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Message from Dean Schamore, State Executive Director for FSA in Kentucky



The abundant rains in May are concerning for many Kentucky farmers. Last week, we continued to have waves of showers and storms move through the area. According to the June 10th *USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service Weekly Crop Progress and Condition Report*, "Producers continue to be delayed with their fieldwork as rains continued across the state. Instances of corn and soybean acres needed to be replanted after flooding continued. The moderate temperatures and plentiful rains, though, have allowed for continued pasture growth, as 83% of pasture was rated in good or excellent condition. The first cutting of hay for the year is estimated at 59% complete."

Let us know of any acres you were unable to plant due to weather events. And if you've not already done so, please call your local FSA office to make an appointment to get your 2024 crops certified. The FSA staff will be eager to assist you with your maps and share specific acreage reporting deadlines by crop for your county. Your crop insurance agent can assist you with reporting information necessary for crop insurance benefits. Contact your local [USDA Service Center](#) for more information on these dates.

It's important to note that FSA works with new farmers and farms of all sizes. Small farmers should also report their acreage because they may be eligible for assistance in the event of a natural disaster. If this is your first year farming a tract of land, you need to make sure you have a farm number, that your tract information is current, and that you're in FSA's system. Whether you are new to farming, or just new to working with us, your local FSA office will help you register for a farm number, which is required for USDA programs and assistance. Things to bring include proof of identity, a copy of your deed or leasing documents, and any entity documentation.

And importantly, the nomination period for the 2024 County Committee Election **begins June 17, 2024**. One of our concentrated outreach efforts is to ensure opportunities for minorities to serve as voting members on these county committees. These county committees make important decisions on how federal farm programs are administered locally. Every eligible agricultural producer should participate in FSA county committee elections – whether a beginning or established producer, historically underserved producer (minority and women), or a large or small operation – because FSA county committees are producers' link with USDA. All nominations must be postmarked or received by Aug. 1, 2024.

We're hiring! If you're interested in working for FSA, see the article below for a County Executive Director in Training (CEDT) position. Applications will be accepted through 06/17/2024.

If you have any questions about any of our programs, please don't hesitate to contact our team. The Kentucky Farm Service Agency is here to support your operations. We wish you a successful summer season!

Sincerely,

Dean Schamore
State Executive Director for FSA
Kentucky State Office

Producers and Landowners Can Now Sign Up for USDA's Grassland Conservation Reserve Program



Agricultural producers and private landowners can now sign up for the Grassland Conservation Reserve Program (Grassland CRP). The signup runs **through June 28, 2024**. Grassland CRP, offered by USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA), is a voluntary working lands conservation program that enables participants to conserve grasslands and provide important conservation benefits for wildlife, soil health and carbon sequestration, all while continuing most grazing and haying practices.

"Grassland CRP is a vital conservation tool that supports two of USDA's top priorities: the wellbeing of American agriculture and the health of America's grasslands, which provide critical environmental benefits for wildlife and carbon sequestration," said Dean Schamore, FSA State Executive Director in Kentucky. "Over the past three years, we have seen historic interest in the Grassland Conservation Reserve Program with producers signing up to conserve over 6.8 million acres. This historic interest from agriculture has proven that agricultural productivity and conservation priorities are not exclusive from one another, but can coexist and, more importantly, complement and enhance one another."

More than 2.3 million acres from agricultural producers and private landowners were accepted through the 2023 Grassland CRP signup. That signup reflects the continued success and value of investments in voluntary, producer-led, working lands conservation programs. The current total participation in Grassland CRP is 8.64 million acres, which is part of the 24.8 million acres enrolled in CRP opportunities overall.

Landowners and producers interested in CRP should contact their local [USDA Service Center](#) to learn more or to apply for the program **before the June 28 deadline**.

FSA in Kentucky is Hiring!

Make a Career Move that Makes a Difference
in **YOUR** Community...

The Kentucky Farm Service Agency is Hiring

The U. S. Department of Agriculture Farm Service Agency (FSA) is accepting applications for County Executive Director in Training (CEDT) (1 Lexington, KY). Applications will be accepted **through 06/17/2024**. Open to all U.S. Citizens. No relocation is authorized.

About the loan analyst position: This is a twelve-month training program that may require travel throughout the state of Kentucky. Depending upon agency needs, candidates will be expected to relocate within the state when the training program is complete.

If you are interested, or know of someone who might be interested, please share this information with them. Here is the direct link to the position with information on how to apply: <https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/793863700>.

