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Farm Service Agency Electronic News Service

NEWSLETTER

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Wisconsin FSA Newsletter

Wisconsin Farm Service Agency **A Message from the State Director**

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Happy Spring, everyone!

Our dairy producers will be the first to get a look at the programs in the 2018 farm bill. I know there is a high level of interest in the new Dairy Margin Coverage program, or DMC, because our county offices are getting a steady stream of calls and visits from producers with questions.

DMC signup will begin on June 17, and Wisconsin FSA employees are looking forward to explaining the program details to you. We will hold county-level meetings throughout the state and will be announcing dates and locations soon. In the meantime, access the updated [decision tool](#) to take a look at what the expanded coverage options and lower premiums will mean for your operation.

Producers have only a few more days to certify 2018 production for payments through the Market Facilitation Program. If you haven't visited your FSA office to certify your production, please remember that May 17 is the deadline.

Best wishes,

Sandy Chalmers

www.fsa.usda.gov/wi

Dates to Remember

May 10, 2019: Deadline for producers who elected to participate in LGM-Dairy in 2018 to sign up for the limited [retroactive MPP-Dairy program](#).

May 17, 2019: Deadline for agricultural producers to certify 2018 crop production for payments through the [Market Facilitation Program \(MFP\)](#)

May 24, 2019: Deadline for producers to obtain buy-up [Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program \(NAP\)](#) coverage for 2019 or 2020 eligible crops for which the NAP application closing date has passed.

May 27, 2019: USDA Service Centers closed.

May 31, 2019: Final date to obtain a [commodity loan](#) on 2018 corn, soybeans and other oilseeds, rice, grain sorghum and pulse crops.

June 17, 2019: [Dairy Margin Coverage Program](#) signup begins.

June 15-August 1, 2019: [County Committee Election](#) nomination period for Local Administrative Area up for election. Individuals can nominate themselves or others.

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USDA Announces New Decision Tool for New Dairy Margin Coverage Program

USDA announced today the availability of a new [web-based tool](#) – developed in partnership with the University of Wisconsin – to help dairy producers evaluate various scenarios using different coverage levels through the new [Dairy Margin Coverage](#) (DMC) program.

The 2018 Farm Bill authorized DMC, a voluntary risk management program that offers financial protection to dairy producers when the difference between the all milk price and the average feed cost (the margin) falls below a certain dollar amount selected by the producer. It replaces the program previously known as the Margin Protection Program for Dairy. Sign up for this USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) program opens on June 17.

The University of Wisconsin launched the decision support tool in cooperation with FSA and funded through a cooperative agreement with the USDA Office of the Chief Economist. The tool was designed to help producers determine the level of coverage under a variety of conditions that will provide them with the strongest financial safety net. It allows farmers to simplify their coverage level selection by combining operation data and other key variables to calculate coverage needs based on price projections.

The decision tool assists producers with calculating total premiums costs and administrative fees associated with participation in DMC. It also forecasts payments that will be made during the coverage year.

For more information, access the tool at fsa.usda.gov/dmc-tool. For DMC sign up, eligibility and related program information, visit fsa.usda.gov or contact your local [USDA Service Center](#).

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Market Facilitation Program Deadline Extended to May 17

USDA extended the deadline to May 17 from May 1 for agricultural producers to certify 2018 crop production for payments through the Market Facilitation Program (MFP), which helps producers who have been significantly affected by foreign tariffs, resulting in the loss of traditional exports. USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) extended the deadline because heavy rainfall and snowfall have delayed harvests in many parts of the country, preventing producers from certifying acres.

Payments will be issued only if eligible producers certify before the updated May 17 deadline.

The MFP provides payments to producers of corn, cotton, sorghum, soybeans, wheat, dairy, hogs, fresh sweet cherries and shelled almonds. FSA will issue payments based on the producer's certified total production of the MFP commodity multiplied by the [MFP rate](#) for that specific commodity.

Producers can certify production by contacting their [local FSA office](#) or through [farmers.gov](#).

