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February 2019



Farm Service Agency **Electronic News Service**

# NEWSLETTER

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## Wisconsin FSA Newsletter

### Wisconsin Farm Service Agency

8030 Excelsior Dr.  
Suite 100  
Madison, WI 53717

Phone: 608-662-4422  
Fax: 855-758-0755

**State Executive Director:**  
Sandy Chalmers

### A Message from the SED

Many of you have questions about the 2018 Farm Bill, which was enacted December 20, 2018. Through the Farm Bill, USDA's Farm Service Agency supports America's farmers and ranchers through a variety of farm loans, safety net, conservation and disaster assistance programs. We're evaluating changes the Farm Bill made to the programs that we administer, and we'll work to implement those changes as quickly as possible. You can count on your local FSA employees to communicate program information and signup deadlines just as soon as that information is available.

We're getting close to the signup deadline for the Market Facilitation Program, or MFP. Remember that the deadline to sign up is February 14, and producers have until May 1 to certify production amounts.

Our Wisconsin FSA offices are busy helping producers finalize their financing. The 2018 Farm Bill increased the limit for direct farm ownership loans to \$600,000, and increased the limit for guaranteed operating loans to \$1.75 million. If you have questions about securing credit, please stop in now to begin a conversation with our dedicated farm loan staff.

**Farm Loan Chief:**  
Tom Brandt

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue announced the appointment of Kevin Hoyer of West Salem to the Wisconsin FSA state committee. The state committee is responsible for the oversight of farm programs and county committee operations, resolving appeals from the agriculture community, and helping to keep producers informed about FSA programs. Kevin joins Committee Chair Lisa Condon, Horicon; Thomas Gillis, River Falls; David Heideman, Clintonville; and Tom McClellan, Delavan.

**Farm Program Chiefs:**  
Greg Biba  
John Palmer

**State Committee:**  
Lisa Condon, Chair  
Thomas Gillis  
David Heideman  
Kevin Hoyer  
Tom McClellan

Stay safe and keep warm.

Sandy Chalmers

[www.fsa.usda.gov/wi](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/wi)

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## Dates to Remember

### February 14, 2019:

- *Extended-* [Acreage reporting](#) deadlines for Wisconsin crops including apples, Caneberries, cherries, cranberries, currants, hops, huckleberries, pears and strawberries
- *Extended-* Deadline to complete [acreage report](#) of all honeybee colonies producer maintains in all counties
- *Extended-* Final date to sign and submit part D of the CCC-910 application for the [Market Facilitation Program \(MFP\)](#)
- *Extended-* Deadline for filing a notice of loss under the [Emergency Livestock Assistance Program](#) if deadline passed sometime between Dec. 31, 2018 and Jan. 23, 2019
- *Extended-* Deadline for filing a notice of loss under the [Livestock Indemnity Program](#) if deadline passed sometime between Dec. 31, 2018 and Jan. 23, 2019
- **Extended-** Deadline for completing a CCC-899 under the [Tree Assistance Program](#) if the form would have been due sometime between Dec. 31, 2018 and Jan. 23, 2019

**February 18, 2019:** USDA Service Centers **closed** in observance of Presidents Day

**March 15, 2019:** Application deadline to purchase [Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program](#) (NAP) for 2019 spring-seeded crops

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## USDA's Market Facilitation Program

**The last day to submit your Market Facilitation Program (MFP) application is Feb. 14, 2019. The final day to certify 2018 production is May 1, 2019.**

Producers of corn, cotton, sorghum, soybeans, wheat, dairy, hogs, fresh sweet cherries and shelled almonds may be eligible to sign up for an MFP payment. MFP is designed to help producers significantly impacted by actions of foreign governments resulting in the loss of traditional exports.

MFP applications are available online at [www.farmers.gov/mfp](http://www.farmers.gov/mfp). Applications can be completed at a local FSA office or submitted electronically either by scanning, emailing, or faxing. To locate or contact your local FSA office, visit [www.farmers.gov](http://www.farmers.gov).

