

May 2020



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

NEWSLETTER

GovDelivery

Missouri FSA Newsletter

Missouri Farm Service Agency

Parkade Center Suite 225
601 Bus. Loop 70 West
Columbia, MO 65203

Phone: 573-876-0925
Fax: 855-830-0680

www.fsa.usda.gov/mo

Acting State Executive Director:
Kim Viers

State Committee:
Julie Hurst - Chair
Marc Allison
Cindy Schroeder
Will Spargo
Barbara Wilson

To find contact information for your local office go to www.fsa.usda.gov/mo.

[Click here](#) for the Missouri Department of

A Message to Missouri Farmers and Ranchers

We know farmers are resilient and the Farm Service Agency in Missouri will continue to deliver the disaster assistance, safety net, farm loan and conservation programs that keep American agriculture in business today and long into the future.

On April 17, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP). This \$19 billion immediate relief program will provide critical support to farmers and ranchers and maintain the integrity of our food supply chain, and ensure every American continues to receive and have access to the food they need. CFAP will use the funding and authorities provided in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES), the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), and other USDA existing authorities. The program includes two major elements to achieve these goals, including direct support to farmers and ranchers and USDA purchase and distribution. [Learn more.](#)

Further details regarding eligibility, rates, and other implementation will be released at a later date.

For the latest updates on the CFAP, and other Frequently Asked Questions, visit usda.gov/coronavirus.

Our USDA Service Centers in Missouri will continue to be open for business by phone appointment only and field work will continue

Conservation Covey
Headquarters newsletter.

with appropriate social distancing. While our program delivery staff will continue to come into the office, they will be working with our producers by phone and using online tools whenever possible. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with the Farm Service Agency are required to call their Service Center to schedule a phone appointment.

I also encourage you to visit farmers.gov/coronavirus to keep up-to-date on temporary program flexibilities available as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

Kim Viers
Acting State Executive Director
Missouri Farm Service Agency

Important Dates to Remember

Producers who plant spring oats and potatoes are reminded to report these crops to their local FSA office by May 15, 2020.

Farmers and ranchers may apply to enroll grasslands in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Grasslands program through May 15, 2020.

Crops insured under the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) must be reported by the final reporting date or 15 days before harvest.

More information about these programs and related deadlines is included in subsequent articles within this newsletter.

Producers with acreage enrolled in CRP are reminded of the current primary nesting season in Missouri. No maintenance (mowing, spraying, burning or disking) is allowed on CRP acreage from May 1 through July 15.

The staff at the Missouri Farm Service Agency wishes everyone a safe planting season!

USDA Reports Record Enrollment in Key Farm Safety-Net Programs

Producers signed a record 1.77 million contracts for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs for the 2019 crop year, which is more than 107 percent of the total contracts signed compared with a 5-year average. USDA also reminds producers that June 30 is the deadline to enroll in ARC and PLC for the 2020 crop year.

Producers interested in enrolling for 2020 should contact their FSA county office. Producers must enroll by June 30 and make their one-time update to PLC payment yields by September 30.

FSA attributes the significant participation in the 2019 crop year ARC and PLC programs to increased producer interest in the programs under the 2018 Farm Bill and to an increase in eligible farms because of the selling and buying of farms and new opportunities for beginning farmers and military veterans with farms having 10 or fewer base acres. Enrollment for 2019 ended March 16.

USDA Service Centers, including FSA county offices, are open for business by phone only, and field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. While program delivery staff will continue to come into the office, they will be working with producers by phone and using online tools whenever possible. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with the FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service or any other Service Center agency are required to call their Service Center to schedule a phone appointment. More information can be found at farmers.gov/coronavirus.

For more information on ARC and PLC, download our [program fact sheet](#) or our [2014-2018 farm bills comparison fact sheet](#). Online ARC and PLC election decision tools are available at fsa.usda.gov/arc/plc. To locate the nearest USDA Service Center, visit farmers.gov/service-center-locator.

