

July 2016



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## Washington FSA Newsletter

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### Washington Farm Service Agency

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[www.fsa.usda.gov/wa](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wa)

**State Executive Director:**  
Judy Olson

**State Committee:**  
Don Olmstead, Jr., Chair  
Larry DeHaan, Member  
Steve Hair, Member

### Final Acreage Reporting Deadline for 2016 Crops Nears

The 2016 final crop acreage reporting deadline for all Washington counties is **July 15, 2016**. You can avoid delays by reporting crop acreages as soon as planting is complete.

Filing an accurate acreage report for all crops and land uses, including failed acreage and prevented planting acreage, can prevent the loss of benefits for a variety of programs (Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program or NAP; Tree Assistance Program or TAP; and Agriculture Risk Coverage and Individual Risk Coverage or ARC-

Jesus Limon, Member  
Sheryl Hagen-Zakarison,  
Member

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

IC). Failed acreage must be reported within 15 days of the disaster event and before disposition of the crop. Prevented planting must be reported no later than 15 days after the final planting date.

Make an appointment or contact your [county FSA office](#) about reporting your crop acreage.

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## FSA Unveils Monthly Webinar Series

The FSA Outreach and Education Division will host a series of webinars each month to inform producers about FSA programs and initiatives. To register for any of the below listed webinars, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/outreach](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/outreach) and click on “Outreach Webinars.”

### **July 19 @ 2 p.m. EDT** **Understanding Receipt for Service**

To ensure that all USDA customers and potential customers are being served properly in local offices, the 2014 Farm Bill requires that a receipt be provided. Learn more about Receipt for Service, how it affects you and what you can expect when you visit a local Farm Service Agency county office.

### **Aug. 9 @ 2 p.m. EDT** **Need Commodity Storage? The Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) Can Help**

The Farm Storage Facility Loan Program provides low-interest financing so producers can build or upgrade permanent or portable facilities to store commodities. Learn how this program may be able to help your operation.

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations to attend or participate in these webinars should contact Tanya Brown at 202-690-1700 or Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339 at least three business days prior to the webinar.

The webinars will be recorded for future viewing and can be accessed on [www.fsa.usda.gov/outreach](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/outreach).

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## Consider Protecting 2017 Crops Now

## ***Non-Insurable Crop Coverage Available for 2017 Crop Year***

Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage, for crops not insurable through your crop insurance agent, is an available tool to help mitigate financial risk if the covered crop is damaged, lost or prevented from being planted due to natural weather related disaster conditions. The first NAP application deadline for 2017 crops is August 31, 2016. A list of crops and corresponding dates can be found at the end of this article.

NAP provides catastrophic level (CAT) of coverage for losses that exceed 50 percent of the expected yield at 55 percent of the average market price for the crop; as well as additional buy-up levels of coverage ranging from 50 to 65 percent of production, in 5 percent increments, at 100 percent of the average market price. You can request organic or direct market price options, if available and applicable, and a historical marketing percentage option for multiple marketed crops. Buy-up coverage will include a premium cost, in addition to the administrative fee. Beginning, limited resource, and traditionally underserved farmers can request a waiver of the service fee and a 50 percent premium cost reduction.

To apply for NAP, submit an application for coverage and pay the administrative fee by the application closing date deadline for the crop. The NAP administrative fee is \$250 per crop, up to a \$750 cap per county. The maximum fee for multiple crops in multiple counties is \$1,875 per crop year. Producers who select buy-up coverage will be billed for the premium amount due, which is based on 5.25 percent of the coverage value based on the level of coverage selected for your share of the acres planted to the covered crop. An online NAP premium calculator is available to help you determine what level of coverage will work best for you and what the associated premium cost will be. The NAP premium calculator can be accessed by clicking on the link: <http://fsa.usapas.com/NAP.aspx>

To be eligible for NAP benefits, production loss must be attributed to an approved weather related disaster condition. Losses must be reported to FSA within 15 days after the adverse weather event or when the loss becomes evident. For hand-harvested crops, you must report the loss within 72 hours of when the damage or loss first becomes apparent. You may receive a NAP payment if all eligibility requirements have been met and the crop suffers a weather-related loss exceeding the level of coverage selected.

