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Ohio FSA State News and Updates

Ohio Farm Service Agency State Office

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Farm Bill Safety-Net Deadlines Approaching for Ohio Farmers

The Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds producers of upcoming important deadlines 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 is Feb. 27, 2015, and the final day for farm owners and producers to choose coverage is March 31, 2015.**

These programs provide financial protection against unexpected changes in the marketplace, so now is the time to have those final conversations, to ask any remaining questions, and to visit the FSA county office to make these decisions.

For the first time in many years, farmers have the opportunity to update yields or reallocate base, but if no changes are made by Feb. 27, the farm's current yield and base will be used and if no program election occurs by March 31, then there will be no 2014 payments for the farm and the farm will default to PLC coverage through the 2018 crop year.

The online tools, available at www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc, allow producers to explore projections on how ARC or PLC coverage will affect their

Carletha Fasching

operation under possible future scenarios.

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

Matt Kleski

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.

State Committee:

Bob Boggs,

Chairsperson

Bob Cole, member

Bruce Long, member

Jim Rex, member

Jim Zumbrink, member

For more information, farmers should contact their [local FSA county office](#).

Dates to Remember

Feb. 27 ---- Last Day to update yield history and/or reallocate base acres.

Mar. 16 --- **Deadline** to obtain 2015 NAP coverage on spring planted crops.

Mar. 31 --- **Final Availability** for 2014 crop wheat, barley, oats, honey loans and LDPs.

Mar. 31 --- Last Day for producers to make a one-time election between ARC and PLC for the 2014 through 2018 crop years.

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

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

Youth Loans

The Farm Service Agency makes loans to youths to establish and operate income-producing projects in connection with 4-H clubs, FFA and other agricultural groups. Projects must be planned and operated with the help of the organization advisor, produce sufficient income to repay the loan and provide the youth with practical business and educational experience. The maximum loan amount is \$5000.

Applicants Must:

Be a citizen of the United States (which includes Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) or a legal resident alien

- Be 10 years to 20 years of age
- Must obtain a written recommendation and consent from a parent or guardian if the applicant has not reached the age of majority under state law
- Comply with FSA's general eligibility requirements
- Be unable to get a loan from other sources
- Conduct a modest income-producing project in a supervised program of work as outlined above
- Demonstrate capability of planning, managing and operating the project under guidance and assistance from a project advisor. The project supervisor must recommend the project

and the loan, along with providing adequate supervision.

To find out more about the FSA Youth loan program, contact your local FSA county office to setup an appointment with a Loan Approval Official.

USDA Provides Greater Protection for Fruit, Vegetable and Other Specialty Crop Growers through NAP Buy-Up Program

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 (NAP) for crops that historically 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 socially disadvantaged 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 NAP program and how it can help them producers can use a NAP Web tool, available at www.fsa.usda.gov/nap, which 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.

FSA reminds all producers that **March 16th** is the deadline for producers to apply NAP coverage for 2015 spring planted crops using Form CCC-471, Application for Coverage, and pay the service fee at the FSA county office. The application and service fee must be filed **by March 16th**, the deadline date for 2015 spring planted crops which include: forage sorghum, oats, potatoes, soybeans, sunflowers and all spring planted specialty crops grown for food.

The service fee is \$250 per crop per county or \$750 per producer per county. The fee cannot exceed a total of \$1875 per producer with farming interest in multiple counties. Limited resource producers may request a waiver of service fees.

To qualify, a producer must be a landowner, tenant or sharecropper who shares in the risk of producing an eligible crop. To learn more, visit the FSA website at www.fsa.usda.gov/nap or contact your FSA office.

USDA Rural Development Agency Offers Free REAP Informational Workshops throughout Ohio

The USDA, Rural Development will be holding 5 free Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) information sessions and application workshops around Ohio. Agricultural producers and rural small businesses are eligible for this grant program. REAP will pay for up to 25% of the total project costs

for an energy efficiency or renewable energy project. Anyone interested is invited to come and learn about the program and how to complete the application. This year there are **two deadlines –April 30th& June 30th**. All are welcome. Reservations are not required.

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please call Christie Hooks at (614) 255-2397 or email at Christie.Hooks@oh.usda.gov.

Locations and Times:

WHERE: Ohio Department of Agriculture

8995 E Main Street
Room 141 A & B
Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068

WHEN: March 2, 2015 from 10AM –Noon

WHERE: USDA, Rural Development

7868 County Road 140
Conference Room Findlay, Ohio 45840

WHEN: March 4, 2015 from 10AM –Noon

WHERE: Neighborhood Development Services

120 East Main Street
Ravenna, Ohio 44266

WHEN: March 10, 2015 from 10AM – Noon

WHERE: Hi-Tech Center

1575 N High Street
Room 27 A & B
Hillsboro, Ohio 45133

WHEN: March 17, 2015 from 10AM – Noon

OSU Extension Offers Conferences to Help Small Farm Owners March 13-14 and March 28

Small farmers wanting to expand or make their farms work more efficiently or landowners who are new to agriculture and are looking for ways to utilize acreage, can learn entrepreneurial tips from agricultural experts from Ohio State University's College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences during a series of small farm conferences in March.

Researchers and educators with OSU Extension and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (OARDC), as well as industry experts, will conduct the workshops.

- The “**Opening Doors to Success**” conference, which will be held March 13-14 at Wilmington College, Boyd Cultural Arts Center, 1870 Quaker Way in Wilmington, will feature educational and hands-on sessions and a trade show for landowners and small farmers that will focus on: pastures and fence, specialty crop production techniques including hoop house management, irrigation and grafting and woodlands management on March 13.

Topics to be addressed during the March 14 session include: farm management, livestock production, foods business and marketing, forages and pastures, vegetable and fruit production and organics. The program offers information on budgeting, business planning and developing a farm

structure, among other issues.

Registration for the conference is \$20 for the March 13 session and \$60 for the March 14 session, or \$70 for both days. The deadline to register is March 5. For more information or to register online, go to <http://go.osu.edu/smfarmconf2015> or contact Nye at 937-382-0901 or nye.1@osu.edu.

- The “**Living Your Small Farm Dream**” conference, which will be held March 28 in the Fisher Auditorium and Shisler Conference Center, 1680 Madison Ave., Wooster, Ohio, on the OARDC campus, will feature 25 sessions, including a keynote address on, “Making Your Small Farm Dream a Reality.”

The conference will feature more than 25 sessions, including workshops on: haymaking 101, chainsaw operation: maintenance and safety, on farm solar energy development, women in agriculture networks, opportunities and resources, direct marketing of meat to the consumer, tunnels: tools to get more and higher quality vegetables, an introduction to beekeeping, soil health and productivity, marketing farm products: where do I start, hops production and marketing, rural energy for America program: An Overview, hobby maple production, farm neighbor laws, ATV safety, vegetable grafting: what, when, why and how, sell well: eggs, produce and cottage foods, Natural Resources Conservation Service programs for small farms, get more out of your pasture, tree fruit and small fruit production, pond care 101, growing vegetables for market, hands-on fruit tree pruning, overview of Farm Service Agency Programs for new and beginning farmers, small flock poultry, organic certification process.

Registration for the “Living the Small Farm Dream” conference is \$60. The deadline to register is March 20. For more information or to register, go to <http://go.osu.edu/smfarmconf2015> or contact Nye at 937-382-0901 or nye.1@osu.edu.

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

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).
