

July 2014



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## Colorado State FSA Office

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Armando Valdez, Chairman  
Marsha Daughenbaugh, Member  
Anita Nein, Member  
Bill Warren, Member  
James Hume, Member

### **COC Nomination Deadline**

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to farmers and ranchers. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

County committee members are a critical component of the operations of FSA. They help deliver FSA farm programs at the local level. Farmers and ranchers who serve on county committees help with the decisions necessary to administer the programs in their counties. They work to ensure FSA agricultural programs serve the needs of local producers.

FSA county committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws. County committee members apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions.

The COC nomination period runs from June 17, 2014 through August 1, 2014. The nomination form is available at USDA Service Centers and [online](#). For more information contact your local FSA office.

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## 2014 Acreage Reporting Dates

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit their local FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by July 15th for spring seeded crops.

The following exceptions apply:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above 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 above 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.
- If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of "cover only," "green manure," "left standing," or "seed," then the acreage must be reported by July 15th.

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.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact the [local County FSA office](#).

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## Filing for NAP Losses

The CCC-576, Notice of Loss, is used to report failed acreage and prevented planting and may be completed by any producer with an interest in the crop. Timely filing a Notice of Loss is required for all crops including grasses. For losses on crops covered by the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) and crop insurance, you must file a CCC-576, Notice of Loss, in the FSA County Office within 15 days of the occurrence of the disaster or when losses become apparent.

If filing for prevented planting, an acreage report and CCC-576 must be filed within 15 calendar days of the final planting date for the crop.

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## 2012 & 2013 ELAP Losses Must be Filed by Aug. 1, 2014 for Honeybee, Livestock and Farm-Raised Fish Losses

Producers who suffered eligible livestock, honeybee or farm-raised fish losses have until August 1, 2014, to submit a notice of loss and application for payment under the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-raised Fish Program (ELAP).

ELAP provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish that have losses due to disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires. ELAP assistance is provided for losses not covered by the Livestock Forage Program (LFP) and Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP). Producers who suffered eligible livestock, honeybee or farm-raised fish losses during 2012 and 2013 program years must submit a notice of loss and application for payment to their local FSA office by August 1, 2014. For 2014 program year losses, the notice of loss and an application for payment must be submitted by November 1, 2014.

For more information, producers can review the ELAP Fact Sheet on the [Farm Bill webpage](#). Producers are encouraged to make an appointment with their local FSA office to apply for these programs.

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## USDA Announces New Support for Beginning Farmers and Ranchers

*Department Implementing New Farm Bill Programs, Unveiling New Centralized Online Resource to Support Next Generation of Farmers*

USDA has announced the implementation of new Farm Bill measures and other policy changes to improve the financial security of new and beginning farmers and ranchers. USDA also unveiled [www.USDA.gov/newfarmers](http://www.USDA.gov/newfarmers), a new website that will provide a centralized, one-stop resource where beginning farmers and ranchers can explore the variety of USDA initiatives designed to help them succeed.

USDA's [www.usda.gov/newfarmers](http://www.usda.gov/newfarmers) has in depth information for new farmers and ranchers, including: how to increase access to land and capital; build new market opportunities; participate in conservation opportunities; select and use the right risk management tools; and access USDA education, and technical support programs. These issues have been identified as top priorities by new farmers. The website will also feature instructive case studies about beginning farmers who have successfully utilized USDA resources to start or expand their business operations.

Today's policy announcements in support of beginning farmers and ranchers include:

- Waiving service fees for new and beginning farmers or ranchers to enroll in the Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the 2014 crop year. NAP provides risk management tools to farmers who grow crops for which there is no crop insurance product. Under this waiver, announced via an [official notice](#) to Farm Service Agency offices, farmers and ranchers whom already enrolled in NAP for the 2014 crop year and certified to being a beginning farmer or social disadvantaged farmer are eligible for a service fee refund.
- Eliminating payment reductions under the [Conservation Reserve Program](#) (CRP) for new and beginning farmers which will allow routine, prescribed, and emergency grazing outside the primary nesting season on enrolled land consistent with approved conservation plans. Previously, farmers and ranchers grazing on CRP land were subject to a reduction in CRP payments of up to 25 percent. Waiving these reductions for new and beginning farmers will provide extra financial support during times of emergency like drought and other natural disasters.
- Increasing payment rates to beginning farmers and ranchers under Emergency Assistance for [Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program \(ELAP\)](#). Under this provision, beginning and farmers can claim up 90 percent of losses for lost livestock, such as bees, under ELAP. This is a fifty percent increase over previously available payment amounts to new and beginning farmers.

In the near future, USDA will also announce additional crop insurance program changes for beginning farmers and ranchers – including discounted premiums, waiver of administrative fees, and other benefits.

Additional information about USDA actions in support of beginning farmers and ranchers is available [here](#).

