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## Ohio FSA State News and Updates

### Ohio Farm Service Agency State Office

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### Sign-Up Ends Feb. 26 for CRP General Enrollment

Farmers and landowners are reminded that the general enrollment period for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) will end on Feb. 26, 2016.

Participants in CRP establish long-term, resource-conserving plant species, such as approved grasses or trees (known as "covers") to control soil erosion, improve water quality and develop wildlife habitat on marginally productive agricultural lands. In return, FSA provides participants with rental payments and cost-share assistance. At times when commodity prices are low, enrolling sensitive lands in CRP can be especially attractive to farmers and landowners, as it softens the economic hardship for landowners at the same time that it provides ecological benefits. Contract duration is between 10 and 15 years. The long-term goal of the program is to re-establish native plant species on marginal agricultural lands for the primary purpose of preventing soil erosion and improving water quality and related benefits of reducing loss of wildlife habitat.

Contracts on 1.64 million acres of CRP are set to expire on Sept. 30, 2016. Producers with expiring contracts or producers with

**Production Adjustment,  
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Matt Kleski

**State Committee:**

Bob Boggs, Chairperson

Bob Cole, member

Bruce Long, member

Jim Rex, member

Jim Zumbrink, member

Visit Ohio FSA website for  
additional information at:  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/oh](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/oh)

Please contact your [FSA  
County Office](#) for  
questions specific to your  
operation.

environmentally sensitive land are encouraged to evaluate their options under CRP.

For more information about FSA's conservation programs, visit with your local FSA office or go online to [www.fsa.usda.gov/crp](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/crp).

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## Enrollment Period for 2016 USDA Safety Net Coverage Continues

Producers who chose coverage from the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs can visit the FSA county offices to sign contracts to enroll in coverage for 2016. The enrollment period will continue until Aug. 1, 2016. Although the choice between ARC and PLC is completed and remains in effect through 2018, producers must still enroll their farm by signing a contract each year to receive coverage.

Producers are encouraged to contact their local FSA office to schedule an appointment to enroll. If a farm is not enrolled during the 2016 enrollment period, producers on that farm will not be eligible for financial assistance from the ARC or PLC programs should crop prices or farm revenues fall below the historical price or revenue benchmarks established by the program.

The two programs were authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill and offer a safety net to agricultural producers when there is a substantial drop in prices or revenues for covered commodities. Covered commodities include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, dry peas, rapeseed, safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat.

For more information, producers are encouraged to contact your [county FSA Office](#).

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## FSA Reminds Producers of Approaching NAP Deadline for 2016 Crops

FSA reminds producers who are interested in the 2016 Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), of the need to apply for coverage by the following crop deadline.

**March 15, 2016** is the deadline for 2016 NAP coverage on forage sorghum, oats, potatoes, Soybeans, Sunflowers and all spring planted specialty crops grown for food.

The 2014 Farm Bill provides greater coverage for losses when natural disasters affect specialty crops. Previously, the program offered coverage at 55 percent of the average market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of expected production. Producers can now choose higher levels of coverage, up to 65 percent of their expected production at 100 percent of the average market price. The expanded protection is especially helpful to beginning and socially disadvantaged producers, as well as farmers with limited resources, who will receive fee waivers and premium reductions for expanded coverage.

Eligible producers can apply for 2016 NAP coverage at their local FSA Office using form CCC-471, Application for Coverage. The service fee for basic NAP coverage is the lesser of \$250 per crop or

\$750 per producer per administrative county, not to exceed a total of \$1,875 for a producer with farming interest in multiple counties. Producers interested in buy-up coverage must pay a premium, in addition to the service fee. The maximum premium will be \$6,564.

Producer meeting the definition of a socially disadvantaged farmer, beginning farmer or limited resource farmer will have service fees waived. Producers meeting this definition that choose to purchase buy-up coverage will also have service fees waived and the premium will be capped at \$3,282.

To help producers learn more about the NAP program and how it can help them, USDA, offers an online Web tool at [www.fsa.usda.gov/nap](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/nap). The webtool allows producers to determine whether their crops are eligible for coverage and gives producers an opportunity to explore a variety of options and levels to determine the best protection level for their operation.

For more information on NAP coverage or obtain coverage, please contact your [FSA County office](#).

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## **USDA Expands Microloans to Help Farmers Purchase Farmland and Improve Property**

### ***Producers, Including Beginning and Underserved Farmers, Have a New Option to Gain Access to Land***

FSA has begun offering farm ownership microloans, creating a new financing avenue for farmers to buy and improve property. These microloans will be especially helpful to beginning or underserved farmers, U.S. veterans looking for a career in farming, and those who have small and mid-sized farming operations. Microloans have helped farmers with operating costs, such as feed, fertilizer, tools, fencing, equipment, and living expenses since 2013.

Now, microloans will be available to also help with farm land and building purchases, and soil and water conservation improvements. FSA designed the expanded program to simplify the application process, expand eligibility requirements and expedite smaller real estate loans to help farmers strengthen their operations. Microloans provide up to \$50,000 to qualified producers, and can be issued to the applicant directly from the FSA.

Individuals interested in applying for a FSA [microloan](#) or would like to discuss other farm loan programs available, should contact their local FSA office to setup an appointment with a Loan Approval Official.

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## **Farm Land of Opportunity Gathering - OEFFA Offers Networking Event for Farmers, Landowners interested in CRP's Transition Incentives Program Feb. 12**

Aspiring farmers or landowners looking to sell, lease or make other arrangements are invited to an informal networking reception Feb. 12, 2016 in Granville, Ohio, hosted by the Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association (OEFFA). If you have land you want farmed or need a plot to get started, be sure to attend OEFFA's unique event designed to connect people and possibilities as we discuss the Transition Incentives Program, administered by the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).

