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Ohio FSA State News and Updates

Ohio Farm Service Agency State Office

200 North High St. Rm. 540
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Phone: 614-255-2441
Fax: 855-832-5100

State Executive Director:
Steven Maurer

Administrative Officer:
Mimi Garringer

Conservation Chief:
Brandi Koehler

Farm Loan Chief:
David Drake

Price Support Chief:
Carletha Fasching

**Production Adjustment,
Compliance and Risk
Management Chief:**
Matt Kleski

State Committee:
Bob Boggs, Chairperson

USDA Extends Application Deadline for Dairy Margin Protection Program to Dec. 19

The application deadline for the dairy Margin Protection Program (MPP) has been extended until **Dec. 19, 2014**. The program, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, protects participating dairy producers when the margin – the difference between the price of milk and feed costs – falls below levels of protection selected by the applicant.

For just \$100, a farmer can cover 90 percent of production at \$4 margin swings, and with affordable incremental premiums, dairy farmers can cover up to \$8 margin swings. Those who apply this year will receive a slight increase in production protection that will not be available in the future. Farmers who do not sign up for the Margin Protection Program for 2015 will forfeit the 1 percent base production increase.

Producers can use the online Web resource at www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool to calculate the best levels of coverage for their dairy operation. They can type in specific operation data and explore price projections and market scenarios to determine what level of coverage is best for them. The online resource is on a secure website that can be accessed from computers, mobile phones or tablets, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

This safety net is not automatic. If interested, producers must visit the FSA office to enroll by Dec. 19 to lock in these protections for 2014 and 2015.

Farm Loan Year End Reviews

Producers that have a farm loan with FSA are reminded they must provide

Bruce Long, member
Jim Rex, member
Jim Zumbrink, member

data for their Year-End Analysis (YEA) to their loan officer each year. Borrowers are urged to provide this information timely so that their files can be maintained. The office will contact you for the data you will need to provide us.

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

Operating Loan Applications Needed Now

Farmers that plan to apply to the Farm Service Agency for annual operating loan assistance this year are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. The earlier an application for loan assistance is filed, the quicker the FSA staff can process your request. Decisions on loans cannot be made until a complete application is received.

[Click here for a list](#) of FSA and OSU Extension Service County Farm Bill Meetings throughout Ohio.

Farmers should also contact their local FSA office to setup an appointment with a Farm Loan Official for information as to what is required in order to have a complete loan application on file.

Visit the Ohio FSA website at:
www.fsa.usda.gov/oh

USDA Provides Greater Protection for Fruit, Vegetable and Other Specialty Crop Growers

Free Basic Coverage Plans and Premium Discounts Available for New, Underserved and Limited Income Farmers

Greater protection is now available from the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program for crops that traditionally have been ineligible for federal crop insurance. The new options, created by the 2014 Farm Bill, provide greater coverage for losses when natural disasters affect specialty crops such as vegetables, fruits, mushrooms, floriculture, ornamental nursery, aquaculture, turf grass, ginseng, honey, syrup, and energy 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 will be especially helpful to beginning and traditionally underserved producers, as well as farmers with limited resources, who will receive fee waivers and premium reductions for expanded coverage. More crops are now eligible for the program, including expanded aquaculture production practices, and sweet and biomass sorghum. For the first time, a range of crops used to produce bioenergy will be eligible as well.

To help producers learn more about the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program and how it can help them, USDA, in partnership with Michigan State University and the University of Illinois, created an online resource. The Web tool, available at www.fsa.usda.gov/nap, allows producers to determine whether their crops are eligible for coverage. It also gives them an opportunity to explore a variety of options and levels to determine the best protection level for their operation.

Because the 2015 application closing dates for some crops have already passed before FSA made the buy-up coverage available, this provides producers with an opportunity to obtain buy-up coverage for those crops for the 2015 crop year by submitting an application for coverage requesting buy-up coverage and paying the service fee, even if the producer did not previously obtain CAT-level coverage and pay the service fee for the crop, **by January 14, 2015.**

For instance, the application and service fee deadline for the 2015 NAP coverage was Nov. 20, 2014 on Apples, Asparagus, Blueberries, Caneberries, Cherries, Chestnuts, Forage for Hay and Pasture, Grapes, Nectarines, Peaches, Pears, Plums, Strawberries, Honey and Maple Sap for Ohio. Since this deadline has passed, producers interested in obtaining additional buy-up coverage must submit an application for buy-up coverage

and pay the service fee **by Jan. 14, 2015**. For questions or to learn more about the NAP buy-up coverage, visit the Farm Service Agency (FSA) website at www.fsa.usda.gov/nap or contact your [local FSA office](#) for additional information.