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## USDA Announces Funding Availability for Turning Biomass Material into Energy

*Farm Bill Implementation Continues as Energy Facilities Can Now Apply for Renewed Biomass Crop Assistance Program*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will begin accepting applications June 16 from energy facilities interested in receiving forest or agricultural residues to generate clean energy. The support comes through the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP), which was authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill.

BCAP provides financial assistance to farmers and ranchers who establish and maintain new crops of energy biomass, or who harvest and deliver forest or agricultural residues to a qualifying energy facility. Of the total \$25 million per year authorized for BCAP, the 2014 Farm Bill provides up to 50 percent (\$12.5 million) each year for matching payments for the harvest and transportation of biomass residues. BCAP matching payments will resume this summer, while crop incentives will begin in 2015. Some matching payments will support the removal of dead or diseased trees from National Forests and Bureau of Land Management public lands. This will be turned into renewable energy while reducing the risk of forest fire. Agriculture residues, such as corn cobs and stalks, also may qualify as energy-producing feedstock.

With the 2014 Farm Bill requiring several regulatory updates to BCAP, the resumption of payments for starting and maintaining new sources of biomass (Project Areas) has been deferred until a later date when the regulatory updates occur.

The USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA), which administers BCAP, will begin accepting applications from biomass conversion facilities beginning June 16, 2014, through July 14, 2014. Information on funding availability

can be found in the Federal Register notice at <http://go.usa.gov/8FSH>. For more details on applications and deadlines on BCAP, visit a local FSA county office or go online to [www.fsa.usda.gov/bcap](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/bcap).

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## USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) Offers Farm Bill Website and Online Overview of Farm Bill Programs

The Agricultural Act of 2014 (the Act), also known as the 2014 Farm Bill, was signed by President Obama on Feb. 7, 2014. The Act repeals certain programs, continues some programs with modifications, and authorizes several new programs administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA). Most of these programs are authorized and funded through 2018.

For the latest on 2014 Farm Bill programs administered by FSA, please visit our Farm Bill website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/farmbill](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/farmbill) and for an FSA program overview please read, download and/or print our recently posted FSA Farm Bill Fact Sheet titled, [What's in the 2014 Farm Bill for Farm Service Agency Customers?](#)

For more information on FSA, please contact your local USDA Service Center or visit us online at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

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## Livestock Disaster Assistance Sign-up Underway

Livestock disaster program enrollment opened on April 15, 2014. These disaster programs are authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill as permanent programs and provide retroactive authority to cover losses that occurred on or after Oct. 1, 2011.

To expedite applications, all producers who experienced losses are encouraged to bring records documenting those losses to their local FSA Office. Producers should record all pertinent information of natural disaster consequences, including:

- Documentation of the number and kind of livestock that have died, supplemented if possible by photographs or video records of ownership and losses
- Dates of death supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts
- Costs of transporting livestock to safer grounds or to move animals to new pastures
- Feed purchases if supplies or grazing pastures are destroyed
- Crop records, including seed and fertilizer purchases, planting and production records

Eligible producers can sign-up for the following livestock disaster assistance programs:

### Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP):

LFP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that have suffered grazing losses due to drought on privately owned or cash leased land or fire on federally managed land. Eligible producers must physically be located in a county affected by a qualifying drought during the normal grazing period for the county. Producers who suffered eligible grazing losses should submit a completed CCC-853 and supporting documentation by January 30, 2015.

### Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP):

LIP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that have suffered livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law. Producers who suffered livestock death losses should submit a notice of loss and an application for payment to their local FSA office by January 30, 2015.

### Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP)

ELAP provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish that have losses due to disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires. ELAP assistance is provided for losses not covered by LFP and LIP. Producers who suffered eligible livestock, honeybee or farm-raised fish losses during 2012 and 2013 program years must submit a notice of loss and application for payment to their local FSA office by August 1, 2014. For 2014 program year losses, the notice of loss and an application for payment must be submitted by November 1, 2014.

For more information, producers can review the LFP, LIP and ELAP Fact Sheets on the [Farm Bill webpage](#).

Producers are encouraged to make an appointment with their local FSA office to apply for these programs. .

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## **New Farm Bill Offers Increased Opportunities for Producers**

The 2014 Farm Bill offers increased opportunities for producers including farm loan program modifications that create flexibility for new and existing farmers. A fact sheet outlining modifications to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) Farm Loan Programs is available [here](#).

The Farm Bill expands lending opportunities for thousands of farmers and ranchers to begin and continue operations, including greater flexibility in determining eligibility, raising loan limits, and emphasizing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers.

Changes that will take effect immediately include:

- Elimination of the 15 year term limit for guaranteed operating loans.
- Modification of the definition of beginning farmer, using the average farm size for the county as a qualifier instead of the median farm size.
- Modification of the Joint Financing Direct Farm Ownership Interest Rate to 2 percent less than regular Direct Farm Ownership rate, with a floor of 2.5 percent. Previously, the rate was established at 5 percent.
- Increase of the maximum loan amount for Direct Farm Ownership Down Payment Loan Program from \$225,000 to \$300,000.
- Elimination of rural residency requirement for Youth Loans, allowing urban youth to benefit.
- Debt forgiveness on Youth Loans, which will not prevent borrowers from obtaining additional loans from the federal government.
- Increase of the guaranteed percentage on Conservation Loans from 75 to 80 percent and 90 percent for socially disadvantaged borrowers and beginning farmers.
- Microloans will not count toward direct operating loan term limits for veterans and beginning farmers.

