July 2019

Farm Service Agency Electronic News Service

NEWSLETTER

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Wisconsin FSA Newsletter

Wisconsin Farm Service Agency

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A Message from the State Director

USDA is providing flexibility to producers who are struggling through one of the most difficult planting seasons in years. Producers can now harvest or graze cover crops planted on prevented planting acres beginning September 1, and maintain their eligibility for a full 2019 prevented planting indemnity. The harvest date was moved to help producers who are facing a shortage of forage in the fall.

Information on prevented planting, cover crops, flooding, and program information is updated regularly on farmers.gov, and your crop insurance agent is also an excellent resource.

We continue to see a high level of interest in the new Dairy Margin Coverage program. Since the program opened on July 17, about

Farm Program Chiefs:
Greg Biba
John Palmer

State Committee:
Lisa Condon, Chair
Thomas Gillis
David Heideman
Kevin Hoyer
Tom McClellan

www.fsa.usda.gov/wi

3,500 Wisconsin producers have signed up, and we have many more producers with appointments scheduled. Producers have until September 20 to sign up for the 2019 program.

If you don't have an appointment to certify your acreage, please call or email your local FSA office. Filing an acreage report is a key to maintaining eligibility for FSA programs.

Best wishes,

Sandy Chalmers

Dates to Remember

May 15-August 1, 2019: Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) primary nesting season. CRP participants must not engage in any CRP maintenance or management activities without written authorization for exception.

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

***Extended* July 22, 2019:** Acreage Reporting Deadline for spring-seeded crops, including forage seeding, crops intended for cover, green manure, or left standing, and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres.

August 15, 2019: Acreage Reporting Deadline for processing snap beans and cabbage.

DMC Informational Meetings: Various informational meetings are being held across the state. Click on the link to see all meeting dates and locations.

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USDA Extends Deadline to Report Crops to July 22, 2019 for Twelve States

USDA is extending the deadline to report acres for agricultural producers in states impacted by flooding and heavy moisture. This new July 22, 2019 deadline applies to producers in Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, Ohio, Tennessee and Wisconsin for reporting crops to USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) county offices and crop insurance agents.

Filing a timely crop acreage report is important to maintaining eligibility for USDA conservation, disaster assistance, safety net, crop insurance, and farm loan programs. A crop acreage report documents all crops and their intended uses and is an important part of record-keeping for your farm or ranch.

Producers filing reports with FSA county offices are encouraged to set up an appointment before visiting the office. Producers who set up appointments before the July 22, 2019 deadline are considered timely filed, even if the appointment occurs after the deadline.

Producers not in these select states must file crops by the original July 15, 2019 deadline.

Other USDA Efforts to Help Producers

USDA has taken additional steps to help impacted producers, including:

- Updating the haying and grazing date for producers who have planted cover crops on prevented plant acres;
- Offering special sign-ups through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program for assistance to plant cover crops; and
- Extending the deadline to report prevented plant acres in certain places.

For more information, visit our Prevented or Delayed Planting webpage.

More Information

To learn more, contact your FSA county office or visit fsa.usda.gov or farmers.gov/prevented-planting.

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Farm Service Agency in Wisconsin Extends Prevented Plant Crop Reporting Deadline to July 22, 2019 for Producers without Insurance or NAP Coverage

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is extending the prevented plant crop reporting deadline for Wisconsin producers affected by spring flooding and excessive moisture.

Producers without crop insurance or Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) coverage in Wisconsin now have until July 22, 2019, to report acres they intended to plant this spring but could not due to weather conditions. The new deadline coincides with the July 22, 2019, FSA crop acreage reporting deadline that is already in place.

Producers need to report prevented plant acres to retain eligibility for FSA program benefits. Normally, the prevented plant reporting deadline is 15 calendar days after the final planting date for a crop as established by FSA and the Risk Management Agency (RMA). The prevented plant reporting deadline extension to July 22, 2019 only applies to FSA and does not change any RMA crop insurance reporting deadline requirements.