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## Dairy Revenue Protection Program Informational Meetings Offered by UW-Extension

University of Wisconsin-Extension continues to offer a number of meetings across the state for farmers interested in learning about the new Dairy Revenue Protection program, a new federal insurance tool, with a quarterly payout to dairy farms when milk revenue falls below their insured revenue level. Mark Stephenson, Director of the UW-Center for Dairy Profitability, will provide a comprehensive overview of the Dairy Revenue Protection program and updates to the FSA Dairy Margin Protection Program (MPP), as another tool for dairy farmers when milk prices are low.

The discussion will cover the following specific information for dairy farmers considering the program:

- New Dairy Revenue Protection (RP) program structure and function
- Overview of Dairy programs RP, MPP and Livestock Gross Margins (LGM)
- FSA implementation
- Expected returns
- Decision making tool & calculations

Registration is recommended for meeting materials. The following UW-Extension meetings on the Dairy Revenue Protection program are available by date and location. For registration, more information and questions, contact the UW-Extension office by meeting location.

### Upcoming Program dates and locations:

**Feb. 12, 2019, 1 p.m.** - Dodge County, Lowell Community Memorial VFW, 280 South Street, Lowell, WI. Contact: Amanda Young, Dodge County UW-Extension, (920) 386-3790

**Feb. 13, 2019, 10 a.m.** - Belvedere Supper Club, 329 WI-97, Marshfield, WI 54449. Contact: Matt Lippert, Wood County UW-Extension, (715) 421-8440

**Feb. 13, 2019, 1 p.m.** - Lincoln County Service Center - Assembly Room in the Upper Level, 801 North Sales Street, Merrill, WI. Contact: Dan Marzu Lincoln County UW-Extension, (715) 539-1072

## Dairy Revenue Protection Program Informational Meetings Offered by UW-Extension (continued)

**March 5, 2019, 10 a.m.** - Green Lake County UW-Extension, 571 County Road A, Green Lake, WI Contact: Ben Jenkins, Green Lake County UW-Extension, (920) 294-4032

**March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019 10 a.m.** – Black River Falls, Jackson County UW-Extension office 227 S. 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Black River Falls, WI Contact: Jaime Pfaff, Jackson County UW-Extension (715) 284-4257

**March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019 1 p.m.** – Blair Community Center, 103 E Broadway Street, Blair WI. Contact: Steve Okonek, Trempealeau County UW-Extension (715) 538-2311 ext. 376

**March 20, 2019, 10 a.m.** - Brillion Community Center Street, Brillion, WI Contact: Amber O'Brien Calumet County UW-Extension, (920) 849-1450

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## Thinking of Selling CRP? Consider This:

A Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contract is a contractual agreement between a participant and U.S. Department of Agriculture for a period of 10 to 15 years. By signing the CRP contract, participants acknowledge the land must remain in the program and maintain the approved cover for the length of the contract.

There are financial consequences of selling CRP ground when the buyer chooses not to assume the contract. Until the buyer(s) signs a revised CRP-1 Contract, the seller remains contractually obligated. Should a buyer not succeed to the CRP contract, the previous owner is required to refund all annual rental payments and cost-share payments, interest, as well as liquidated damages equal to 25 percent of one year's annual rental payment on the acres involved. FSA will notify new landowners of the opportunity to succeed to the contract but cannot force new landowners into this agreement.

The FSA staff can provide current contract holders with copies of the contract and appendix to ensure the real estate agent or attorney assisting with the sale, and prospective buyers, are aware of the contract terms.

CRP participants who are considering selling their property should contact their local FSA office immediately with any questions regarding their contract, payment amounts, or contractual obligations. Upon completion of the sale, the seller should immediately notify the FSA office of the new owner's contact information, if known, to begin the process of contract succession.

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## Get Access to the Farmers.gov Dashboard

The vision of farmers.gov is to provide farmers, ranchers, and forest landowners with online self-service applications, educational materials, engagement opportunities, and business tools.

Many of these self-service features are available through the secure [farmers.gov portal](#), where you can log in to your dashboard to apply for programs, process transactions, and manage accounts.

