

August 2017



Farm Service Agency Electronic News Service

# NEWSLETTER

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## Wisconsin FSA Newsletter

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### Wisconsin Farm Service Agency

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

### A Message from the SED

School busses are out on the roads again and kids are going back to school. Back to school also signifies that harvest is coming in Wisconsin. Keep in mind that the Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers a number of programs to help obtain some working capital for your farming operation during and after harvest.

**Marketing Assistance Loans (MAL's)** provide producers interim financing at harvest time to help them meet cash flow needs when market prices are typically at harvest-time lows. Interest rates are very competitive and the loans are a great tool for any farm operation. To learn more visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport).

It may be too late for this harvest, but the **Farm Storage Facility Loans** available through FSA provide low-interest financing for producers to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities to store eligible commodities they produce, including cold storage facilities, bulk tanks, storage facilities, new or used handling and storage equipment (portable or permanently affixed), and storage and handling trucks. Due to recent program changes, more storage and handling equipment is eligible than ever before. Please contact your local FSA office to find out if storage or facility needs are eligible for this program.

FSA also offers a variety of different **direct and guaranteed farm operating and ownership loans** that can help producers to purchase farmland, repair buildings, purchase operating expenses, and cover costs associated with soil and water conservation. To learn more visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/farmloans](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/farmloans).

For a number of programs, annual payments are processed in October. County offices will be running many reports in the coming month to ensure that all paperwork, contracts, and payment information is correct. If you have made any changes to your operation organization or your bank account this year, please make sure that your local office is aware before payments are processed. Your payments can be delayed if information has changed and the office is not informed. To find your local office contact information, please visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Wishing you a great school year,

Russ Raeder

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## Dates to Remember

### **September 1, 2017:**

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (**NAP**) application deadline for 2018 Value Loss Crops including ginseng, turf grass sod, aquaculture, mushrooms, and Christmas trees

### **September 1, 2017:**

Signup period for the 2018 Dairy Margin Protection Program (**MPP**) begins

### **September 4, 2017:**

USDA **Service Centers will be closed** in observance of Labor Day

### **September 30, 2017:**

NAP Application deadline for 2018 crops including alfalfa, birdsfoot trefoil, clover, grasses, mixed forages, rhubarb, rye, triticale, vetch, wheat, and other winter seeded small grains and perennial forage

### **November 1, 2017:**

Enrollment begins for 2018 Agriculture Risk Coverage/Price Loss Coverage (**ARC/PLC**) contracts

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## 2016 PLC Payment Rates and ARC Actual Prices for Wheat, Barley and Oats

The Agricultural Act of 2014 provides for payments for covered commodities through the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program when the market year average price is below the reference price. Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) program payments are triggered when the actual revenue is below the guarantee established for the program.

The Marketing Year Average (MYA) price for wheat, barley and oats was announced June 29, 2017 resulting in a PLC payment rate of \$1.61 per bushel for 2016 wheat and \$0.34 per bushel for 2016 oats. There is no PLC payment on 2016 barley.

## 2016 PLC Payment Rates and ARC Actual Prices for Wheat, Barley and Oats, (Continued)

For Agriculture Loss Coverage – County (ARC-CO), actual crop revenue is calculated by multiplying the actual average yield for your county by the higher of the MYA price or the national loan rate. For 2016, the following prices have been set – wheat at \$3.89 per bushel; barley at \$4.96 per bushel; and oats at \$2.06 per bushel. 2016 county yields will not be available until this fall.

Agriculture Loss Coverage–Individual Option (ARC-IC) will utilize the same prices as ARC-CO; however, the actual crop revenue cannot be calculated until participating producers report all production for all covered commodities planted on the farm and all MYA prices for all covered commodities planted on the farm are known. Both of these items are necessary to calculate the ARC-IC actual revenue for the farm.

All 2016 ARC and PLC payments cannot be made until after Oct. 1, 2017, or the announcement of the final 2016 MYA price for the applicable covered commodity.

For information on release dates for MYA prices, ARC-CO yields and projected and final PLC payment rates, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc) and click on the “ARC/PLC Program Data” link.

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## Consider 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. The 2014 Farm Bill expanded NAP to include higher levels of protection. Beginning, underserved and limited resource farmers are now eligible for free catastrophic level coverage, as well as discounted premiums for additional levels of protection.

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/actuarialinformationbrowser2017/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, with higher levels of coverage, up to 65 percent of their expected production at 100 percent of the average market price, including coverage for organics and crops marketed directly to consumers.

Deadlines for coverage vary by state and crop. In Wisconsin, please be aware of the upcoming NAP deadlines:

**September 1, 2017:** Deadline to insure 2018 Value Loss Crops including ginseng, turf grass sod, aquaculture, mushrooms, and Christmas trees

**September 30, 2017:** Deadline to insure 2018 crops including alfalfa, birdsfoot trefoil, clover, grasses, mixed forages, rhubarb, rye, triticale, vetch, wheat, and other winter seeded small grains and perennial forage

To learn more about NAP visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/nap](http://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.