However, the extension does not apply to crops covered by FSA's NAP Program. Producers should check with their local FSA office regarding prevented plant provisions for NAP-covered crops.

Producers are encouraged to contact their local FSA office as soon as possible to make an appointment to report prevented plant acres and submit their spring crop acreage report. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

For information regarding RMA crop insurance, contact your Approved Insurance Provider. To find your provider, visit rma.usda.gov/information-tools/agent-locator-page.

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New Dairy Margin Coverage Signup Began June 17

Signup began June 17 for the new Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) program, the cornerstone program of the dairy safety net that helps dairy producers manage the volatility of milk and feed prices, operated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency (FSA).

The 2018 Farm Bill allowed USDA to construct the new DMC, which replaces the Margin Protection Program for Dairy (MPP-Dairy). This new program offers 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.

The program provides coverage retroactive to January 1, 2019, with applicable payments following soon after enrollment. At the time of signup, dairy producers can choose between the $4.00 to $9.50 coverage levels. Learn more about coverage levels and premiums.

The Farm Bill also allows producers who participated in MPP-Dairy from 2014-2017 to receive a repayment or credit for part of the premiums paid into the program. FSA has been providing premium reimbursements to producers since last month and those that elect the 75 percent credit option will now have that credit applied toward 2019 DMC premiums.

The Department has built in a 50 percent blend of premium and supreme alfalfa hay prices with the alfalfa hay price used under the prior dairy program to provide a total feed cost that more closely aligns with hay rations used by many producers. At a milk margin minus feed cost of $9.50 or less, payments are possible. With the 50 percent hay blend, FSA's revised April 2019 income over feed cost margin is $8.82 per hundredweight (cwt). The revised margins for January, February and March are, respectively, $7.71, $7.91 and $8.66 – triggering DMC payments for each month.

DMC payments will be reduced by 6.2 percent in 2019 because of a sequester order required by Congress and issued in accordance with the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

DMC offers catastrophic coverage at no cost to the producer, other than an annual $100 administrative fee. Producers can opt for greater coverage levels for a premium in addition to the administrative fee. Operations owned by limited resource, beginning, socially disadvantaged or veteran farmers and ranchers may be eligible for a waiver on administrative fees. Producers have the choice to lock in coverage levels until 2023 and receive a 25-percent discount on their DMC premiums.

To assist producers in making coverage elections, USDA partnered with the University of Wisconsin to develop a DMC decision support tool, which can be used to evaluate various scenarios using different coverage levels through DMC.

All dairy operations in the United States are eligible for the DMC program. An operation can be run either by a single producer or multiple producers who commercially produce and market cows' milk.

Eligible dairy operations must have a production history determined by FSA. For most operations, production history is based on the highest milk production in 2011, 2012 and 2013. Newer dairy operations have other options for determining production history. Producers may contact their local FSA office to get their verified production history.

Dairy producers also are reminded that 2018 Farm Bill provisions allow for dairy operation to participate in both FSA's DMC program and the Risk Management Agency's Livestock Gross Margin (LGM-Dairy) program. There are also no restrictions from participating in DMC in conjunction with any other RMA insurance products.

For more information, visit farmers.gov DMC webpage or contact your local USDA service center. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

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Eligibility for Nominations for the 2019 County Committee Elections

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees are a critical component of the day-to-day operations of FSA and allow grassroots input and local administration of federal farm programs.

Committees are comprised of locally elected agricultural producers responsible for the fair and equitable administration of FSA farm programs in their counties. Committee members are accountable to the Secretary of Agriculture. If elected, members become part of a local decision making and farm program delivery process.

A county committee is composed of three to 11 elected members from local administrative areas (LAA). Each member serves a three-year term. To be eligible for nomination and hold office as a committee member or alternate, a person must fulfill each of the following requirements: (1) be a producer with an interest in farming or ranching operations, (2) participate or cooperate in any FSA program provided for by law, (3) be a U.S. citizen, (4) be of legal voting age, (5) meet the basic eligibility requirements, and (6) reside in the county or multi-county jurisdiction in which they will be serving.