The Farm Service Agency (FSA), which administers the program, also wants to hear from producers and other interested stakeholders who may have suggestions or recommendations on the program. Written comments will be accepted until Feb. 13, 2015 and can be submitted through www.regulations.gov.

2015 Acreage Reporting Dates

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:

Jan. 2, 2015 ----- Report honey and Maple sap.

Jan. 15, 2015 ----- Apples, Grapes.

May 31, 2015 ----- Report Nursery Crop Acreage.

July 15, 2015 ----- Report all your Burley Tobacco, Cabbage (Planted 3/19/15-5/31/15), Corn, Grain Sorghum, Hybrid Corn Seed, Spring Oats, Popcorn, Potatoes, Soybeans, Sugar Beets, Tomatoes and all other crops.

Aug. 15, 2015 ----- Report Cabbage (Planted 6/1/15-7/20/15).

Sept. 30, 2015 --- Report Aquaculture.

Dec. 15, 2015 ----- Fall Barley, Fall Wheat, and all other Fall-Seeded Small Grains.

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, producers are encouraged to contact their County FSA office.

Coverage Selection for New 2014 Farm Bill Safety Net Programs Continues

Producers have until March 31, 2015, to choose the Program Best for their Operation.

Farm owners and producers are reminded that the opportunity to choose between the new 2014 Farm Bill established programs, Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC), began Nov. 17, 2014, and continues through March 31, 2015. The new programs, designed to help producers better manage risk, usher in one of the most significant reforms to U.S. farm programs in decades.

USDA helped create online tools to assist in the decision process, allowing farm owners and producers to enter information about their operation and see projections that show what ARC and/or PLC will mean for them under possible future scenarios. Farm owners and producers can access the online resources, available at

www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc, from the convenience of their home computer or mobile device at any time.

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.

Dates associated with ARC and PLC that farm owners and producers need to know:

- **Now through Feb. 27, 2015:** Farm owners may visit their Administrative County Farm Service Agency office to update yield history and/or reallocate base acres.
- **Nov. 17, 2014 to March 31, 2015:** Producers make a one-time election between ARC and PLC for the 2014 through 2018 crop years.
- **Mid-April 2015 through summer 2015:** Producers sign contracts for 2014 and 2015 crop years.
- **October 2015:** Payments issued for 2014 crop year, if needed.

To learn more about which safety net options are most appropriate for specific farming operations, farmers can use new Web tools at www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc, which can be accessed from the convenience of a home computer or a mobile device at any time.

To learn more about upcoming educational meetings, farmers should contact their [County FSA office](#) or visit the [Ohio FSA website](#) to view a current list of Farm Bill meetings throughout the state.

Maintaining CRP Practice Covers

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) is committed to partnering with landowners and producers to create the most beneficial conservation practices in Ohio. Properly established and maintained CRP practice cover not only promotes wildlife, it helps prevent erosion and enhances water quality.

CRP participants follow a set of standards to establish and manage their conservation cover throughout the length of the 10-15 year contract. Properly maintaining CRP practice covers will allow landowners to survey their CRP practice cover and be aware of any potential problems. These requirements go beyond planting the practice acres and walking away; or mowing the cover every year for cosmetic purposes.

CRP participants must follow the terms and conditions of the CRP-1 contract and support documents, including the Conservation Plan of Operations (CPO). The CPO is a record of the participant's decisions and contains all practices necessary for the successful establishment, maintenance, and management of the vegetative cover on all acres enrolled in CRP. Participants should refer to their completed conservation plan and NRCS Job Sheets provided during the development of the conservation plan for guidance and contact their County FSA office for further information or questions.

CRP participants are reminded to schedule maintenance and management activities on CRP acres outside of the primary nesting season. Cost-share documents along with detailed bills are to be submitted to the FSA office after the activity has been completed. Mid-contract management activities are required and failure to perform them on a timely basis will result in a determination of noncompliance.

Landowners and farmers who need more information should contact their County FSA office.

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).