## Start Planning: Youth Loans Available

As the youth across the state are finishing up their year-long 4-H and FFA projects, the Farm Service Agency (FSA) wants to take the opportunity to remind everyone that loans are available to youth to establish and operate agricultural income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5000.

Youth Loan Eligibility Requirements:

- Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien
- Be 10 to 20 years of age
- Comply with FSA's general eligibility requirements
- Be unable to get a loan from other sources
- Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above
- Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the youth loan applicant, and provide adequate supervision.

Stop by the local FSA office for help preparing and processing the application forms. To find your local office visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

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## USDA Service Centers Closed September 4

In observance of the Labor Day Holiday (a federal holiday), USDA Service Centers will be closed on Monday, September 4th, 2017.

FSA will resume normal business hours on Tuesday, September 5th.

Producers needing to conduct business with FSA should plan appointments and office visits accordingly.

If you have questions or want to make an appointment, please contact your local USDA Service Center. To locate a USDA Service Center near you, please visit: <http://offices.usda.gov>.

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## Organic Certification Cost Share Program Available through FSA

The Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) provides cost share assistance to producers and handlers of agricultural products who are obtaining or renewing their certification under the National Organic Program (NOP). Certified operations may receive up to 75 percent of their certification costs paid from Oct. 1, 2016, through Sept. 30, 2017, not to exceed \$750 per certification scope.

Eligible costs include application fees, inspection costs, fees related to equivalency agreement/arrangement requirements, travel/per diem for inspectors, user fees, sales assessments and postage.

Ineligible costs include equipment, materials, supplies, transitional certification fees, late fees and inspections necessary to address National Organic Program regulatory violations.

Producers and handlers may submit OCCSP applications to FSA county offices or they may apply through participating State Agencies, which will be listed at <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/occsp/index> as their agreements to administer the program are finalized.

The FSA OCCSP application form is available at [USDA's eForms site](#) by selecting "Browse forms" and entering "OCCSP" in the "title or keywords" field on the search page. To learn more about organic certification cost share, visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/organic](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/organic) or contact a local FSA office by visiting <http://offices.usda.gov>.

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## Now Hiring: Career Opportunities in Wisconsin FSA

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) is an exciting and rewarding place to start, build, and/or continue your career. Be part of our team and support the well-being of Wisconsin agriculture and the American public.

FSA's diverse culture and benefits allow for a healthy balance between your career and home life. In addition to a generous salary, FSA offers a friendly and professional working environment with a diverse workforce, flexible hours/work schedules, and other family-friendly benefits such as: paid vacation and sick leave, paid holidays, retirement and supplemental savings plan, a wide array of health, dental, vision, and life insurance plans, flexible spending accounts, and long-term care insurance. Working for the U.S. Department of Agriculture will afford you the opportunity to contribute to projects that positively impact the lives of over 300 million people. Explore a career with the U.S. Department of Agriculture at [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov). New job openings are posted on a regular basis. Interested individuals can search for career opportunities based upon keywords and/or specific locations as well as create search profiles and job announcement notifications.

Currently the Wisconsin Farm Service Agency is accepting applications for positions in a number of locations in Wisconsin.

The Farm Service Agency is seeking candidates with farm experience and/or knowledge to perform work in support of Wisconsin agriculture and farmers. Starting annual salary is shown in each announcement listed below. All positions offer benefits which includes health insurance that can be carried into retirement, 401(k) plan, pension program, paid holidays, vacation, sick leave, and flexible work schedules.

Individuals who are interested in learning more about the hiring process with the Wisconsin Farm Service Agency are invited to visit <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/state-offices/Wisconsin/career-oppo/index>.

Applicants will need to enter the appropriate job announcement number below into the keyword search on [www.usajobs.com](http://www.usajobs.com) or click on the link below:

### County Program Technician (PT):

**Dodgeville, WI (Iowa County)** - CO-4/7: [WI-2017-0028](#)

Application deadline: 10:59 p.m. Central Time: Tuesday, September 19, 2017

**Madison, WI (Dane County)** - GS-4/7: [WI-2017-0027](#)

Application deadline: 10:59 p.m. Central Time: Tuesday, September 19, 2017

**Portage, WI (Columbia County)** - CO-4/7: [WI-2017-0026](#)

Application deadline: 10:59 p.m. Central Time: Tuesday, September 19, 2017

### County Farm Loan Officer Trainee (FLOT):

**Ashland, WI (Ashland-Bayfield-Douglas-Iron Counties)** - CO 4/7: [WI-2017-0025](#)

Application deadline: 10:59 p.m. Central Time: Tuesday, September 19, 2017

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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).

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