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## Policy Updates for Acreage Reporting

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) recently made several policy updates for acreage reporting for cover crops, revising intended use, late-filed provisions, grazing allotments as well as updated the definitions of “idle” and “fallow.”



### Reporting Cover Crops:

Cover crop types can be chosen from the following four categories:

- **Cereals and other grasses**
- **Legumes**
- **Brassicas and other broadleaves**
- **Mixtures**

If the cover crop is harvested for any use other than forage or grazing and is not terminated according to policy guidelines, then that crop will no longer be considered a cover crop and the acreage report must be revised to reflect the actual crop.

### Permitted Revision of Intended use After Acreage Reporting Date:

New operators or owners who pick up a farm after the acreage reporting deadline has passed and the crop has already been reported on the farm, have 30 calendar days from the date when the new operator or owner acquired the lease on land, control of the land or ownership and new producer crop share interest in the previously reported crop acreage. Under this policy, appropriate documentation must be provided to the County Committee’s satisfaction to determine that a legitimate operator or ownership and producer crop share interest change occurred to permit the revision.

### **Acreage Reports:**

In order to maintain program eligibility and benefits, you must timely file acreage reports. Failure to file an acreage report by the crop acreage reporting deadline may result in ineligibility for future program benefits. FSA will not accept acreage reports provided more than a year after the acreage reporting deadline.

### **Reporting Grazing Allotments:**

FSA offices can now accept acreage reports for grazing allotments. You will use form "FSA-578" to report grazing allotments as animal unit months (AUMs) using the "Reporting Unit" field. Your local FSA office will need the grazing period start and end date and the percent of public land.

### **Definitions of Terms**

FSA defines "idle" as cropland or a balance of cropland within a Common Land Unit (CLU) (field/subfield) which is not planted or considered not planted and does not meet the definition of fallow or skip row.

Fallow is considered unplanted cropland acres which are part of a crop/fallow rotation where cultivated land that is normally planted is purposely kept out of production during a regular growing season.

For more information, contact your Local County USDA Service Center or visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://fsa.usda.gov).

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## **Producers with Individual Agriculture Risk Coverage Reminded to Report Yields**

Producers who elected Individual Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC-IC) are required to report yields annually to FSA. The final date to report production from the prior crop year for farms enrolled in ARC-IC is July 15. The ARC Program is an income support program that provides payments when actual crop revenue declines below a specified guarantee level.

ARC-IC program payments are issued when the actual individual crop revenue for all covered commodities planted on the ARC-IC farm is less than the ARC-IC guarantee for those covered commodities. ARC-IC uses producer's certified yields, rather than county level yields. ARC-IC payments are dependent upon the planting of covered commodities on the farm. A producer's ARC-IC farm is defined as the sum of the producer's interest in all ARC-IC enrolled farms in the state. Producers with all farms enrolled in County Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage are not required to report production from the prior crop year.

For more information contact your Local USDA Service center or visit [fsa.usda.gov](https://fsa.usda.gov).

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## **USDA Opens Signup for CLEAR30, Expands Pilot to Be Nationwide**



Landowners and agricultural producers currently enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) now have a wider opportunity to enroll in a 30-year contract through the Clean Lakes, Estuaries, And Rivers initiative, called CLEAR30. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is expanding CLEAR30 – a water-quality focused option available through CRP – to be nationwide now.

Interested producers with CRP contracts expiring September 30, 2021, should sign up by August 6, 2021. CLEAR30 provides an opportunity for producers to receive incentives for a 30-year commitment to water quality practices on their CRP land, building on their original 10- to 15-year CRP contracts.

These long-term contracts ensure that practices remain in place for 30 years, which improves water quality through reducing sediment and nutrient runoff and helping prevent algal blooms.

### **About CLEAR30**

CLEAR30 was created by the 2018 Farm Bill to better address water quality concerns. Originally, CLEAR30 was only available in the Great Lakes and Chesapeake Bay watersheds. Now, access is expanded to agricultural producers nationwide.

Eligible producers must have certain water quality benefitting practices currently enrolled under continuous CRP or through the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), under contracts that are expiring on September 30, 2021.

These long-term contracts will help ensure that conservation impacts and benefits remain in place for 30 years, reducing sediment and nutrient runoff and, ultimately, algal blooms.

Conservation in riparian areas also provides important carbon sequestration benefits. Traditional CRP contracts run from 10 to 15 years.