About the Market Facilitation Program

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Sonny Perdue, launched the trade mitigation program to assist farmers suffering from damage because of unjustified trade retaliation by foreign nations. FSA implemented MFP in September 2018 as a relief strategy to protect agricultural producers while the Administration works on free, fair and reciprocal trade deals to open more markets to help American farmers compete globally. To date, more than \$8.3 billion has been paid to nearly 600,000 applicants.

The MFP is established under the statutory authority of the Commodity Credit Corporation Charter Act and is administered by FSA.

More Information

For more information, contact your [local FSA office](#) or visit [www.farmers.gov/MFP](#).

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Higher Limits Now Available on USDA Farm Loans

Higher limits are now available for borrowers interested in USDA's farm loans, which help agricultural producers purchase farms or cover operating expenses. The 2018 Farm Bill increased the amount that producers can borrow through direct and guaranteed loans available through USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) and made changes to other loans, such as microloans and emergency loans.

Key changes include:

- The Direct Operating Loan limit increased from \$300,000 to \$400,000, and the Guaranteed Operating Loan limit increased from \$ 1.429 million to \$1.75 million. Operating loans help producers pay for normal operating expenses, including machinery and equipment, seed, livestock feed, and more.
- The Direct Farm Ownership Loan limit increased from \$300,000 to \$600,000, and the Guaranteed Farm Ownership Loan limit increased from \$1.429 million to \$1.75 million. Farm ownership loans help producers become owner-operators of family farms as well as improve and expand current operations.
- Producers can now receive both a \$50,000 Farm Ownership Microloan and a \$50,000 Operating Microloan. Previously, microloans were limited to a combined \$50,000. Microloans provide flexible access to credit for small, beginning, niche, and non-traditional farm operations.
- Producers who previously received debt forgiveness as part of an approved FSA restructuring plan are now eligible to apply for emergency loans. Previously, these producers were ineligible.
- Beginning and socially disadvantaged producers can now receive up to a 95 percent guarantee against the loss of principal and interest on a loan, up from 90 percent.

Higher Limits Now Available on USDA Farm Loans (continued)

About Farm Loans

Direct farm loans, which include microloans and emergency loans, are financed and serviced by FSA, while guaranteed farm loans are financed and serviced by commercial lenders. For guaranteed loans, FSA provides a guarantee against possible financial loss of principal and interest.

For more information on FSA farm loans, visit www.fsa.usda.gov or contact your [local USDA Service Center](#).

USDA Announces Buy-Up Coverage Availability and New Service Fees for Noninsured Crop Coverage Policies

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced that higher levels of coverage will be offered through the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), a popular safety net program, beginning April 8, 2019. The 2018 Farm Bill also increased service fees and made other changes to the program, including service fee waivers for qualified military veterans interested in obtaining NAP coverage.

"When other insurance coverage is not an option, NAP is a valuable risk mitigation tool for farmers and ranchers," said FSA Administrator Richard Fordyce. "In agriculture, losses from natural disasters are a matter of when, not if, and having a NAP policy provides a little peace of mind."

NAP provides financial assistance to producers of commercial crops for which insurance coverage is not available in order to protect against natural disasters that result in lower yields or crop losses or prevent crop planting.

NAP Buy-Up Coverage Option

The 2018 Farm Bill reinstates higher levels of coverage, from 50 to 65 percent of expected production in 5 percent increments, at 100 percent of the average market price. Producers of organics and crops marketed directly to consumers also may exercise the "buy-up" option to obtain NAP coverage of 100 percent of the average market price at the coverage levels of between 50 and 65 percent of expected production. NAP basic coverage is available at 55 percent of the average market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of expected production.

Producers have a one-time opportunity until May 24, 2019, to obtain buy-up coverage for 2019 or 2020 eligible crops for which the NAP application closing date has passed.

Buy-up coverage is not available for crops intended for grazing.

