

July 2015



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Sheridan-Johnson County FSA Updates

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**Next County Committee
Meeting: July 22, 2015**

OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD FOR ARC/PLC PROGRAMS

Eligible producers may now formally enroll in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for 2014 and 2015. The enrollment period began June 17, 2015 and will end September 30, 2015. The Sheridan-Johnson County FSA Office will begin scheduling appointments in late July for producers who have previously elected to participate in ARC or PLC. Please note: Election is not the same as enrollment and producers must still enroll their farm (sign a contract) to receive program benefits. This will be an annual signup until the year 2018, the end of the 2014 Farm Bill.

USDA Packages Disaster Protection with Loans to Benefit Specialty Crop and Diversified Producers

Free basic coverage and discounted premiums available for new and underserved loan applicants.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) today announced that producers who apply for FSA farm loans also will be offered the opportunity to enroll in new disaster loss protections created by the 2014 Farm Bill. .

The new coverage, available from the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP), is available to FSA loan applicants who grow non-insurable crops, so this is especially important to fruit and vegetable producers and other specialty crop growers. New, underserved and limited income specialty growers who apply for farm loans could qualify for basic loss coverage at no cost, or higher coverage for a discounted premium.

The basic disaster coverage protects at 55 percent of the market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of production. Covered crops include "specialty" crops, for instance, vegetables, fruits, mushrooms, floriculture, ornamental nursery, aquaculture, turf grass, ginseng, honey, syrup, hay, forage, grazing and energy crops. FSA allows beginning, underserved or limited income producers to obtain NAP coverage up to 90 days after the normal application closing date when they also apply for FSA credit.

In addition to free basic coverage, beginning, underserved or limited income producers are eligible for a 50 percent discount on premiums for the higher levels of coverage that protect up to 65 percent of expected production at 100 percent of the average market price. Producers also may work with FSA to protect value-added production, such as organic or direct market crops, at their fair market value in those markets. Targeted underserved groups eligible for free or discounted coverage are American Indians or

Alaskan Natives, Asians, Blacks or African Americans, Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders, Hispanics, and women.

FSA offers a variety of loan products, including farm ownership loans, operating loans and microloans that have a streamlined application process. Growers need not apply for an FSA loan, nor be a beginning, limited resource, or underserved farmer, to be eligible for Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program assistance. To learn more, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/nap or www.fsa.usda.gov/farmloans, or contact your local FSA office at <https://offices.usda.gov>.

Important FSA Dates and Deadlines to Remember

- June 15, 2015: Nomination Period Begins for County Committee Elections. Producers may request nomination forms from their local FSA county office or obtain online at www.fsa.usda.gov/election.
- June 17 to Sept. 30, 2015: Open enrollment Period for ARC/PLC programs.
- July 3, 2015: Fourth of July Holiday Observed; FSA Office closed
- July 15, 2015: Acreage Reporting Deadline for Spring Seeded Alfalfa crops, Forage Seeding, all other spring seeded crops and any crops not previously recorded.
- July 15, 2015: Final 2014 Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) Production Records are due.
- August 3, 2015: Last day to file County Committee nomination forms at the local FSA county 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).