FSA Reminds Missouri Producers of Ongoing Disaster Assistance Program Signup

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has started making payments through the Wildfire and Hurricane Indemnity Program – Plus (WHIP+) to agricultural producers in Missouri who suffered eligible losses because of drought or excess moisture in 2018 and 2019. Signup for these causes of loss opened March 23, and producers who suffered losses from drought (in counties designated D3 or above) and excess moisture, as well as floods or tornadoes can still apply for assistance through WHIP+.

To be eligible for WHIP+, producers must have suffered losses of certain crops, trees, bushes or vines in counties with a Presidential Emergency Disaster Declaration or a Secretarial Disaster Designation (primary counties only) for qualifying natural disaster events that occurred in calendar years 2018 or 2019. Also, losses located in a county not designated by the Secretary as a primary county may be eligible if a producer provides documentation showing that the loss was due to a qualifying natural disaster event.

For losses due to drought, a producer is eligible if any area of the county in which the loss occurred was rated D3, or extreme drought, or higher on the U.S. Drought Monitor during calendar years 2018 or 2019. Producers who suffered losses should contact their FSA county office.

In addition to the recently added eligible losses of drought and excess moisture, FSA will implement a WHIP+ provision for crop quality loss that resulted in price deductions or penalties when marketing crops damaged by eligible disaster events. To ensure an effective program for all impacted farmers, the Agency is currently gathering information on the extent of quality loss from producers and stakeholder organizations.

USDA Service Centers, including FSA county offices, are open for business by phone only, and field work will continue with appropriate social distancing. While program delivery staff will continue to come into the office, they will be working with producers by phone and using online tools whenever possible. All Service Center visitors wishing to conduct business with the FSA, Natural Resources Conservation Service or any other Service Center agency are required to call their Service Center to schedule a phone appointment. More information on Service Centers can be

found at farmers.gov/coronavirus, and more information on WHIP+ can be found at farmers.gov/whip-plus.

USDA's Conservation Reserve Program Grasslands Signup

Farmers and ranchers may apply to enroll grasslands in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Grasslands signup. The signup runs through May 15.

Through CRP Grasslands, participants retain the right to conduct common grazing practices, such as haying, mowing or harvesting seed from the enrolled land. Timing of some activities may be restricted by the primary nesting season of birds.

Participants will receive an annual rental payment and may receive up to 50 percent cost-share for establishing approved conservation practices. The duration of the CRP contract is either 10 or 15 years. FSA will rank applications using a number of factors including existence of expiring CRP land, threat of conversion or development, existing grassland, and predominance of native species cover, and cost.

The 2018 Farm Bill set aside 2 million acres for CRP Grassland enrollment. CRP is one of the largest conservation programs at USDA. CRP marks its 35-year anniversary in 2020 with 22 million acres currently enrolled.

For more information or to enroll in CRP Grasslands, contact your local FSA county office or visit fsa.usda.gov/crp. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

Communication is Key in Lending

Farm Service Agency (FSA) is committed to providing our farm loan borrowers the tools necessary to be a success. A part of ensuring this success is providing guidance and counsel from the loan application process through the borrower's graduation to commercial lending institutions. While it is FSA's commitment to advise borrowers as they identify goals and evaluate progress, it is crucial for borrowers to communicate with their farm loan staff when changes occur. It is the borrower's responsibility to alert FSA to any of the following:

- Any proposed or significant changes in the farming operation;
- Any significant changes to family income or expenses;
- The development of problem situations;
- Any losses or proposed significant changes in security

In addition, if a farm loan borrower cannot make payments to suppliers, other creditors, or FSA on time, contact your farm loan staff immediately to discuss loan servicing options.

For more information on FSA farm loan programs, visit www.fsa.usda.gov.

USDA Reminds Missouri Producers to Complete Crop Acreage Reports

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices in Missouri are currently open to phone and virtual appointments only but can still work with producers on timely filing crop acreage reports. FSA staff can provide assistance over the phone, by email and through other virtual means.

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable in Missouri:

May 15, 2020: *Spring oats and potatoes*

July 15, 2020: *CRP, burley tobacco, corn, cotton, forage, grain sorghum, hybrid corn seed, pasture, popcorn, rangeland, rice, soybeans and all other crops.*

Acreage reporting dates vary by crop and by county. Contact your local FSA office for a list of acreage reporting deadlines by crop.