USDA Announces Availability of Low-Interest Physical Loss Loans for Kentucky Producers Affected by Tornado on May 8, 2024 and Tornadoes, High Winds and Hail on April 2, 2024



Physical loss loans through the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) can help producers repair or replace damaged or destroyed physical property essential to the success of the agricultural operation, including livestock losses. Examples of property commonly affected include essential farm buildings, fixtures to real estate, equipment, livestock, perennial crops, fruit and nut bearing trees, and harvested or stored crops and hay.

Impacted Area: Kentucky

Triggering Disaster #1: Tornado that occurred on May 8, 2024.

Application Deadline: February 7, 2025.

Primary Counties Eligible: Daviess.

Contiguous Counties Also Eligible:

Kentucky: Hancock, Henderson, McLean, Ohio

Indiana: Spencer, Warrick.

Impacted Area: Indiana

Triggering Disaster #2: tornadoes, high winds, and hail that occurred on April 2, 2024.

Application Deadline: January 17, 2025.

Primary Counties Eligible: Posey, Warrick.

Contiguous Counties Also Eligible:

Kentucky: Daviess, Henderson, Union

Indiana: Dubois, Gibson, Pike, Spencer, Vanderburgh.

Illinois: Gallatin, White.

More Resources

On farmers.gov, the [Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool](#), [Disaster Assistance-at-a-Glance fact sheet](#), and [Loan Assistance Tool](#) can help you determine program or loan options. To file a Notice of Loss or to ask questions about available programs, contact your local [USDA Service Center](#).

Federal Emergency Management Agency Designates Multiple Kentucky Counties as Primary and Continuous Natural Disaster Areas Due to April 2024 Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds, Tornadoes, Flooding, Landslides, and Mudslides

These Presidential disaster declarations allow the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) to extend much-needed emergency credit to producers recovering from natural disasters through [emergency loans](#). Emergency loans can be used to meet various recovery needs including the replacement of essential items such as equipment or livestock, reorganization of a farming operation, or to refinance certain debts. FSA will review the loans based on the extent of losses, security available, and repayment ability.



Impacted Area: Kentucky

Triggering Disaster #1: Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds, Tornadoes, Landslides, and Mudslides that occurred on April 2, 2024.

Application Deadline: January 22, 2025.

Primary Counties Eligible: Boyd, Carter, Fayette, Greenup, Henry, Jefferson, Jessamine, Mason, Oldham, Union, Whitley.

Contiguous Counties Also Eligible:

Kentucky: Bell, Bourbon, Bracken, Bullitt, Carroll, Clark, Crittenden, Elliott, Fleming, Franklin, Garrard, Hardin, Henderson, Knox, Laurel, Lawrence, Lewis, McCreary, Madison, Mercer, Owen, Robertson, Rowan, Scott, Shelby, Spencer, Trimble, Webster, Woodford.

Illinois: Gallatin, Hardin.

Indiana: Clark, Floyd, Harrison, Posey.

Ohio: Adams, Brown, Lawrence, Scioto.

Tennessee: Campbell, Claiborne.

West Virginia: Wayne.

Impacted Area: West Virginia

Triggering Disaster #2: Severe Storms, Straight-line Winds, Tornadoes, Flooding, Landslides, and Mudslides that occurred April 2 to April 6, 2024.

Application Deadline: January 22, 2025.

Primary Counties Eligible: Boone, Brooke, Cabell, Fayette, Hancock, Kanawha, Lincoln, Marshall, Nicholas, Ohio, Preston, Putnam, Tyler, Wayne, Wetzel.

Contiguous Counties Also Eligible:

Kentucky: Boyd, Lawrence, Martin.

Maryland: Garrett.

Ohio: Belmont, Columbiana, Gallia, Jefferson, Lawrence, Monroe, Washington.

Pennsylvania: Beaver, Fayette, Greene, Washington.

West Virginia: Barbour, Braxton, Clay, Doddridge, Grant, Greenbrier, Harrison, Jackson, Logan, Marion, Mason, Mingo, Monongalia, Pleasants, Raleigh, Ritchie, Roane, Summers, Taylor, Tucker, Webster, Wyoming.

More Resources

On farmers.gov, the [Disaster Assistance Discovery Tool](#), [Disaster Assistance-at-a-Glance fact sheet](#), and [Loan Assistance Tool](#) can help you determine program or loan options. To file a Notice of Loss or to ask questions about available programs, contact your local [USDA Service Center](#).

FEMA offers different assistance programs for individual citizens, public groups including government agencies and private nonprofit organizations. To find the FEMA help you need following a disaster event, visit [fema.gov/assistance](https://www.fema.gov/assistance).