Some of the basic eligibility requirements for NAP benefits include annual reporting of crop acreages; timely reporting damage, loss or prevented planting as it occurs; providing actual production evidence on a yearly basis; and obtaining a loss adjustor appraisal if the damaged crop will be destroyed or left unharvested.

NAP coverage for the 2017 crop year should be purchased at least 30 days before the crop is planted, but no later than the established NAP application for coverage closing date listed as follows:

8/31/16 – Aquaculture; beets (for stecklings); cabbage (for seed or fresh); canola; carrots (for seed); cauliflower (for seed or fresh); Christmas trees; floriculture; mushrooms; onions (for seed, fresh or processing); rapeseed; rutabaga (for seed or fresh); turf grass sod; turnips (for seed or fresh); and any other fall planted crops not mentioned in other closing dates.

9/30/16 – Garlic; mint; perennial grazing; forage; mixed forage and forage seed crops.

11/21/16 – All perennial crops not listed under the 9/30 category; asparagus; berries; grapes; honey; hops; tree fruits and nuts.

3/15/17 – Artichokes, beets (for seed or fresh); buckwheat; camelina; carrots (for fresh or processing); mustard; radish (for seed or fresh); small grain forages (wheat, barley, oats, peas); and any other spring planted crops not mentioned in other closing dates.

NAP closing dates are also posted on the FSA website [www.fsa.usda.gov/wa](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wa). Contact your local [county office](#) if you are interested in applying for NAP coverage, or if you have any questions regarding NAP availability or application closing dates.

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## Deadline to Submit Production for NAP Covered Crops

Producers who obtain Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage are required to annually report all harvested production for NAP covered crops. This will help ensure you maintain compliance with NAP program requirements. Reported production will be used to determine your approved production history for future year NAP participation. Failure to timely report production can negatively affect your future year approved yield for your NAP covered crops. If you've filed a notice of loss for a NAP covered crop, actual production evidence must be timely filed before a NAP application for payment can be processed. The deadline to provide 2015 crop year actual production to your [county office](#) is Friday **July 15, 2016**.

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## Reporting Losses of Hand-Harvested Crops

For hand-harvested crops covered by Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage, please report any damage or loss within 72 hours of when the damage or loss first becomes apparent. You should provide the following information, producer name, unit affected, crop affected, apparent date of the loss, cause of loss, what will be done with the damaged crop, and what has been done with the damaged crop. Notification can initially be made to your local county office by email, fax, or phone. A CCC-576 Part B "Notice of Loss" form must be submitted within 15 calendar days from when the damage occurred.

Failure to timely notify FSA of the loss may adversely affect eligibility for NAP benefits if the loss exceeds the level of coverage selected. If damage is extensive and you decide the crop will not be taken to harvest, include this decision when filing a notice of loss so a loss adjuster can be scheduled to conduct a field visit before the crop deteriorates further. If the crop is taken to harvest, once the hand harvesting is complete you must notify the county office so that a loss adjuster can conduct a field visit to appraise any production remaining in the field. Contact your [county office](#) for more information.

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## FSA Seeks Nominees for 2016 County Committee Elections

### *Committee Members Bring Local Knowledge to Federal Agency*

You have an opportunity to influence federal farm programs with your local knowledge. FSA is seeking nominations for farmers and ranchers willing to represent your peers on the agency's county committees. All county FSA offices will accept nominations through **August 1, 2016** for this fall's elections.

Farmers and ranchers on FSA county committees make decisions which impact program payments. They can settle appeals of agency decisions. Also, they're responsible for hiring FSA managers at the county level.

FSA encourages all interested agricultural producers, including women and minority growers, to seek nomination. Eligible candidates must participate or cooperate in any Farm Service Agency program and be of legal voting age. Even if you are not currently participating in FSA programs, you are considered

eligible to vote if you have farm records on file with the agency.

