

March 2015



## Missouri FSA Newsletter

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### Missouri Farm Service Agency

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#### State Committee:

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#### State Executive Director:

Mark Cadle

Please contact your local FSA Office for questions specific to your operation or county.

### USDA Provides One-Time Extension of Deadline to Update Base Acres or Yield History for ARC/PLC Programs

**Farmers Now Have Until March 31 to Update Their Yields and Reallocate Base Acres; Deadline for Choosing Between ARC and PLC also Remains March 31**

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced a one-time extension for the new safety-net programs established by the 2014 Farm Bill, known as Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC). The final day to update yield history or reallocate base acres has been extended until March 31, 2015. The final day for farm owners and producers to choose ARC or PLC coverage also remains March 31, 2015.

If no changes are made to yield history or base acres by March 31, 2015, the farm's current yield and base will be used. A program choice of ARC or PLC coverage also must be made by March 31, 2015. If no choice is made, no 2014 payments for the farm will be made and the farm will default to PLC coverage through the 2018 crop year.

Online tools, available at [www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc), allow producers to explore projections on how ARC or PLC coverage will affect their operation under possible future scenarios.

Farmers who have not made an ARC/PLC choice should contact their local FSA county office immediately.

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## Producers are Reminded of the March 15 Sales Closing Date for Noninsurable Crops

FSA urges producers who want to purchase coverage through the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) to do so before the sales closing date of March 15, 2015. Since the 15th falls on a weekend, applications will be accepted through Monday, March 16, 2015.

NAP provides financial assistance to producers of noninsurable crops when low yields/grazing loss, loss of inventory or prevented planting occur due to natural disasters including drought, freeze, hail, excessive moisture or excessive wind.

In order to meet eligibility requirements for NAP, crops must be noninsurable, commercially-produced agricultural commodity crops for which the catastrophic risk protection level of crop insurance is not available.

The Agricultural Act of 2014 (the 2014 Farm Bill) allows producers to choose higher levels of NAP coverage. 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. It is important to note that the higher coverage is not available on grazing crops.

Many specialty crops, forage and pasture have a NAP application closing date of March 15, 2015.

Eligible producers must file the application and pay a service fee by the deadline. Producers also pay a fixed premium for higher coverage. Beginning, limited resource and underserved producers may request a waiver of the service fee and a 50 percent premium reduction when the application for coverage is filed.

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## 2015 Acreage Reporting Dates

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

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for Missouri:

Crop	Crop Reporting Deadline
Spring Oats, Potatoes	May 15
Burley Tobacco, Corn, Cotton, Grain Sorghum, Hybrid Seed Corn, Popcorn, Rice, Soybeans and all other crops	July 15

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 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.
- If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of "cover only," "green manure," "left standing," or "seed," then the acreage must be reported by July 15th.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact your local county FSA office.

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## Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybee, and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP)

The Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP) provides emergency assistance to eligible livestock, honeybee, and farm-raised fish producers who have losses due to disease, adverse weather or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires, not covered by other agricultural disaster assistance programs.

- Eligible livestock losses include grazing losses not covered under the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), loss of purchased feed and/or mechanically harvested feed due to an eligible adverse weather event, additional cost of transporting water because of an eligible drought and additional cost associated with gathering livestock to treat for cattle tick fever.

Eligible honeybee losses include loss of purchased feed due to an eligible adverse weather event, cost of additional feed purchased above normal quantities due to an eligible adverse weather condition, colony losses in excess of normal mortality due to an eligible weather event or loss condition, including CCD, and hive losses due to eligible adverse weather.

- Eligible farm-raised fish losses include death losses in excess of normal mortality and/or loss of purchased feed due to an eligible adverse weather event.

Producers who suffer eligible livestock, honeybee, or farm-raised fish losses from October 1, 2014 to September 30, 2015 must file:

- A notice of loss the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent or by November 1, 2015
- An application for payment by November 1, 2015

The Farm Bill caps ELAP disaster funding at \$20 million per federal fiscal year.

