural projects, with almost 9,000 young people now participating. More information about the available types of FSA farm loans can be found at www.fsa.usda.gov/farmloans or by contacting your local FSA office.

[EZ Guaranteed Loans Factsheet](#) (pdf)

[Guaranteed Microlender Factsheet](#) (pdf)

Emergency Loans – Disaster Designations in Montana

FSA's Emergency Loan Program is available for agricultural producers in counties designated as primary or contiguous natural disaster areas. See map below of current Disaster Designations in Montana by County. Contact your local FSA office for specific designations in your area and time frames to apply. Eligible producers have **eight months** from the date of the disaster designation to apply for low-interest emergency loans to 1.) restore or replace essential property; 2.) pay all or part of production costs associated with the disaster year; 3.) pay essential family living expenses; or 4.) refinance certain debts, excluding real estate. Producers interested in applying for an emergency loan, or other FLP loans, should contact their local FSA office to set up an appointment with the Farm Loan Program staff serving your area.

[Current Disaster Designations in Montana](#) - (by county)

[Emergency Loan Factsheet](#) (pdf)

Change in Farming/Ranching Operation

If you have bought or sold land, or if you have picked up or dropped rented land from your operation, make sure you report the changes to your administrative FSA office as soon as possible. When making ownership changes, please provide a copy of the land deed or recorded land contract for purchased property. If changes have been made to your organizational structure (entity type, members, shares, etc.) or to the contributions of land, capital, equipment, labor, or management being made to your farming operation, these changes also need to be promptly reported to your recording FSA office when made. A reminder that the failure to maintain up-to-date and accurate records with FSA can cause potential loss of program eligibility.

Upcoming 2016 FSA Deadlines

NOW!!: File form CCC-633 EZ page 1 with FSA before losing beneficial interest to maintain Loan Deficiency Payment (LDP) eligibility. (To request payments, producers need to submit page 2 of the CCC-633EZ.)

Nov. 1: 2016 Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees & Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) Application for Payment Deadline - See article above for more details.

Nov. 7: County Committee Election Ballots will be Mailed to Eligible Voters

Nov. 12: All Hay Bales Must be Removed from CRP

Nov. 15: 2017 Acreage Reporting Deadline for Apiculture, Perennial Forage, Pasture, Rangeland & Forage (PRF) including Native Grass, Fall Wheat (Hard Red Winter – HRW), and all other Fall-Seeded Small Grains

Nov. 15: Deadline for 2016 NAP Production Reports for Annual Fall-Seeded Crops, Perennial Forage, Mixed Forage Crops, Rye, Speltz, Triticale, Wheat and Garlic

Dec. 1: 2017 NAP Application Closing Date for Honey Producers

Dec. 5: Last Day to Return Voted County Committee Election Ballots to local FSA offices

Dec. 16: Final date to enroll in the 2017 Margin Protection Program Dairy (MPP-Dairy). The MPP Dairy Program 2017 Registration was extended to Dec. 16.

Ongoing FSA Notice of Loss Requirements:

Montana farmers and ranchers are reminded to timely report all crop and livestock losses to your local FSA office. For any questions, please contact your local FSA county office.

NAP – Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program: 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.

ELAP – Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program: Submit 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.

LIP - Livestock Indemnity Program: Submit Notice of Loss within 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent.

TAP - Tree Assistance Program: 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>.

Ag News from USDA Rural Development: USDA Seeks Applications for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Loans and Grants

Rural small businesses and agricultural producers are encouraged to apply for loans and grants to support renewable energy and energy efficiency projects.

USDA is accepting [Rural Energy for America Program](#) (REAP) applications for: 1) energy audit and renewable energy development assistance grants, and 2) renewable energy system and energy efficiency guaranteed loans and grants.

The application deadline for energy audit and renewable energy development assistance grants is **Jan. 31, 2017**. Applications for renewable energy system and energy efficiency grants of \$20,000 or less are due by Oct. 31, 2016, for the first funding cycle and March 31, 2017, for the second funding cycle. Applications for renewable energy system and energy efficiency grants of greater than \$20,000 and all combination grants and guaranteed loans are due by March 31, 2017. USDA will set aside 20 percent of the funds for grants of \$20,000 or less.

Applications for renewable energy system and energy efficiency grants or for loan/grant combinations that are received after March 31, 2017, will be considered in Fiscal Year 2018, which starts Oct. 1, 2017. Guaranteed loan applications will be reviewed and processed when received, with periodic competitions. For additional information, contact the USDA [energy coordinator](#) for your state, or see page 71689 of the October 18 [Federal Register](#).

Eligible applicants for renewable energy systems and energy efficiency loans and grants include agricultural producers and rural small businesses, which may include tribal business entities, rural electric cooperatives and public power entities. Renewable energy sources include wind, solar, renewable biomass (including anaerobic digesters), small hydro-electric, ocean, geothermal or hydrogen derived from these renewable resources. Eligible applicants for energy audit and renewable energy development assistance grants include State, tribal or local governments; institutions of higher education; and rural electric cooperatives and public power entities.

Nationwide, USDA has helped finance more than 12,000 REAP projects since 2009. When fully operational, these projects will generate or save enough energy to power more than 750,000 homes annually, and replace more than 36 million barrels of oil annually.

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).