Additional modifications must be implemented through the rulemaking processes. Visit the [FSA Farm Bill website](#) for detailed information and updates to farm loan programs.

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## **USDA Announces Changes to Fruit, Vegetable and Wild Rice Planting Rules**

Farm Service Agency (FSA) has announced fruit, vegetable and wild rice provisions that affect producers who intend to participate in certain programs authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014.

Producers who intend to participate in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs are subject to an acre-for-acre payment reduction when fruits and nuts, vegetables or wild rice are planted on the payment acres of a farm. Payment reductions do not apply to mung beans, dry peas, lentils or chickpeas. Planting fruits, vegetables or wild rice on acres that are not considered payment acres will not result in a payment reduction. Farms that are eligible to participate in ARC/PLC but are not enrolled for a particular year may plant unlimited fruits, vegetables and wild rice for that year but will not receive ARC/PLC payments for that year. Eligibility for succeeding years is not affected.

Planting and harvesting fruits, vegetables and wild rice on ARC/PLC acreage is subject to the acre-for-acre payment reduction when those crops are planted on either more than 15 percent of the base acres of a farm enrolled in ARC using the county coverage or PLC, or more than 35 percent of the base acres of a farm enrolled in ARC using the individual coverage.

Fruits, vegetables and wild rice that are planted in a double-cropping practice will not cause a payment reduction if the farm is in a double-cropping region as designated by the USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation.

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## 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 AND 2013 AVERAGE ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME COMPLIANCE REVIEW

The AGI verification and compliance reviews for 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 are conducted on producers who the IRS indicates may have exceeded the adjusted gross income limitations described in [7 CFR 1400.500]. Based on this review, producers will receive determinations of eligibility or ineligibility.

If the producer is determined to have exceeded the AGI limitation of \$500,000 of nonfarm income, \$750,000 of farm income, \$1 million of conservation program benefits or the \$1 million total AGI, then receivables will be established for payments earned directly or indirectly by the producer subject to the applicable limitation. The Colorado FSA State Office will begin notifying producers selected for review next month. If you have any questions about the review process or determination, please contact the Colorado FSA State Office at 720-544-2876.

Producers who receive initial debt notification letters may only appeal the amount of the debt to their local FSA office. Adverse determinations become administratively final if not timely appealed and can only be reopened if exceptional circumstances exist that prevented the producer from timely filing the appeal.

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## USDA INVITES SUGGESTIONS FOR THE 2017 CENSUS OF AGRICULTURE

USDA invites suggestions for the 2017 Census of Agriculture that is conducted once every five years by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). The Census provides detailed data covering nearly every facet of U.S. agriculture down to the county level.

NASS released the complete 2012 Census of Agriculture results on May 2, 2014. The agency is now planning the content for the 2017 Agriculture Census and is accepting input. Any individual or organization may submit suggestions on questionnaire items to add or delete, as well as any other ideas concerning the Census. There will be another opportunity to provide official comment through the Federal Register process in the coming weeks.

Content suggestions for the 2017 Census will be accepted until August 4, 2014. Comments can be submitted online at [www.agcensus.usda.gov/Contact\\_Us/Census\\_Program\\_Input\\_Form/](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov/Contact_Us/Census_Program_Input_Form/). Written suggestions may be mailed to: Census Content Team, Room 6451, 1400 Independence Ave, SW, Washington, DC 20250.

To learn more and to access the complete 2012 Census of Agriculture results, including State and County Profiles and all the other Census data and tools, visit [www.agcensus.usda.gov](http://www.agcensus.usda.gov).

For additional information you can read the [Land Contract Guarantee Program Fact Sheet](#).

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## Deadline Dates and Interest Rates

**July 15, 2014** – Acreage Reporting Deadline for all Spring Seeded 2014 - Crops and CRP

**July 15, 2014** – Deadline for 2013 ACRE Production Reports

**July 15, 2014** – Deadline to report 2013 NAP Production Evidence

**August 1, 2014** – Last day to file COC nomination forms

**August 1, 2014** – 2012 and 2013 ELAP Sign-up Deadline

**August 1, 2014** – Deadline to request a reconstitution for 2014

**August 29, 2014** – 2012 SURE Sign-up Deadline

### Interest Rates for July:

90-Day Treasury Bill - .125%

Farm Operating Loans - Direct 2.125%

Farm Ownership Loans - Direct 3.875%

Farm Ownership Loans - Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher 1.50%

Emergency Loans - 3.125%

Farm Storage Facility Loans - (7 years) 2.25%

Sugar Storage Facility Loans - 3.00%

Commodity Loans 1996-Present - 1.125%

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