Each county committee draws its members from local administrative areas. Nominated by local farmers and ranchers, candidates must live in the county's local administrative area they will represent and must be eligible to vote in the county election. Members serve on staggered three-year terms so that one-third of the seats are up for re-election each year. If you would like to nominate a candidate, or yourself, contact your local [FSA office](#) or check the [LAA map](#) on the FSA website [www.fsa.usda.gov/wa](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wa) to find out which local administrative areas are up for election.

Elected county committee members receive an hourly wage for their attendance and representation at county committee meetings.

Elections will take place in the fall and newly elected committee members begin their terms in January 2017. FSA will send ballots to all eligible voters. Additional information and nomination forms may be requested from any [FSA office](#). Nomination forms may also be obtained [online](#).

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## Dairy Margin Protection Program (MPP) Annual Coverage Election Begins

Beginning on Friday July 1, 2016, dairy operations can submit your 2017 calendar year MPP-Dairy annual election coverage forms to FSA. MPP-Dairy offers various levels of coverage for dairy operations to choose from each year. The basic coverage level of \$4.00 per hundredweight on 90 percent of the dairy operation's established production history is available for the \$100 annual administrative fee. You have the option to choose a higher level of coverage by paying the administrative fee plus a premium based on level of coverage selected. The higher levels of coverage range from \$4.00 up to \$8.00 per hundredweight in \$0.50 increments. Dairies who choose the premium option, may select to cover a percentage of your production history, ranging from 25 to 90 percent, in 5 percent increments.

A web-based decision tool is available to help you compare options and decide what level of coverage will provide the best coverage to manage your financial risk associated with low milk prices or high feed costs that may occur during the 2017 calendar year. This decision tool also calculates the premium cost that would be associated with selection of a higher level of coverage. The decision tool can be found at: [www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool). This web-based tool allows you to quickly and easily combine unique operation data and other key variables to calculate your coverage needs based on price projections. You 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, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

FSA county offices will accept the MPP-Dairy 2017 coverage election and the \$100 annual administrative through September 30, 2016. Contact your [county office](#) for more information about the MPP-Dairy program, or the web-based decision tool.

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## Conservation Reserve Program Payments Depend on Completed Contracts

Producers who had Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) bids accepted in the CRP General Signup 49 are reminded to complete your conservation plan by **September 9, 2016**. If you have not yet made an appointment to work with USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to develop a conservation plan, please contact your local NRCS office. Completed plans must include all signatures

by the deadline in order for FSA to approve contracts timely. FSA can make CRP payments only on completed contracts. Contact your Farm Service Agency [county office](#) if you have questions.

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## Cutoff Date for ARC/PLC Enrollment Approaches

FSA county offices are accepting enrollment for the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs. This is an additional step after completing ARC/PLC selection and base and yield updates. The deadline to enroll in 2016 ARC/PLC is **August 1, 2016**, including providing all required signatures. Depending on the level of farm complexity, an office visit for ARC/PLC enrollment can be lengthy, so appointments are encouraged.

For each year, enrollment needs to reflect the owners and operator on the farm for that year. So the contract participants could differ from 2015 to 2016.

To make an appointment or to learn more, contact your Farm Service Agency [county office](#).

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## Completion of 2015 Emergency Conservation Program Projects

FSA implemented the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) in many Washington counties as a result of drought and fires in 2015. Producers who participated in program need to report completion of your ECP practices and submit all supporting cost data so you can receive payment. Deadlines vary by county and ECP signup. Check the approval of your ECP project for the expiration date. The work must be completed by then or must request an extension prior to the deadline. Contact your Farm Service Agency [county office](#) if you have questions or need an extension.

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## Farm Ownership Loans Still Available

FSA still has funds available to purchase a farm or ranch. FSA offers direct farm ownership loans to producers who want to establish your own farm or ranch and are unable to get commercial credit. FSA loan officers process, approve and service direct loans.

Direct farm ownership loans can be used to purchase farmland, enlarge an existing farm, construct and repair buildings, and to make farm improvements.