FSA assists with the transition of expiring Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) land from a retired or retiring owner or operator to a beginning, veteran, or socially disadvantaged farmer or rancher to return land to production for sustainable grazing or crop production.

Because the CRP TIP offers two additional years of annual rental payments to farmers who rent or sell "retiring" CRP land to beginning, socially disadvantaged, or veteran farmers that use sustainable

practices, this is a great opportunity for farmers with land coming out of CRP. Join us to connect with beginning farmers who could benefit from your land and make you eligible to continue to receive two years of CRP annual rental payments!

Friday, February 12  
5:15 pm - 6:30 pm  
Granville Middle School  
248 New Burg St.  
Granville, OH 43023

This event is free of charge, but registration is required. OEFFA Conference or Pre-conference registration is not required to attend this gathering. Light refreshments will be served.

For more details, or to register visit the: [www.oeffa.org/q/getland](http://www.oeffa.org/q/getland) website or contact Milo Petruziello at 614-421-2022 ext. 206 or [milo@oeffa.org](mailto:milo@oeffa.org). This event is part of the 37th annual OEFFA Conference. Visit the OEFFA website at: <http://www.oeffa.org/conference2016.php> for more information.

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## **OSU Extension Offers Conference in Clinton County to Help Small Farm Owners March 11-12**

Ohio State University's College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences will offer "Opening Doors to Success," a two-day conference March 11-12, 2016 at Wilmington College's Boyd Cultural Arts Center. The Southwest Ohio Small Farm conference will feature multiple workshops and a trade show for landowners and small farmers. This conference will kick off Friday afternoon with two hands-on workshops focusing on Meat Goat Production and Water Management and Irrigation Techniques.

The March 12 session is from 8 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. at Wilmington College's Boyd Cultural Arts Center, 1870 Quaker Way. On Saturday, the conference will feature 25-plus sessions from Ohio State University and industry experts as well as a trade show for small farmers that will offer information that can benefit a variety of growers.

Some of the topics at the conference include: Women in Agriculture, Goat production, Poultry production, Farm Business Planning, Artisan Cheese Making, Direct marketing, Organics, Starting a business, Hand Sprayer Calibration, Legal issues for small farms, Soil basics, Fertility Management, High tunnels, Beekeeping, Vegetable and fruit production, Financing/loans and Estate Planning.

The small farm conference, combined with a trade show, are set up to help participants learn tips, techniques and methods for diversifying their opportunities into successful new enterprises and markets as a way to improve economic growth and development on their farms. Participants will have several opportunities throughout the conference to learn in-depth about an issue, gain resources, and study how to finance a new venture.

Registration for the conference is \$20 for the March 11 session and \$60 for the March 12 session, or \$70 for both days. The deadline to register is March 4. For more information about the Southwest Ohio Small Farm conference in Wilmington, Ohio or to register online, go to <http://agnr.osu.edu/small-farm-programs/small-farm-conferences-and-trade-shows> website or contact Tony Nye at (937) 382-0901 or [nye.1@osu.edu](mailto:nye.1@osu.edu).

The conference is co-sponsored by OSU Extension's Small Farm Program; Wilmington College, USDA's Farm Service Agency, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, the National Agriculture Statistic Service, USDA's Rural Development and the Ohio Farm Bureau.

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## OSU Extension Offers Conference in Wayne County to Help Small Farm Owners April 2

Ohio State University's College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences will offer "Living Your Small Farm Dream," a conference for landowners and producers interested in tips, techniques and methods to help make their small farm operations more successful, profitable and sustainable through a one-day conference and trade show on April 2, 2016 at the Shisler Conference Center on the Ohio State University Campus in Wooster, Ohio.

On Saturday, the conference will feature 25-plus sessions from Ohio State University and industry experts as well as a trade show for small farmers that will offer information that can benefit a variety of growers. Whether individuals are new to agriculture or an experienced farmer, this conference will provide individuals with educational sessions to diversify their opportunities into successful new enterprises and new markets as a way to improve economic growth and development on their farms. Participants will have several opportunities throughout the conference to learn in-depth about an issue, gain resources, and study how to finance a new venture.

Some of the topics at the conference include: Women in Agriculture, Goat production, Poultry production, Farm Business Planning, Artisan Cheese Making, Direct marketing, Organics, Starting a business, Hand Sprayer Calibration, Legal issues for small farms, Soil basics, Fertility Management, High tunnels, Beekeeping, Vegetable and fruit production, Financing/loans and Estate Planning.

Registration for the "Living the Small Farm Dream" conference is \$60. The deadline to register is March 25. For more information about the Northeast Ohio Small Farm conference in Wooster, Ohio or to register online, go to <http://agnr.osu.edu/small-farm-programs/small-farm-conferences-and-trade-shows> website or contact Tony Nye at (937) 382-0901 or [nye.1@osu.edu](mailto:nye.1@osu.edu).

The conference is co-sponsored by OSU Extension's Small Farm Program; USDA's Farm Service Agency, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, the National Agriculture Statistic Service and USDA's Rural Development.

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## Selected Interest Rates for February 2016

- 90 Day Treasury Bill, -- 0.125%
- Farm Operating Loans, Direct, -- 2.625%
- Farm Ownership Loans, Direct, -- 3.875%
- Limited Resource Loans, -- 5.000%
- Farm Ownership Loans, Down Payment, -- 1.500%
- Emergency Loans, -- 3.625%
- Farm Storage Facility Loan, 7 year, -- 2.000%
- Farm Storage Facility Loan, 10 year, -- 2.125%
- Farm Storage Facility Loan, 12 year, -- 2.250%
- Sugar Storage Facility Loans, 15 year, -- 2.375%
- Commodity Loans, 1996- Present, -- 1.625%

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