All nomination forms for the 2019 election must be postmarked or received in the local USDA service center by Aug. 1, 2019. For more information on FSA county committee elections and appointments, refer to the FSA fact sheet: *Eligibility to Vote and Hold Office as a COC Member* available online at: **fsa.usda.gov/elections.**

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USDA Offers Producers Options to Re-enroll or Extend Expiring CRP Contracts

Farmers and ranchers with expiring Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contracts may now re-enroll in certain CRP continuous signup practices or, if eligible, select a one-year contract extension. USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is also accepting offers from landowners who want to enroll for the first time in one of the country's largest conservation programs. FSA's 52nd signup for CRP runs from June 3 to August 23.

This year's CRP continuous signup includes practices such as grass waterways, filter strips, riparian buffers, wetland restoration and others. View a full list of practices approved for this signup. Continuous signup contracts last for 10 to 15 years. Soil rental rates are set at 90 percent of 2018 rates. Incentive payments are not offered for these practices.

Producers interested in applying for CRP continuous practices, including those under existing CREP agreements, or who want to extend their contract, should contact their USDA service center by August 23.

To locate your local FSA office, visit www.farmers.gov. More information on CRP can be found at www.fsa.usda.gov/crp.

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2019 Acreage Reporting Deadlines and Signature Requirements

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit their local FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline for the 2019 crop year.

PLEASE NOTE: Your crop insurance agent and FSA will be working with the Acreage and Crop Reporting Streamlining Initiative (ACRSI). This initiative is a result of the 2014 Farm Bill and standardizes data requirements for acreage reporting between FSA and Crop Insurance providers. **At this time, you MUST sign all acreage reports (FSA-578s) at a local Farm Service Agency office to meet the FSA program requirements.** You may also have to sign forms with your local Crop Insurance agent. Please contact your Farm Service Agency office AND your Crop Insurance agent to ensure you have completed all required forms to maintain eligibility for all programs.

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for Wisconsin:

July 22, 2019: All spring-seeded crops; including dry edible beans, dark and light red kidney beans, perennial forage, pasture, rangeland, forage seeding, and all CRP acreage

August 15, 2019: Processing snap beans, cabbage

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- 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 calendars days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should contact their county office for specific acreage reporting dates for their crops.

For additional questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact you local FSA office. To find your local office visit [http://offices.usda.gov.](http://offices.usda.gov)

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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.

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.

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2019 USDA-NRCS Public Conservation Meetings Announced

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Wisconsin has announced the schedule for 2019 Local Working Group (LWG) meetings. Eighteen meetings will be held across Wisconsin in August and September to gather input and help set priorities for U.S. Department of Agriculture conservation programs under the 2018 Farm Bill.

Farmers representing a variety of crops and livestock raised within the local area, private woodland owners, representatives of agricultural and environmental organizations, and representatives of other agriculture and natural resource agencies are welcome and should be represented.

Wisconsin LWGs represent two or more counties grouped together by geography, similar land use, resources, and type of agriculture. See a map of Local Working Groups. This will allow greater flexibility and access to funding for the groups.

One of the main programs discussed at the meetings will be the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), a federal conservation program that helps agricultural producers in a manner that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible goals. EQIP offers technical and financial assistance to help landowners with needed conservation practices for water quality, soil health, wildlife and other natural resources.

Local Working Group meetings are open to the public. Anyone interested in becoming a member in LWGs should contact their local NRCS Service Center. Contact your local NRCS District Conservationist if you are interested in participating. For detailed information on local work groups, see What are Local Working Groups and see the Schedule of Meetings.

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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	JULY 2019
Farm Operating- Direct	3.250%
Farm Operating- Microloan	3.250%
Farm Ownership- Direct	3.875%
Farm Ownership- Microloan	3.875%
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)	JULY 2019
3-year FSFL	1.875%
5-year FSFL	1.875%
7-year FSFL	2.000%
10-year FSFL	2.125%
12-year FSFL	2.250%

9-Month Commodity Loans	JULY 2019
Marketing Assistance Loan	3.125%

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