USDA Microloans Help Farmers Purchase Farmland and Improve Property

Farmers can use USDA farm ownership microloans to buy and improve property. These microloans are especially helpful to beginning or underserved farmers, U.S. veterans looking for a career in farming, and those who have small and mid-sized farming operations. Microloans have helped farmers and ranchers with operating costs, such as feed, fertilizer, tools, fencing, equipment, and living expenses since 2013.



Microloans can also help with farmland and building purchases and soil and water conservation improvements. FSA designed the expanded program to simplify the application process, expand eligibility requirements and expedite smaller real estate loans to help farmers strengthen their operations. Microloans provide up to \$50,000 to qualified producers and can be issued to the applicant directly from the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA).

To learn more about the FSA microloan program, contact your local [USDA Service Center](#) or visit fsa.usda.gov/microloans.

Ask the Expert: A Q&A on Youth Loans with Tina Mellinger

In this *Ask the Expert*, Tina Mellinger answers questions about Farm Service Agency (FSA) Youth Loans. Tina is a Farm Loan Manager in Ohio and has worked for FSA for 37 years. Her FSA farm loan team makes an average of around 50 loans each year, with around five of those being Youth Loans. Her entire career has been centered around loan-making. At the beginning of her career, she worked for Rural Development making home loans.

Tina grew up on a 50-cow dairy farm in southeastern Ohio. She earned an animal science and ag education degree from the Ohio State University.

To read the full blog, visit farmers.gov/blog/ask-expert-qa-on-youth-loans-with-tina-mellinger.

USDA Seeks Members for Federal Advisory Committee for Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is seeking nominations for four positions on the [Federal Advisory Committee for Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production](#). USDA will accept nominations from May 7, 2024, to July 7, 2024. The 12-member Committee, which first convened in March 2022, is part of USDA's efforts to increase support for urban agriculture and innovative production. Members of the Committee provide input on policy development and help identify barriers to urban agriculture as USDA works to promote urban farming and the economic opportunities it provides in cities across the country.

Members of the Committee include representative from urban and innovative agricultural production, higher education or extension programs, non-profits, business and economic development, supply chain, and financing. Last year, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack [appointed four new members](#) to the Committee to replace members whose terms expired. The Committee's last [public meeting](#) was held in April 2024.

Nominations

USDA is seeking nominations for individuals representing a broad spectrum of expertise. Four positions are open for nominations including:

- One individual who is an agricultural producer or farmer using innovative technology.
- One individual representing an institution of higher education or extension program.
- One individual with supply chain experience, which may include a food aggregator, wholesale food distributor, food hub, or an individual who has direct-to-consumer market experience.
- One individual representing related experience in urban, indoor and other emerging agriculture production practices.

Individuals who wish to be considered for membership must submit a nomination package including the following:

- A completed [background disclosure form \(Form AD-755\)](#) signed by the nominee.
- A brief summary explaining the nominee's interest in one or more open vacancies including any unique qualifications that address the membership composition and criteria described above.
- A resume providing the nominee's background, experience, and educational qualifications.
- Recent publications by the nominee relative to extending support for urban agriculture or innovative production (optional).
- Letter(s) of endorsement (optional).

Nomination packages must be submitted by email to UrbanAgricultureFederalAdvisoryCommittee@usda.gov or postmarked by July 7, 2024. If sending by mail, packages should be addressed to USDA NRCS, Attn: Brian Guse, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Room 4083, Washington, DC 20250. Any interested person or organization may nominate qualified individuals for membership, including self-nominations. For special accommodations, contact Markus Holliday at UrbanAgricultureFederalAdvisoryCommittee@usda.gov.

Additional details are available in the [Federal Register notice](#).

Learn more at www.usda.gov/urban. For additional resources available to producers, download the [Urban Agriculture at a Glance brochure](#) or visit www.farmers.gov/urban.

Current Farm Loans and Farm Programs Interest Rates

Selected Interest Rates for June 2024



Farm Loan Programs

90-Day Treasury Bill	5.500%
Farm Operating Loans - Direct	5.375%
Farm Ownership Loans - Direct	5.625%
Limited Resource Loans	5.000%
Farm Ownership Loans - Direct FO Down Payment	1.625%
Emergency Loans	3.750%



Farm Programs

Farm Storage Facility Loans	3 Year	4.750%
	5 Year	4.500%
	7 Year	4.500%
	10 Year	4.500%
	12 Year	4.625%
Commodity Loans		6.125%
CCC Borrowing Rate		5.125%

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fsa.usda.gov

Farm Loans and Farm Programs Interest Rates

- See our [2024 Kentucky Guaranteed Lender Newsletter](#)
- See our [2024 USDA Farm Service Agency Annual Program and Policy Reminders](#).

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Contact [your local USDA Service Center](#).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender. 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).