NAP Service Fees

For all coverage levels, the new NAP service fee is the lesser of \$325 per crop or \$825 per producer per county, not to exceed a total of \$1,950 for a producer with farming interests in multiple counties. These amounts reflect a \$75 service fee increase for crop, county or multi-county coverage. The fee increases apply to obtaining NAP coverage on crops on or after April 8, 2019.

NAP Enhancements for Qualified Military Veterans

The 2018 Farm Bill NAP amendments specify that qualified veteran farmers or ranchers are now eligible for a service fee waiver and premium reduction, if the NAP applicant meets certain eligibility criteria.

Limited resource, targeted underserved, and beginning farmers or ranchers remain eligible for a waiver of NAP service fees and premium reduction when they file form CCC-860, *Socially Disadvantaged, Limited Resource and Beginning Farmer or Rancher Certification*.

For NAP application, eligibility and related program information, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/nap or contact your local USDA Service Center. To locate your local FSA office, visit www.farmers.gov.

Producers Must Report Failed Acres and Prevented Planting

Producers are reminded to report failed acres and prevented planting in order to establish or retain FSA program eligibility.

Producers with failed acres should use form FSA-576, Notice of Loss, to report failed acres.

For losses on crops covered by the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and crop insurance, 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. **To be approved as failed acreage, the acreage must have been reported as failed acreage before the disposition of the crop; Risk Management Agency (RMA) data may be used for failed acreage when reported after the disposition of the crop, if the failed acreage was reported timely to RMA and supports the failed acreage information reported on the FSA-578, Report of Acreage.**

Additionally, producers must report crop acreage they intended to plant, but due to natural disaster, they were prevented from planting. Prevented planting acreage must be reported on form FSA-576, Notice of Loss, no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date as established by FSA and RMA.

Final planting dates for various crops are available through an interactive map on the RMA website. Visit the interactive map here: <https://prodwebnlb.rma.usda.gov/apps/MapView/index.html>

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.

Please contact your local FSA office to schedule an appointment to file a Notice of Loss. To find your local FSA office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Opportunity to Request a Referendum: Soybean Promotion, Research, and Information Program

The USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) announced that soybean producers may request a referendum on the Soybean Promotion and Research Order, as authorized under the Soybean Promotion, Research, and Consumer Information Act. Participation in the Request for Referendum is voluntary, and producers should only participate if they wish to request a referendum on the program.

The results of the Request for Referendum will be published in a notice in the Federal Register. If at least 10 percent of eligible producers, as determined by USDA, participate in the Request for Referendum, a referendum will be held within one year from that determination.

Interested soybean producers may request a referendum during a four-week period beginning on May 6 and ending May 31, 2019. Form LS-51-1, *Soybean Promotion and Research Order Request for Referendum*, may be [downloaded online](#) or obtained by mail, fax, or in person from Farm Service Agency (FSA) county offices during this time.

Completed forms and supporting documentation must be returned to the appropriate county FSA office by fax or in person no later than close of business May 31, 2019, or if returned by mail, must be postmarked by midnight May 31, 2019, and received in the county FSA office by close of business on June 6, 2019.

For detailed information, including eligibility, read the full [AMS announcement](#). To find your local office, visit www.farmers.gov.

Current Interest Rates

*Interest rates are announced at the beginning of each month.

[Click here to find notification of current FSFL and commodity loan interest rates](#)

[Click here to view current Farm Loan interest rates](#)

Farm Loan Interest Rates	MAY 2019
Farm Operating- Direct	3.500%
Farm Operating- Microloan	3.500%
Farm Ownership- Direct	4.000%
Farm Ownership- Microloan	4.000%
Farm Ownership- Direct, Joint Financing	2.500%
Farm Ownership- Down Payment	1.500%
Emergency Loan- Amount of Actual Loss	3.750%

Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL)	MAY 2019
3-year FSFL	2.250%
5-year FSFL	2.250%
7-year FSFL	2.375%
10-year FSFL	2.500%
12-year FSFL	2.500%

9-Month Commodity Loans	MAY 2019
Marketing Assistance Loan	3.375%

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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).