The maximum loan amount for direct farm ownership loans is \$300,000 and a down payment is not required. Repayment terms vary depending on the type of loan, collateral and the producer's ability to repay the loan. Farm ownership loan repayment cannot exceed 40 years.

Please contact your FSA [county office](#) for more information or to apply for a direct farm ownership or operating loan.

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## USDA's Building Blocks for Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry

The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced a comprehensive and detailed approach to support farmers, ranchers, and forest land owners in their response to address the causes of climate change in April 2015. The framework consists of 10 building blocks that span a range of technologies and practices to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase carbon storage, and generate clean renewable energy through mitigation.

USDA's strategy focuses on climate-smart practices designed for working production systems that provide multiple economic and environmental benefits in addition to supporting resilience to extreme weather, reduced emissions and increased carbon storage.

Through this comprehensive set of voluntary programs and initiatives spanning its programs, USDA expects to reduce net emissions and enhance carbon sequestration by over **120 million metric tons** of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (MMTCO<sub>2</sub>e) per year – about 2 percent of economy-wide net greenhouse emissions – by 2025. That's the equivalent of taking **25 million cars** off the road, or offsetting the emissions produced by powering nearly **11 million homes** last year.

For more information on the Building Blocks for Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry click the following link: <http://www.usda.gov/documents/climate-smart-fact-sheet.pdf> . For additional information on ways to consider greenhouse gases when managing land, refer to the USDA Climate Hub webpage: <http://www.climatehubs.oce.usda.gov/>.

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## Outreach Funding Available for FSA Educational Partners

FSA is accepting proposals for cooperative agreements to educate historically underserved farmers and other producers about FSA programs, such as those that provide financial, disaster or technical support.

Applications are due no later than **July 11, 2016**. This is the second consideration period for proposals. Projects not selected during the first evaluation period will be reconsidered during the second period. Additional information on the funding solicitation and the related FSA programs can be found at <http://www.grants.gov/> using reference number USDA-FSA-CA-2016-001. For nonprofits and public institutions of higher education that are considering participation, a recording of the online informational session held with stakeholders is posted on the web at [www.fsa.usda.gov/outreach](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/outreach).

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## Hiring Continues at the Farm Service Agency

The Farm Service Agency continues to fill positions in Washington state as employees retire and the agency makes up for years of losses during a hiring freeze. FSA is seeking qualified applicants interested in a training position, with the long term goal of managing an FSA county office in Washington state. FSA is hiring County Office Trainees (COTs), Program Technicians and Farm Loan Assistant/Specialist.

The agency is looking for qualified applicants who are interested in living in rural communities and assisting farmers and ranchers. Vacancies with FSA are posted on the USAJobs website [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov).

Positions specific to FSA in Washington state can be found at <https://www.usajobs.gov/JobSearch/Search/GetResults?OrganizationID=AGFA&ApplicantEligibility=All&CountrySubDivision=Washington>

Or contact Mitzi Stephens at the FSA State Office at [mitzi.stephens@wa.usda.gov](mailto:mitzi.stephens@wa.usda.gov) or (509) 323-3007.

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## Important Dates and Deadlines

**July 11, 2016** - Deadline to submit outreach partnership proposals.

**July 15, 2016** - Crop acreage reporting deadline for spring-seeded crops and CRP.

**July 15, 2016** - Deadline to submit 2015 actual production for NAP covered crops.

**August 1, 2016** - Deadline to submit nominations for county committee elections.

**August 31, 2016** - Deadline to obtain 2017 crop year NAP coverage for aquaculture; beets (for stecklings); cabbage (for seed or fresh); canola; carrots (for seed); cauliflower (for seed or fresh); Christmas trees; floriculture; mushrooms; onions (for seed, fresh or processing); rapeseed; rutabaga (for seed or fresh); turf grass sod; turnips (for seed or fresh); and any other fall planted crops not mentioned in other closing dates.

**September 9, 2016** - Deadline to complete and sign conservation plan for Signup 49 CRP contracts.

For previous issues of the FSA Washington newsletter and a list of annual program **reminders**, check the [newsletter page](#) on the FSA Washington website.

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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).