The following ELAP Fact Sheets (by topic) are available online:

- [ELAP for Farm-Raised Fish Fact Sheet](#)
- [ELAP for Livestock Fact Sheet](#)
- [ELAP for Honeybees Fact Sheet](#)

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## Loans for Targeted Underserved Producers

FSA has a number of loan programs available to assist applicants to begin or continue in agriculture production. Loans are available for operating type loans and/or purchase or improve farms or ranches.

While all qualified producers are eligible to apply for these loan programs, the FSA has provided priority funding for members of targeted underserved groups.

A targeted underserved applicant is one of a group whose members have been subjected to racial, ethnic or gender prejudice because of his or her identity as members of the group without regard to his or her individual qualities. For purposes of this program, targeted underserved groups are women, African Americans, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Hispanics, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

FSA loans are only available to applicants who meet all the eligibility requirements and are unable to obtain the needed credit elsewhere.

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## USDA Can Help You Make Your Farm, Ranch or Small Business More Profitable

USDA is offering grants and loan guarantees to help rural businesses and agricultural producers reduce their energy costs and consumption.

The funding is being provided through USDA Rural Development's Rural Energy for America Program (REAP). Loans and grants are available to install renewable energy systems or make energy efficiency improvements.

Renewable energy systems include solar, wind, geothermal, anaerobic digesters, and renewable biomass.

Energy efficiency improvements include grain drying and handling, lighting, refrigeration, facility improvements (such as adding insulation or replacing windows), heating and cooling upgrades, motor replacements and automated control upgrades.

Grants of up to 25% of a project's total costs are available.

- The maximum grants are \$250,000 for energy efficiency improvements and \$500,000 for renewable energy systems

Loans guarantees of up to 75% of a project's total costs are available.

- The minimum loan is \$5,000
- The maximum loan is \$25 million

Grant application deadlines are April 30, 2015 and June 30, 2015. Guaranteed loan applications will be reviewed on a monthly basis.

Missouri has \$1.8 million in grant funding available for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects. For information on REAP contact (573) 876-9321 or email [nathan.tutt@mo.usda.gov](mailto:nathan.tutt@mo.usda.gov)

Don't miss this great opportunity!

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## Employment Opportunities in Missouri FSA Farm Loan Program

Missouri FSA is currently seeking applicants for our Farm Loan Officer Trainee program. Multiple positions will be hired. Duty station will be determined at the time of selection.

### Major responsibilities include:

- Making, servicing, and supervising loans;
- Providing technical advice, guidance, and credit counseling to loan applicants and borrowers;
- Has delegated loan approval authority to approve loans within a specific limit;
- Has knowledge of agency farm loan programs and eligibility requirements;
- Has knowledge of the technicalities of farm financing and credit, financial management concepts and practices, farm operations, land use and value, production and marketing of various crops and livestock, and prices and markets in the serviced farming areas.

Applications must be completed online through the USAJobs website. Direct links to the vacancy announcements can be found below.

Pay Grade [GS-5/7](#)

Pay Grade [GS-9](#)

Vacancies close on March 23, 2015. For questions regarding this employment opportunity, email [Mo-fsa-hr@one.usda.gov](mailto:Mo-fsa-hr@one.usda.gov).

All Missouri FSA employment opportunities can be found online at [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov).

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## Interest Rates and Dates to Remember

Selected Interest Rates for March 2015	
90-Day Treasury Bill	.125%
Farm Operating Loans — Direct	2.50%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	3.50%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency Loans	3.50%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years)	1.75%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (10 years)	1.875%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (12 years)	2.00%
Commodity Loans 1996-Present	1.250%

Dates to Remember	
March 15	NAP application closing date for many NAP crops, including forage and pasture. <i>Since the 15<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend, applications are accepted through 3/16.</i>
March 31	Final date to make ARC or PLC election and the extended deadline to reallocate base acres or update yields.
March 31	Final availability date for 2014 Marketing Assistance Loans (MALs) and Loan Deficiency Payments (LDPs) for small grains and honey.
Mid-April	Anticipated start for enrollment (signing contracts) for ARC and PLC.

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USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. 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).