Annual rental payments for landowners who enroll in CLEAR30 will be equal to the current Continuous CRP annual payment rate plus a 20% water quality incentive and annual rate adjustment of 27.5%.

### **How to Sign Up**

To sign up for CLEAR30, contact your local USDA Service Center by August 6, 2021. While USDA offices may be closed to visitors because of the pandemic, Service Center staff continue to work with agricultural producers via phone, email, and other digital tools. To conduct business, please contact your local USDA Service Center. Contact information can be found at [farmers.gov/service-locator](https://farmers.gov/service-locator).

### **More Information**

CLEAR30 is an option available through CRP, which is one of the world's largest voluntary conservation programs with a long track record of preserving topsoil, sequestering carbon and reducing nitrogen runoff, as well providing healthy habitat for wildlife.

To enroll in CLEAR30, please contact your local USDA Service Center. For more information on CRP, visit the Conservation Reserve Program.

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## **FSA Offers Loan Servicing Options**



There are options for Farm Service Agency (FSA) loan customers during financial stress. If you are a borrower who is unable to make payments on a loan, contact your local FSA Farm Loan Manager to learn about your options.

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# USDA Seeks New Partnerships to Safeguard, Restore Wetland Ecosystems



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing up to \$17 million for conservation partners to help protect and restore critical wetlands on agricultural lands through the Wetland Reserve Enhancement Partnership (WREP). USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is prioritizing proposals that focus on assisting historically underserved producers conserving wetlands. Proposals from partners are due August 15, 2021.

Restored wetlands help to improve water quality downstream, enhance wildlife habitat, reduce impacts from flooding and provide recreational benefits.

“Our goal is to support agricultural producers in their efforts to conserve natural resources on their land,” said Denise Coleman, State Conservationist in Pennsylvania. “Wetland Reserve Enhancement Partnerships help partners and producers work together to protect wetland ecosystems on working lands.”

Through WREP projects, eligible conservation partners protect, restore and enhance high-priority wetlands on agriculture lands. WREP enables effective integration of wetland restoration on working agricultural landscapes, providing meaningful benefits to farmers and ranchers who enroll in the program and to the communities where the wetlands exist.

Eligible partners include state and local governments and non-government organizations.

WREP funding is for fiscal year 2022 which begins on October 1, 2021.

## How to Apply

Partners interested in applying should contact their [NRCS state office](#) for more information. Proposals are due by **August 15, 2021**.

Partners looking to learn more about opportunities for WREP funding for fiscal year 2022 are encouraged to attend the WREP workshop on July 15, 2021 at 1 p.m. EST. Partners interested in attending should contact WREP Program Manager, Lisa McCauley at [lisa.mccauley@usda.gov](mailto:lisa.mccauley@usda.gov).

### **More Information**

Funding will be provided through the Wetland Reserve Enhancement Partnership (WREP), part of the [Agricultural Conservation Easement Program \(ACEP\)](#), a Farm Bill conservation program. Through WREP, states, local units of governments, non-governmental organizations and American Indian tribes collaborate with NRCS through cooperative and partnership agreements. These partners work with tribal and private landowners who voluntarily enroll eligible land into easements to protect, restore and enhance wetlands on their properties.

Wetland reserve easements enable landowners to successfully reduce impacts from flooding, recharge groundwater, enhance and protect wildlife habitat and provide outdoor recreational and educational opportunities. Partners benefit from WREP by targeting outreach and enrollment priorities supported by NRCS, including places impacted by natural disasters. To learn more, visit [www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.pa.nrcs.usda.gov).

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## **FSA Interest Rates- July 2021**

### **Farm Operating Loans**

Farm Operating Loans - Direct 1.875 %

Farm Operating Loans - Microloan 1.875 %

### **Farm Ownership Loans**

Direct 3.250 %

Microloan 3.250 %

Joint Financing 2.500 %

Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher 1.500 %

Emergency Loans 2.875 %

**Farm Storage Facility Loans**

Farm Storage Facility Loans (3 Year Term) 0.375 %

Farm Storage Facility Loans (5 Year Term) 0.750 %

Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 Year Term) 1.250 %

Farm Storage Facility Loans (10 Year Term)1.500 %

Farm Storage Facility Loans (12 Year Term)1.750 %

**Commodity Loans**

1.125 %



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