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers must file an accurate crop acreage report by the applicable deadline. FSA staff is still able to assist producers in completing acreage reports, including providing maps.

FSA county offices in Missouri will provide maps to producers through mail and email with instructions for completing the maps. After planting is complete, producers should return completed maps and the acreage reporting sheet by mail or email to their local FSA office.

After completed maps and all acreage reporting information is received, FSA will make software updates and email or mail producers the completed *Report of Acreage* form (FSA-578) to sign. Producers must return the signed form certifying their acreage report to the FSA office through mail or email by the applicable acreage reporting date.

The following exceptions apply to acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the 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 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.

Producers should also report crop acreage they intended to plant, but due to natural disaster, were unable to plant. Prevented planting acreage must be reported on form CCC-576, Notice of Loss, no later than 15 calendar days after the final planting date as established by FSA and USDA's Risk Management Agency.

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.

If you have applied for organic certification and do not receive it before the acreage reporting deadline, you may provide the necessary documentation to FSA immediately upon receipt from the certifying agent. For questions, please contact your local FSA office. To locate your local FSA office visit farmers.gov/service-center-locator.

Farm Storage Facility Loans

FSA's Farm Storage Facility Loan (FSFL) program provides low-interest financing to producers to build or upgrade storage facilities and to purchase portable (new or used) structures, equipment and storage and handling trucks.

The current May interest rates range from 0.250% for a 3-year term to 0.750% for a 12-year term.

The low-interest funds can be used to build or upgrade permanent facilities to store commodities. Loans up to \$50,000 can be secured by a promissory note/security agreement. Loans exceeding \$100,000 require additional security.

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, view the [fact sheet](#), 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 Announces Grants for Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the availability of \$3 million for grants through its new Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production. The competitive grants will support the development of urban agriculture and innovative production projects through two categories, Planning Projects and Implementation Projects. USDA will accept applications on Grants.gov until midnight July 6, 2020.

Planning Projects

\$1 million is available for Planning Projects that initiate or expand efforts of farmers, gardeners, citizens, government officials, schools, and other stakeholders in urban areas and suburbs. Projects may target areas of food access; education; business and start-up costs for new farmers; and development of policies related to zoning and other needs of urban production.

Implementation Projects

\$2 million is available for Implementation Projects that accelerate existing and emerging models of urban, indoor, and other agricultural practices that serve multiple farmers. Projects will improve local food access and collaborate with partner organizations and may support infrastructure needs; emerging technologies; educational endeavors; and urban farming policy development.

Webinar

A webinar will be held on June 3, 2020 from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time. The webinar will provide an overview of the grants' purpose, project types, eligibility, and basic requirements for the

submission of an application. Information on how participate in the webinar, or listen to the recording, will be posted on the farmers.gov/urban webpage.

More Information

The Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Technology was established through the 2018 Farm Bill.

Applications must be submitted through [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov) by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on July 6, 2020.

More information is available at farmers.gov/urban.

For more information or to apply for Urban Agriculture Innovative grants, contact your local FSA county office. To locate your local FSA office, visit farmers.gov/service-locator.

Interest Rates and Dates to Remember

Selected Interest Rates for May 2020

90-Day Treasury Bill	0.750%
Farm Operating Loans - Direct	1.750%
Farm Ownership Loans - Direct	2.625%
Farm Ownership Loans - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher	1.500%
Emergency Loans	2.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (3 years)	0.250%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (5 years)	0.375%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years)	0.625%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (10 years)	0.750%
Farm Storage Facility Loans (12 years)	0.750%
Commodity Loans (1996-Present)	1.125%

Dates to Remember

May 15, 2020	Final date to report spring oats & potatoes.
May 15, 2020	CRP Grasslands signup ends.
May 25, 2020	Memorial Day Holiday. FSA offices are closed.
May 31, 2020	Final availability date for 2019 Marketing Assistance Loans & LDPs for feed grains, upland cotton, soybeans & minor oilseeds.
June 30, 2020	Deadline to complete enrollment for 2020 ARC & PLC programs.

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).
