

September 2015



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Alaska FSA Newsletter

Alaska State Farm Service Agency

State Executive Director
Danny Consenstein
907-761-7738
Cell: 907-841-4890
Email:
danny.consenstein@ak.usda.gov

Northern County Office

PO Box 585
Delta Junction, AK 99737

County Executive Director/Farm Loan Officer

Lloyd Wilhelm
907-895-4242 ext 150
Fax: 855-711-9095
Email:
lloyd.wilhelm@ak.usda.gov

Southern County Office

800 W Evergreen, Ste 216
Palmer, AK 99645

County Executive Director

USDA Reminds Farmers and Ranchers of Sept. 11 Program Deadline to Offset Transportation Costs in Alaska

Farm Service Agency (FSA) reminds farmers and ranchers residing outside the contiguous United States that they have until Sept. 11, 2015, to enroll in the Reimbursement Transportation Cost Payment (RTCP) for fiscal year 2015. Applicants will have until Nov. 2, 2015, to provide supporting documentation.

The program offsets portions of the costs of transporting agricultural products over long distances. The program allows farmers and ranchers in Alaska, Hawaii and insular areas including the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, Virgin Islands of the United States, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands and Republic of Palau, to recover transportation costs.

Payments are calculated based on the costs incurred for transportation of the agricultural commodity or inputs, subject to an \$8,000 per producer cap per federal fiscal year. In the event that claims for payments exceed the funds available from the program for a fiscal year, payments will be reduced on a pro-

Erin Sturdivant
907-761-7754
Fax: 907-761-7789
Email:
erin.sturdivant@ak.usda.gov

Farm Loan Manager
Jeff Curry
907-761-7773
Fax: 907-761-7789
Email: jeff.curry@ak.usda.gov

Hours Monday-Friday
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Committee Meetings:
Northern Co Sept. TBA
Southern Co Sept. 8, 4:00 pm

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

rata basis.

For more information on the RTCP, farmers and ranchers in the eligible areas can visit their FSA county office or review the fact sheet online at www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/rtcp_2015.pdf. To find your local FSA county office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov> and/or www.fsa.usda.gov/ak.

USDA Adds More Eligible Commodities for Farm Storage Facility Loans

New Provisions Increase On-Farm Storage for Dairy, Flowers, Meats

FSA's Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program, which provides low-interest financing to producers to build or upgrade storage facilities, will now include dairy, flowers and meats as eligible commodities.

For 15 years, the FSFL program has provided affordable financing, allowing American farmers and ranchers to construct or expand storage on the farm and by adding eligible commodities; these low-interest loans will help even more family farmers and ranchers to expand on-site storage.

The new commodities eligible for facility loans include floriculture, hops, rye, milk, cheese, butter, yogurt, meat and poultry (unprocessed), eggs, and aquaculture (excluding systems that maintain live animals through uptake and discharge of water). Commodities already eligible for the loans include corn, grain sorghum, rice, soybeans, oats, peanuts, wheat, barley, minor oilseeds harvested as whole grain, pulse crops (lentils, chickpeas and dry peas), hay, honey, renewable biomass, and fruits, nuts and vegetables for cold storage facilities.

Producers do not need to demonstrate the lack of commercial credit availability to apply. The loans are designed to assist a diverse range of farming operations, including small and mid-sized businesses, new farmers, operations supplying local food and farmers markets, non-traditional farm products, and underserved producers.

To learn more about the FSA Farm Storage Facility Loan, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/pricesupport or contact your local FSA county office. To find your local FSA county office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

USDA Enrollment Period for Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Safety-Net Programs Closes Sept. 30

Eligible producers are reminded that enrollment in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for 2014 and 2015 ends Sept. 30, 2015.

The new programs, established by the 2014 Farm Bill, trigger financial protections for agricultural producers when market forces cause substantial drops in crop prices or revenues. More than 1.76 million farmers have elected ARC or PLC. Previously, 1.7 million producers had enrolled to receive direct payments (the program replaced with ARC and PLC by the 2014 Farm Bill). This means more farms have elected ARC or PLC than previously enrolled under previously administered programs.

Nationwide, 96 percent of soybean farms, 91 percent of corn farms, and 66 percent of wheat farms elected ARC. 99 percent of long grain rice farms, 99 percent of peanut farms, and 94 percent of medium grain rice farms elected PLC. For data about other crops and state-by-state program election results go to www.fsa.usda.gov/arc-plc.

Covered commodities under ARC and PLC include barley, canola, large and small chickpeas, corn, crambe, flaxseed, grain sorghum, lentils, mustard seed, oats, peanuts, dry peas, rapeseed, long grain rice, medium grain rice (which includes short grain and sweet rice), safflower seed, sesame, soybeans, sunflower seed and wheat. Upland cotton is no longer a covered commodity.

For more information please contact your local FSA office <http://offices.usda.gov>.

Agricultural Producers in Alaska Still Have Time to Apply for Direct Farm Ownership Loan Program

Low-Interest Loans Can Help Producers Start or Expand Farms

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Alaska Farm Service Agency (FSA) announced that farmers and ranchers still have time to apply for low interest loans available through the FSA direct farm ownership program. Applications must be approved by Sept. 30, 2015, to take advantage of the funding available.

Eligible farmers and ranchers can borrow up to \$300,000 to buy farmland, construct or repair buildings, pay closing costs, or promote soil and water conservation. The interest rate can be as low as 1.5 percent with up to 40 years to repay.

New farmers and ranchers, military veterans, and underserved farmers and ranchers also are encouraged to apply. Each year Congress targets 80 percent of available loan funds to beginning and targeted underserved farmers and ranchers. Targeted underserved groups include American Indians or Alaskan Natives, Asians, Blacks or African Americans, Native Hawaiians, or other Pacific Islanders, Hispanics and women.

For more information about farm loan, visit www.fsa.usda.gov/farmloans, or contact your local FSA office. To find your local FSA county office, visit <http://offices.usda.gov>.

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 to purchase or improve farms or ranches.

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

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.

USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) Online Hay and Grazing Acres Locator Tool

FSA's **Hay Net** website www.fsa.usda.gov/haynet is the "go to" online resource for agricultural producers to list information concerning the need for hay and grazing acres or the availability of hay and grazing acres.

If, due to extenuating circumstances, producers are in need of hay and/or grazing acres to support livestock, please use **Hay Net** to post an advertisement seeking these resources. Likewise, landowners who have hay and/or grazing acres available for livestock producers should post a Hay Net advertisement as well.

A few things to remember when using the **Hay Net** website:

- There is a one-time registration process that should be completed by all users who want to post an ad online.
- Users who just want to browse ads DO NOT NEED to have an eAuthentication user id.
- Hay and grazing acre ads will be automatically removed after a period of 13 months.
- Please help your fellow farmer and rancher by keeping ads current and up to date and remove ads you no longer need or want advertised on **Hay Net**. Please, no corporate advertisements on this site.

Hay Net is brought to you by FSA as a public service. The sole purpose of this online resource is to provide a site for the exchange of information. FSA does not endorse, guarantee, or otherwise make representations of any kind regarding any user of this site and FSA is not responsible for defining the terms of grazing agreements or lease contracts.

For more information about **Hay Net** and other FSA services and programs, please contact your local FSA office. For local FSA Service Center contact information, please visit: offices.usda.gov.

Save Time - Make an Appointment with FSA

To insure maximum use of your time and to insure that you are afforded our full attention to your important business needs, please call our office ahead of your visit to set an appointment and to discuss any records or documentation that you may need to have with you when you arrive for your appointment. For local FSA Service Center contact information, please visit: <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>.

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).