If you work with USDA, we encourage you to get an USDA eAuthentication account, providing you access to the farmers.gov dashboard and enabling you to better manage your USDA business online.

### Sign Up Today

We encourage you to register for a Level 2 eAuthentication account:

1. Contact your [local service center](#) to ensure your correct email address is on file.
2. Create an account at [www.eauth.usda.gov](http://www.eauth.usda.gov). When creating your account, be sure to request Level 2 access and use the email address on file.
3. Complete identity verification by either using the online self-service identity verification method or by completing the identity verification in-person at your USDA service center.
4. Now that you're enrolled, contact your local USDA service center to have your account linked with your USDA customer record.
5. You're ready to login!

Currently, only customers doing business as individuals can access their records using a USDA eAuthentication account. Access for customers doing business as an entity (such as an LLC or Trust) or on behalf of another individual will be available in the future.

### Available Dashboard Features

USDA is building farmers.gov **for farmers, by farmers**, based on feedback from you and our field employees who serve you. Once you're logged in to the secure farmers.gov portal, you can view a dashboard personalized with your customer profile and complete the following activities:

- View and track your application for the [2017 Wildfires and Hurricanes Indemnity Program](#); and
- Apply for the [Market Facilitation Program](#).

You can also link directly to our existing business applications, such as Farm Service Agency's [FSAfarm+](#) and Natural Resources Conservation Service's [Conservation Client Gateway](#). As we grow, these and other USDA business applications will be integrated into the dashboard.

### Other Upcoming Features

In the next year, USDA plans to add new features to the dashboard, enabling you to:

- view information on current and previous farm loans;
- evaluate loan programs to find the best fit for your business goals;
- submit loan documents to your service center; and
- view your farm records, including your farm and tract number and maps.

## Need Help?

For help setting up your account, call our help desk at 1-800-457-3642. For other questions, we encourage you to reach out your [local USDA service center](#).

To read the full blog, visit <https://www.farmers.gov/media/blog/2018/12/19/get-access-your-farmersgov-dashboard>.

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## USDA and SCORE Joining Forces to Find Mentors

USDA is collaborating with SCORE – [www.score.org](http://www.score.org) - the nation's largest network of volunteer, expert business mentors in an effort to expand the field of available agriculture mentors and provide free business mentoring to farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural and rural business owners. SCORE is currently looking for volunteers with experience in an agriculture related field who would like to become a part of an extended field of volunteers. The organization's Orientation and Mentoring Certification program provides volunteers with everything needed to be a successful volunteer. Training includes background about SCORE's mission and services, as well as guidance on how to be a business mentor, including enhancement of listening, interviewing and problem-solving skills.

Current SCORE volunteer mentors have backgrounds in finance, accounting, marketing, operations, business and financial planning. The mentors provide local expertise and free one-on-one business mentoring to new and existing farmers and business owners. Together they work through the process of starting up or maintaining ag and rural businesses. No matter what stage a business is in, SCORE volunteer mentors can help in developing business plans, navigating financing and legal issues, identifying new markets, and other topics in order to help their clients succeed. FSA invites you to learn more and sign up to become a mentor today at <https://newfarmers.usda.gov/mentorship>.

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## 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](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

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## Current Interest Rates

\*Interest rates are announced at the beginning of each month.

[Click here to find notification of current FSFL and commodity loan interest rates.](#)

[Click here to view current Farm Loan interest rates.](#)

### **Farm Loan Interest Rates                      FEBRUARY 2019**

Farm Operating- Direct	3.750%
Farm Operating- Microloan	3.750%
Farm Ownership- Direct	4.125%
Farm Ownership- Microloan	4.125%
Farm Ownership- Direct, Joint Financing	2.500%
Farm Ownership- Down Payment	1.500%
Emergency Loan- Amount of Actual Loss	3.750%

### **Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL)                      FEBRUARY 2019**

3 year FSFL	2.500%
5 year FSFL	2.500%
7 year FSFL	2.625%
10 year FSFL	2.750%
12 year FSFL	2.750%

### **9-Month Commodity Loans                      FEBRUARY 2019**

Marketing Assistance Loan	3.625%
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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).

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