



# NEWSLETTER



## Idaho Farm Service Agency

### December 2013 County Newsletter

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## 2014 ACREAGE REPORTING DEADLINES

Producers now have until January 15, 2014, to report crops that have a November 15, 2013, or December 15, 2013, reporting deadline without paying a late-file fee. Crops under this waiver include wheat and native and improved grasses intended for grazing or haying. **The Risk Management Agency (RMA) did not grant a waiver so producers need to consult their crop insurance agent for deadlines for insured crops.**

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

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for Idaho:

- November 15, 2013: Perennial Forage
- December 15, 2013: Fall Alfalfa Seed, Fall Canola, Fall Mint, Fall-Seeded Small
- Grains, Lentils, Peas (Austrian, Green, Yellow), Fall Rapeseed
- January 2, 2014 Honey
- January 15, 2014: Apples, Apricots, Cherries, Grapes, Nectarines, Peaches,
- Plums
- July 15, 2014: Spring Alfalfa Seed, all other crops

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.

Additionally, producers can purchase both NAP and RMA coverage for 2014 annual forage crops. NAP coverage will not be available for 2015 annual forage crops.

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

## BEGINNING FARMER LOANS

FSA assists beginning farmers to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years
- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's median size.

For more information contact your local FSA office.

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## **FSA ADVISES PRODUCERS TO ANTICIPATE PAYMENT REDUCTIONS DUE TO MANDATED SEQUESTER**

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is reminding farmers and ranchers who participate in FSA programs to plan accordingly in FY2014 for automatic spending reductions known as sequestration. The Budget Control Act of 2011 (BCA) mandates that federal agencies implement automatic, annual reductions to discretionary and mandatory spending limits. For mandatory programs, the sequestration rate for FY2014 is 7.2%. Accordingly, FSA is implementing sequestration for the following programs:

- Dairy Indemnity Payment Program;
- Marketing Assistance Loans;
- Loan Deficiency Payments;
- Sugar Loans;
- Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program;
- Tobacco Transition Payment Program;
- 2013 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payments;
- 2013 Average Crop Revenue Election Program;
- 2011 and 2012 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program;
- Storage, handling; and Economic Adjustment Assistance for upland cotton

Conservation Reserve Program payments are specifically exempt by statute from sequestration, thus these payments will not be reduced.

These sequester percentages reflect current law estimates; however with the continuing budget uncertainty, Congress still may adjust the exact percentage reduction. Today's announcement intends to help producers plan for the impact of sequestration cuts in FY2014.

At this time, FSA is required to implement the sequester reductions. Due to the expiration of the Farm Bill on September 30, FSA does not have the flexibility to cover these payment reductions in the same manner as in FY13. FSA will provide notification as early as practicable on the specific payment reductions.

## **MICROLOAN PROGRAM**

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) developed the Microloan program to better serve the unique financial operating needs of beginning, niche and small family farm operations.

FSA offers applicants a Microloan designed to help farmers with credit needs of \$35,000 or less. The loan features a streamlined application process built to fit the needs of new and smaller producers. This loan program will also be useful to specialty crop producers and operators of community supported agriculture (CSA).

Eligible applicants can apply for a maximum amount of \$35,000 to pay for initial start-up expenses such as hoop houses to extend the growing season, essential tools, irrigation and annual expenses such as seed, fertilizer, utilities, land rents, marketing, and distribution expenses. As financing needs increase, applicants can apply for a regular operating loan up to the maximum amount of \$300,000 or obtain financing from a commercial lender under FSA's Guaranteed Loan Program.

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

## **2013 CROP COMMODITY LOAN DISBURSEMENTS RESUME**

The Farm Service Agency has resumed processing and disbursement of 2013 crop commodity loans. Crop year 2013 commodity loan-making was suspended Oct. 1, 2013, to make changes necessary to accommodate the automatic funding reductions known as sequester.

The commodity loan programs provide interim financing to producers for agricultural commodities stored after harvest and then sold throughout the year. Producers requesting 2013 crop commodity loans on their harvested commodities now will have a 5.1 percent reduction to the loan amount upon its disbursement, due to the sequestration. Commodity loans issued by marketing associations and loan servicing agents are also subject to the sequestration reduction.

During the period that loan-making was suspended, producers were still able to submit loan applications to their county FSA offices, marketing associations and loan servicing agents. The processing and disbursement of these applications will begin immediately.

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## FARM STORAGE FACILITY LOANS

The Farm Storage Facility Loan Program (FSFLP) allows producers of eligible commodities to obtain low-interest financing to build or upgrade farm storage and handling facilities.

The new maximum principal amount of a loan through FSFL is \$500,000. Participants are now required to provide a down payment of 15 percent, with CCC providing a loan for the remaining 85 percent of the net cost of the eligible storage facility and permanent drying and handling equipment. Additional security is required for poured-cement open-bunker silos, renewable biomass facilities, cold storage facilities, hay barns and for all loans exceeding \$50,000. New loan terms of 7, 10 or 12 years are available depending on the amount of the loan. Interest rates for each term rate may be different and are based on the rate which CCC borrows from the Treasury Department.

Payments are available in the form of a partial disbursement and the remaining final disbursement. The partial disbursement will be available after a portion of the construction has been completed. The final fund disbursement will be made when all construction is completed. The maximum amount of the partial disbursement will be 50 percent of the projected and approved total loan amount.

The following commodities are eligible for farm storage facility loans:

- Corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley or minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain
- Corn, grain sorghum, wheat, oats or barley harvested as other-than-whole grain
- Pulse crops - lentils, small chickpeas, dry beans and dry peas
- Hay
- Renewable biomass
- Fruits (including nuts) and vegetables - cold storage facilities
- Honey

### Selected Interest Rates for December 2013

Farm Operating Loans — Direct	1.875%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct	4.125%
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.50%
Emergency Loans	2.875%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years)	2.00%

### Dates to Remember

Dec. 2	NAP Closing Date
Dec. 15	Crop reporting deadline for all fall planted small grains
Jan. 2	Crop reporting deadline for Honey
Jan. 15	Apples and others (list on Pg1)
Jan. 17	Deadline for COC Election ballots
Jan. 31	LDP Deadline for Unshorn Lamb Pelts
Feb. 18	New COC members take office